

tips

Get ahead in Area of Study 3 by:

- reading the opinion pages of Victorian and national newspapers as often as possible, in hard copy or online
- staying up to date with current issues: collect and save interesting media texts (editorials, opinion pieces, persuasive photographs, etc.) and discuss their features with friends and your class by identifying the issue and point of view, and how language in all its forms is being used to position the audience
- watching news and current affairs programs to compare the types of stories reported and how language is used in their presentation
- thinking critically, trying to understand and explain how the author of a persuasive text has tried to position the audience by analysing the text's purpose and form.

Your turn

The aim with language analysis is to look at the whole package in context. As a warm-up, analyse the media text 'Not about sex', below, by studying it critically and answering the following questions.

- 1 Purpose
 - a What is the issue, and what is the author's point of view? Explain the author's purpose/s.
 - b Explain how the visual language positions us to accept the author's point of view from the outset.
- 2 Form and language
 - a What type of text is this? How can you tell?
 - b What verbal and visual language strategies are employed (for example, evidence)?
- 3 Audience
 - a Who is this text intended for? In other words, which groups are being targeted?
 - b Who is likely to be persuaded by the text? Who is it likely to offend or alienate?

Herald Sun

Not about sex

ROBYN RILEY, *Herald Sun*, 2 October 2007

Picture: Brianne Makin

IT WOULD be understandable if the parents of teenagers refusing permission for the cervical cancer vaccine Gardasil were doing it because of concerns about its safety or efficacy for their daughters.

Sadly, that is not the case. The cervical cancer vaccine Gardasil is scientifically proven to prevent the human papilloma virus strains 16 and 18, the culprits that

cause about 70 per cent of cervical cancer, so its ability to do the job is not in question.

To be honest, I would have thought all parents would jump at the chance to access this free vaccine for their daughters.

Yet, one in five parents of teenage girls have not. We heard this week that some are deliberately opting out of the

Federal Government's free vaccination program because, according to the experts, they fear Gardasil will make their daughters promiscuous.

I find it incredible that in this day and age, 20 per cent of parents would risk the health of their daughters just because of some misguided notion that they are protecting their virtue.

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That is just not relevant. Gardasil is not about sex. It is a vaccine that may help stop cervical cancer.

I am gobsmacked. We don't live in the dark ages. Teenagers are, on the whole, better educated about sex and its consequences than their parents were at the same age.

And it shows.

I am disappointed to think some adults truly believe that protecting against some strains of a virus that can cause a deadly cancer could make a teenager more sexually active.

It is ignorant, disrespectful and, I think, bordering on a form of abuse.

I am with Tony Abbott on this issue.

This week the Federal Health Minister made a plea to parents of schoolgirls who had refused permission to reconsider.

He was supported by Dr Edith Weisberg, a reproductive health research

expert, who confirmed some Australian parents were not giving permission because they thought their daughters would see it as a green light to have sex.

She told the ABC it was time to expel the myths that telling kids about sex or protecting them against the things they may pick up from sex was going to make them irresponsible in their sexual behaviour. The doctor said all the research showed that the more kids know about sex and the more they talk about it, the more responsible they are in their sexual behaviour. Natalie Jenkins, the chair of the Gynaecological Awareness Information Network, agreed.

She went a step further and warned parents that to refuse the vaccine meant missing out on a huge opportunity to stop cervical cancer.

Educate your children. Discuss the issue as a family. Please don't refuse a

potential life-saver because of ignorance and prejudice.

I have said before that the Fed Government deserves the thanks the parents of every girl for investing \$436 million in a program to provide Gardasil free.

It is the right thing to do. Cervical cancer is a killer. Gardasil can help stop it.

I'm sure if some parents address that notion rather than stick their heads in the sand, they might change their minds. It is high time for some trust in common sense.

Join the discussion with Robyn Riley at blogs/news.com.au/heraldsun/robriley

Vaccine pioneer Professor Ian Frazer asks to give Gardasil to Therese Raft

