



# WATCH TOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF BRITAIN

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January 12, 2011

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Service Meeting part “How Parents Can Protect Their Children From Misuse of Blood”

Dear Brothers:

We are writing to provide you with directions for the 15-minute local needs part scheduled in the March 2011 issue of *Our Kingdom Ministry* for the week of April 4, 2011. Please use the attached outline “How Parents Can Protect Their Children From Misuse of Blood” as the basis for a 15-minute talk to be given by a capable elder who can present the material in a clear, simple, and loving manner for the benefit of prospective parents and those who currently have children. The outline is based on the information sheet *How Parents Can Protect Their Children From Misuse of Blood (S-55)* that all elders received at the recent Kingdom Ministry school and that is available in the *Forms* section of the *jw.org* website to those with the *View Forms—Restricted* role.

As a reminder, the S-55 information sheet should be retained in the congregation file along with other medical-related items. Be sure to review this important information with parents as the need arises in the future.

We take this opportunity to send you an expression of our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

*Watch Tower B. & J. Society*  
OF BRITAIN

cc: Travelling overseers

## HOW PARENTS CAN PROTECT THEIR CHILDREN FROM MISUSE OF BLOOD

### *Note to the speaker:*

Highlight the Scriptural responsibility of parents and their adolescent children. Remind parents and families to contact the elders and the Hospital Liaison Committee should they need assistance when facing a medical problem involving the blood issue. Please stick closely to the outlined material and the timing of each section. This outline is based on the information sheet *How Parents Can Protect Their Children From Misuse of Blood* (S-55)

### **CHILDREN ARE A PRECIOUS GIFT FROM JEHOVAH** (2 min.)

God-fearing parents view their children as a precious gift from Jehovah. They keenly feel their God-given responsibility to train and protect this treasured inheritance [Read Psalm 127:3]

Having this Biblical view, parents promptly seek appropriate medical care when their children are sick. What reasonable steps can parents take to protect their children from misuse of blood? (Ec 9:11)

### **STEPS TO PROTECT CHILDREN—SPIRITUALLY AND MEDICALLY** (6 min.)

1. Parents must be firmly resolved to ‘abstain from blood’ by refusing it for their children (Ac 15:28, 29) [Read Deuteronomy 12:23, 25]

Parents should help their children to develop their own firm convictions to abstain from blood

2. Parents should conduct practice sessions, perhaps during the Family Worship evening, to help their children defend their position if faced with the prospect of a transfusion [Read 1 Peter 3:15] (*w08* 10/1 30-31; *km* 12/05 6; *w91* 6/15 15-18)

3. Parents should take steps to find a cooperative doctor

The elders can assist in contacting the local Hospital Liaison Committee (HLC)

4. Parents should inform doctors and medical facilities early on about their position on blood transfusions and of their willingness to accept non-blood alternatives

Some doctors or hospitals, based on their medical or legal understanding, will not give 100-per cent assurance that they will not use blood when treating young children, infants, and premature babies

Nevertheless, when a cooperative doctor has performed similar procedures without blood in the past, he may assure parents that he will do everything he can to avoid using blood. Under this circumstance, parents may conclude that this is their best option.

If they grant permission for treatment, *parents should make it clear in writing that they are not authorizing a blood transfusion for their child*

Parents bear the responsibility for such decisions, and this would not be viewed by the congregation as a compromise (Ga 6:5)

Parents have the right to cross out any objectionable language in hospital forms (*g91* 3/8 5-6)

5. Prospective mothers should endeavour to seek good prenatal care during pregnancy [Refer to the article “Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies” in the November 2009 *Awake!*, pages 26-29]

### **STEPS TO PROTECT CHILDREN—LEGALLY** (5 min.)

1. Remember that the law does not give parents unlimited medical decision-making authority to accept or refuse treatment for their children

If doctors and hospital personnel do not have parental consent to use blood, they may seek consent from a judge in the form of a court order

2. If parents have reason to believe that a court order may be forthcoming, they should advise

all social workers and hospital personnel that they want notice of any court proceeding so that they can have an opportunity to be heard

How can a parent deal with the court proceeding?

3. If there is time, it often is advisable to seek the help of a solicitor. If the parent secures a solicitor, the organization's Legal Department can share information with him to help him make the best defence possible under the circumstances

A judge's paramount concern is the physical welfare of the child. The judge needs to see that the parents are not neglectful or abusive but are loving parents who want their child to receive the best medical care

Parents can inform the court that they are refusing blood on deeply held religious grounds but are not refusing medical care and have no intention of "martyring" their child

4. Parents can inform the judge that they would like an opportunity to find a doctor who will treat the child with acceptable methods of non-blood management

The HLC may already have helped them find such a doctor who will testify in court, perhaps by telephone. The HLC may also share with the judge medical articles that show that the child's medical problem can be effectively managed without blood

5. If a mature adolescent is involved, parents can request that the hospital evaluate his decision-making capacity. Request that the court hear from the child prior to making its decision

In dealing with those seeking to force a transfusion, parents should never waver in their convictions

Some judges or doctors may ask if the parents would "transfer" the responsibility of making a decision to them so the parents could more easily live with their conscience. Parents should make clear that they personally feel an obligation to do all they can to avoid a transfusion

If a court order is issued despite one's best efforts, continue to ask the doctor not to transfuse and to urge that non-blood alternative treatments be utilized

### **TRUST IN JEHOVAH (2 min.)**

Parents show insight and trust in Jehovah by making necessary preparations in advance to protect their child from a blood transfusion [Read Proverbs 16:20]

Parents and families should contact the elders and the HLC if they need assistance when facing a medical problem and the blood issue is involved

May parents and children "be firmly resolved not to eat the blood . . . that it may go well with you" because of having Jehovah's blessing and approval (De 12:23-25)