

Summary of Episodes - OFCOM complaint

Date of Episode	Summary
01/12/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DSA signposting only has phone number, no description of services provided, which is unlike ARC • Signposting only provided verbally at the end of each episode – This is not accessible for affected viewers who have DS, as they have a learning disability and research into their learning profile means they are better at visual rather than auditory processing • Jai says “It’s bad, isn’t it?”. This language perpetuates negative stereotype that DS is something be feared of and is “bad” • Jai asked if the test would change anything. This suggests that the purpose of antenatal screening and diagnostic testing is to determine whether or not to have a termination of pregnancy, and does not provide details of other reasons for testing, including determining whether additional monitoring and scans are required during pregnancy, or for parents to prepare for a baby with disabilities. This is directive and does not help significant existing issues around informed consent to antenatal screening and testing. • Quotes in the episode (below) perpetuate negative stereotypes of the condition, that a DS diagnosis is “bad” that children with DS are a burden to their families and their siblings, that they are people to be “coped” and “managed” with. Furthermore, the scripting is not accurate or consistent with scientific studies which show that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>“brothers and sisters experience a wide range of emotions, but typically the positive feelings outweigh the negative feelings”</i> (Skotko, Levine, 2006) ○ <i>“Siblings find rich value in having a family member with DS, and most will assume positions of advocacy at some level in their lives”</i> (Skotko, Levine, 2006) ○ <i>Of parents surveyed “99% reported that they love their son or daughter, 97% were proud of them; 79% felt their outlook on life was more positive because of them”</i> (Skotko et al, 2011) • “Families of children with Down Syndrome have the potential to lead full and productive lives and positively adapt to their child’s diagnosis” (Caples et al 2018) <p>Quotes</p> <p>Jai: It’s bad, isn’t it?</p> <p>Laurel: This child could potentially need a lot of care. This doesn’t just affect us, it has a huge impact on our kids lives too</p> <p>Jai: When Eliza was born, we were shocked to hear she had a disability, but we managed</p> <p>Laurel: Given the choice, isn’t it better to be armed with the facts so we can properly decide whether we can cope?</p> <p>Laurel: Kids break your heart.... Parenting is a series of difficult decisions. We need to know what we’re dealing with to make informed choices</p>

30/11/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Signposting to DSA was only available on ITV website 15 mins post episode ending• DSA signposting only has phone number, no description of services provided, which is unlike ARC• Signposting only provided verbally at the end of each episode – This is not accessible for affected viewers who have DS, as they have a learning disability and research into their learning profile means they are better at visual rather than auditory processing• Doctor says, regarding CVS testing, “obviously It’s for you to decide how important that information might be to you” and Laurel responds “You mean whether or not I choose to have a termination?” and then the scene ends. This suggests that the purpose of antenatal screening and diagnostic testing is to determine whether or not to have a termination of pregnancy, and does not provide details of other reasons for testing, including determining whether additional monitoring and scans are required during pregnancy, or for parents to prepare for a baby with disabilities. This is directive and does not help significant existing issues around informed consent to antenatal screening and testing.
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