

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR ORAL REPLY
QUESTION 223**

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Mr A M Mpontshane to ask the Minister of Education:

Whether her department has any plans to reduce the huge increase in teenage pregnancies (a) in Western Cape schools, and (b) in other provinces; if not, why not; if so, what plans?

N1532E

REPLY:

Yes, my Department has programmes to prevent teenage pregnancies. Abstinence is the message we promote and we do this in many ways through the curriculum, in Life Orientation, Life Skills education, HIV and AIDS programmes, and human rights and values in the education.

The Girls Education Movement also encourages girls to choose abstinence. Our Boys' Empowerment Programme teaches learners about gender-based violence, masculinity, responsible sexuality, substance abuse, and loving relationships.

(a) In regard to the Western Cape, my Department has set in place an intra-departmental body called "the Teenage Strategic Committee". This committee monitors social behaviour and teenage pregnancy related issues.

(b) My Department is finalising "measures to prevent learner pregnancy in public school", which have been developed through an extensive process of consultation.

Some provincial education departments have developed their own policies on learner pregnancy and the Western Cape is one of them.