Really GREAT TEACHERS
make you feel that you, too, can become great

So what exactly is “gender”? And why are teachers expected to understand, and to respond to, issues linked to gender?

These are two questions that the national Department of Education (DoE) will be answering in this six-part Genderations series. These resources have been developed by the DoE especially to support teachers with gender-related issues that may occur in their schools.

The six Genderations editions will focus on two different matters linked to gender:
1. Preventing and managing learner pregnancy at schools
   The first three editions set out the DoE’s Measures for the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy.
   These Measures set out the role that educators should play to help reduce teen pregnancies even further. They also set out what procedures educators should follow if a schoolgirl does fall pregnant.
   The first three of the Genderations series will be filled with useful information from the DoE’s Measures document, as well as giving practical support to help teachers deal with this matter in the best way possible.

2. Preventing and managing sexual violence and harassment at schools
   The last three in the DoE’s Genderations series will focus on another area of critical importance linked to gender: sexual violence and harassment.
   The content for these three editions set out the DoE’s Guidelines for the Prevention and Management of Sexual Violence and Harassment in Public Schools.
   They will clearly define the range of acts that are seen as sexual violence and harassment, and the terrible effects that the victim can suffer.
   They will also set out strategies for schools that can help prevent such abuse from happening, as well as the procedures educators should follow in the event that an incident of sexual violence or harassment does occur.
   These three Genderations editions will also be full of information about practical support and resources available to educators when handling these difficult matters.

Collect all six of the Genderations series, and file them at school for future reference.
One In Four South African Women is HIV-Positive by Her 21st Birthday. The Rate of HIV Infection Among 15-19-year-olds has Been Doubled That of Their Peers. By the Age of 18, One in Four Women Has Given Birth. What could educators do to help teenagers like Clayton and Rosy (see story on the left)? LO teacher Ruth Shabangu has some suggestions.

First step: I used to arrange an after-school meeting with both Clayton and Rosy. Both teenagers needed to be reminded of the implications of their situation, and to be made fully aware of all the options open to them. This talk may take more than one meeting, but I would stress that the decision must be made urgently. If the couple decide to have the baby, there is a lot of groundwork that needs to be done before the baby is born. For example, arrangements need to be made so that Rosy gets her qualifications. At the same time, she would need time off from school to go for prenatal care, as well as to receive counseling from health professionals or parents. She will also have to prepare her family and home for the coming birth.

Second step: Once the couple had made their decision, my next responsibility would be to point them in the right direction for voluntary medical assistance and further counseling they may need.

Fourth step: I would also facilitate a follow-up private session with Rosy and Clayton (see if possible), to make sure she's coping if the situation appears to be getting out of control.

I refer to her organizations that provide appropriate expertise.

MISTAKES SHOULD NOT BE REPEATED! I'm very sympathetic towards adolescents. As much as I will remember, the transition from childhood to maturity adult's full major life-changes and challenges.