

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**ORAL REPLY**

**QUESTION 373.**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 30/08/2022**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 28/2022**

**373. Rev K R J Meshoe (ACDP) to ask the Minister of Basic Education: to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

(1) Whether, given that in the period 1 January to 31 March this year, 53 rapes occurred at primary and high schools, and one at a crèche according to the latest crime statistics, and that according to a certain clinical psychologist (name furnished), in more than 40% of cases of sexual abuse against children, including rape, the perpetrators are other children (details furnished), she has found that in establishing the curriculum on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE), there is any known causal link between the exposure of children to pornography and rape; if so, what are the relevant details;

(2) whether she has found that the CSE curriculum exacerbates the early and premature sexualisation of children which encourage them to explore their sexuality through masturbation and other means; if so, what are the relevant details?

## NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

### ORAL REPLY

#### QUESTION 373.

#### Response

(1) According to available research, Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE), has no causal link to the exposure of children to pornography and rape, instead CSE has been essential to the prevention and combating of sexual abuse against children, sexual violence and sexual exploitation. The importance of CSE to prevent children from falling prey to sexual offenders online was important during the period of confinement due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

(2) CSE Curriculum *does not* encourage learners to be sexually active, as this is not sex education, but CSE aims to equip children and young people with knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will empower them to realise their health, well-being and dignity; develop respectful social and sexual relationships; consider how their choices affect their own well-being and that of others and understand and increasing the protection of their rights throughout their lives.

The key components of the CSE are to increase HIV, STIs and TB knowledge and skills amongst learners, educators and officials; decrease risky sexual behaviour amongst learners, educators and officials and decrease barriers to retention in schools, in particular, for vulnerable learners.

Existing research suggests that comprehensive sexuality education might lead to less teen pregnancy, and there are no indications that it boosts the levels of sexual intercourse or sexually transmitted diseases, but promotes retention of girls in school, and consequently increases the potential to complete high school. The key messages in the curriculum focus on delaying sexual debut; establishing and maintaining healthy relationships and reduce gender inequality and gender-based harm and violence.