

MEC Dhlomo urges youth: delay sexual debut to ensure good health and personal growth

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KZN Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo has urged all young people to delay their sexual debut for as long as possible, saying that this is key to help them realise their potential, and to safeguard their positive educational and health outcomes.

"Do not use your bodies as insurance for marriage," he told learners from Fanelesibonge High School at Nquthu, at Umzinyathi District yesterday (05 May 2017).

"A child who falls pregnant at 15 is simply not ready to give birth. She is at risk of dying and also losing that baby, unless she delivers by caesarean section. Even then, there may be complications. And chances are, by the time she is 17, she will fall pregnant for the second time, and again have a third child at 21. And when the boy who has made her pregnant wants to take a wife, he will most likely pay lobolo for someone else. Rather pride yourself in your body by abstaining, and say, 'Let me finish school, go to university and study and find work before concerning myself with romantic relationships and the complications they bring.'"

MEC Dhlomo said young people who cannot abstain should rather use Dual Protection, which is a combination of medical male circumcision and using condoms during every sexual episode; while combining this with contraceptive methods for women.



MEC Dhlomo at Nquthu

"I plead with you to be responsible for your health. With the range of free health services available to the public, anyone who falls pregnant or gets infected with a sexually transmitted infection will only have themselves to blame."

MEC Dhlomo also advised girls and young women to spurn any excuses from their partners who do not want to use condoms.

"If you want to use condoms and your partner asks if this is because you don't 'trust' them, tell them that in fact this is because you don't trust yourself and you don't want to infect them."

Today's visit to Nquthu will be followed by a multi government department blitz in Nquthu on Wednesday, 10 May, as part of Operation Sukuma Sakhe (OSS), which is led by the Honourable Premier Mr Willies Mchunu.

OSS is a structured continuous interaction between Government and the community in a concerted bid to ensure integrated service delivery and the 12 National Outcomes of government. These include:

- Improved quality of basic education
- A long and healthy life for all South Africans.
- Skilled and capable workforce to support inclusive growth path.

Youth and women are the majority in the country and in this regard, should play a critical to support inclusive economic growth.

MEC Dhlomo, several amakhosi, izinduna and political leaders also distributed glasses, wheelchairs and food parcels to identified deserving community members.

The public is invited to attend Operation Sukuma Sakhe activities at Nquthu on 10 May 2017.