

MEDIA RELEASE

PSA demands government to urgently institute prosecutions on all Statutory Rape cases to reduce teen pregnancies

DATE

10 January 2025

EMBARGO

None

ENQUIRIES

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) regrettably noted the increased number of teenagers giving birth at numerous hospitals across the country. Many of these girls might be forced to stop schooling to take care of their children which condemns them to a bleak future of very limited employment opportunities.

The statistics of the newly born babies during festive seasons, i.e. Christmas and New Year are normally publicised which provides a bit of the window regarding the problem of teenage pregnancy. Using this information, one can conclude that during the year 2024, several teenagers also gave birth despite being underage. It was recorded that 80 teenagers gave birth on 1 January 2025, a figure which decreased from 190 that was recorded in 2024 although it is still concerning. Having children as early as 13 giving birth is an indictment on society as these children cannot be able to take care of their newly born children as they are children themselves. Further, statistics revealed that more than 122 000 teenagers gave birth this past financial year, with 2716 young girls aged 10 to 14 and 119 587 teens aged 15 to 19 facing parenthood while still being children themselves.

There is however no correlation between these shocking statistics of teenagers giving birth and statutory rape cases. Law provides that a minor cannot give consent to sexual activity, thus any sexual activity with a minor is a violation of that child and the perpetrator is criminally liable. The PSA calls for collaborative efforts between state organs such as the Department of Education, Department of Health, Department of Home Affairs, Department of Social Development, Department of Justice as well as South African Police to address this societal problem. Progressive legislations have been promulgated but the scourge of teenage pregnancy is still thriving.

The PSA urges government to investigate and prosecute those who partake in concealing these pregnancies by facilitating negotiations between the families, irrespective of their stature in the community. The PSA as a leader in society emphasizes that statutory rape is a crime and should be treated as such and taken seriously to ensure that the rate of teenage pregnancy in South Africa is reduced.

END