



Western Cape
Government

Department of Health and Wellness

#YOUTH MONTH

June 2022 Toolkit

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1 Background

Youth month in South Africa is annually celebrated on June 16, a day dedicated to honouring the sacrifice made by youth during the Soweto Uprising in 1976. This is an opportunity to reflect on the obstacles and concerns facing young people, as well as their tenacity resilience and courage in confronting these challenges.¹

Youth are regarded as a valuable resource in shaping society. With support and youth empowerment, youth can be enabled to become active members of society. Youth month and beyond, following a 365-day approach youth provides many opportunities to recognise youth for the role played towards building a resilient, inclusive, and endearing culture to shape the present and future.

2 Defining Youth

According to the National Youth Policy 2020-2030 Youth is defined as those aged between 14 and 35 years. This definition is consistent with the African Youth Charter. The age limit of 35 remains due to the need to fully address historical imbalances in South Africa (SA).²

3 Theme

The proposed theme for youth month is: ***“Promoting sustainable livelihood and resilience of young people for a better tomorrow”***.³

4 Status of Youth

Youth make up about 34,7% or 20,66 million of the 59,62 million South African population. The youth population is projected to reach about sixty-two million by 2023 and grow to 63 to 66 million by 2025.⁴ In the Western Cape (WC) about 58 per cent of the population is below the age of 35.⁵

Unemployment is among the key challenges faced by Youth in SA. In addition to youth unemployment further factors limit the upward mobility of youth. These include:

- Lack of education and skills.

¹ Youth Month concept document. Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities. Available in accompanying zip folder

² National Youth Policy 2020-2030. Available in zip folder.

³ See footnote 1

⁴ See footnote 1

⁵ Mid-year population estimates. 2019. Available at <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0302/P03022019.pdf>

- Gender-based violence and femicide.
- Mental Health Issues.
- Youth poverty.⁶

The factors above affect youth disproportionately such as youth with disabilities and LGBTIQ+⁷ youth. Exclusion, isolation, bullying, discrimination is among the experiences faced which has a direct impact on the financial, mental and physical wellbeing of youth. These experiences are noted as threats to the health and wellbeing of youth.⁸

The factors above may further be seen to have an impact on the increasing teenage pregnancy rate in SA. Teenage pregnancy has social consequences for youth in that it may contribute to continuing the cycle of poverty including early school dropout.⁹

According to a recent report by Stats SA, around 33 000 teens and children gave birth to babies registered in 2020.¹⁰ Research argues that sexual violence is strongly associated with increased risk of unintended pregnancy.¹¹

In Sub – Saharan Africa (SSA) 30 to 40% of unintended pregnancy end in induced abortion where 3 out of 4 abortions are classified as unsafe.¹² Termination of pregnancy rates are on the rise in the Western Cape.¹³

5 Adolescent Health

Adolescents aged 10-19 represent a significant proportion of the South African population at 17,4% and contribute to 2,1% of the total mortality.¹⁴ This age group is important as they represent the future work force contributing to the economic development of society. The challenges faced connect to the above highlighting:

- Mental health
- Substance use

⁶ See footnote 2

⁷ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer +

⁸ See footnote 2

⁹ Teenage pregnancy. 2022. Western Cape Government. Available at <https://www.westerncape.gov.za/general-publication/teenage-pregnancy>

¹⁰ Number of child, teen moms soar - Stat SA. 2021. Available at <https://www.news24.com/news24/southafrica/local/peoples-post/number-of-child-teen-moms-soar-stat-sa-20211123>

¹¹ See footnote 10

¹² Contraception needs and pregnancy termination in sub-Saharan Africa: a multilevel analysis of demographic and health survey data. Adde, K.S., Dickson, K.S., Ameyaw, E.K. et al. *Reprod Health* 18, 177 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12978-021-01227-3>

¹³ See footnote 14

¹⁴ The Young and the Restless – Adolescent Health in SA. 2022. Available at <https://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=15261>

- Early and unprotected sex with multiple partners that increases risk of acquiring HIV infections, other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) as well as teenage pregnancy.¹⁵

Research findings in a report, *profiling health challenges by adolescents (10-19 years) in SA* suggests that the leading causes of adolescent deaths are external linked to accidents, assault, contact with an object and traffic accidents followed by infectious diseases such as HIV and Tuberculosis (TB) as well as respiratory diseases such as influenza.¹⁶

The overall health challenges listed in the above report include:

- Teenage pregnancy and births in facilities,
- termination of pregnancy,
- male circumcision,
- cancer,
- mental health,
- disability,
- road traffic fatalities and causes of death.¹⁷

5.1 Adolescent Youth Friendly Services (AYFS)

- To address these challenges Adolescent Youth Friendly Services (AYFS) have been implemented in SA and closer to home in the Western Cape following a whole of government, whole of society approach. This aligns to the National Adolescent and Youth Health Programme that aims to see a reduction in maternal, child, infant and neonatal mortalities.
- This includes the following outputs:
 - Reduction and prevention of teenage pregnancy
 - Reduction in deliveries of 10–14-year-olds
 - Training of Health care workers on mandatory reporting of child abuse and Children's Act 50 of 2005.¹⁸
- Efforts in the Western Cape include¹⁹:

¹⁵ See footnote 14

¹⁶ See footnote 14

¹⁷ See footnote 14 or access the full report here <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/03-09-15/03-09-152022.pdf>

¹⁸ National Adolescent and Youth Health (NAYH) Programme. Available on request.

¹⁹ See footnote 10

- Sexual and Reproductive Health initiatives driven by the Western Cape Government Health and Wellness promoting “working together to end inequalities, promote sexual reproductive health services, sexually transmitted infections prevention and condom utilization.”²⁰
- Adolescent Youth Friendly Services (AYFS) at Health care facilities in the Western Cape to impact a reduction in HIV, TB and teenage pregnancy.²¹
- Implementation of parenting and family strengthening support programmes driven by the Department of Social Development (DSD).
- Child protection services by DSD that includes prevention and early intervention programmes for children and teenagers at risk as well as those in need of psychosocial support.
- Support and education channelled via the Department of Education.

These efforts are further strengthened through partnerships with civil society organisations.

6 Objective of the Toolkit

- This toolkit covers a variety of youth related topics that can be accessed to address challenges faced by youth. The reader can choose key messages and Information, Education and Communication (IEC) material most suited for their setting to:
 - Raise awareness of the upcoming Youth month and key aspects youth face.
 - Support the public health agenda by aligning Youth month activities.
 - To empower with information, guided by global, national and provincial approaches.
 - To capacitate the health promoters and partners with information that they can use when imparting knowledge to the public and assist.

7 Target audience for this toolkit

- The target audience for this toolkit is twofold:
 - a) The toolkit user target group
 - Facility based staff and Health Promoters working in health facilities in the Western Cape.

²⁰ Reproductive Health Month. See Zip folder for National Health STI Month concept document

²¹ Western Cape Government Health launch Youth Friendly Services. 2017. Available at <https://www.westerncape.gov.za/news/western-cape-government-health-launch-youth-friendly-services>

- Community Liaison Officers in the Metro and Rural health services.
- Community Health Care Workers.
- Western Cape on Wellness (WoW!) Champions to share with their members.
- Relevant Partners.

b) The toolkit target audience (group that can benefit from the information)

- Young people aged 14 to 35 years from various localities and socio-economic conditions.
- General population.

8 Channels of communication

- The toolkit will be shared with the target audience (toolkit users) via email.
- The recipients could then use the information in the toolkit to inform youth activities or dialogues during Youth Month and beyond.
- Key messages and IEC material used in this toolkit can be shared via social media pages and shared with followers on social media platforms such as Facebook via the Departmental page (Western Cape Government Health), Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp among others.
- The suggested hashtag for all social media posts is **#Youthmonth2022**.

9 Suggested activities to promote #YouthMonth2022

- Organise a youth dialogue to raise awareness on Adolescent Youth Friendly services and how/where to access these services promoting access to the services.
- Community outreach and dialogues with adolescent men (targeted approach).
- Awareness drive using data to inform activities at local level (Social mobilisation)
- Arrange Health talks at the facility or at community level, providing health education and awareness on sexual reproductive health (SRH), gender-based violence, financial wellness, and mental health among other key topics.
- Participate in the Adolescent Youth Friendly Services Induction Departmental webinars on 8 June 2022 and 12 July 2022. Please see webinar details in zipfolder.
- Health care worker sensitisation on SRH and prevention strategies.
- Explore key population activations e.g., young men having Sex with Men (MSM), young people with disability, young women.
- **#YouthMonth** activities can include having information tables, sharing of IEC material, sharing information in the toolkit via email, among others.
- Display posters and information on noticeboards in health facilities or relevant sites e.g., Youth friendly zones.

10 Measures of Success

- Feedback from the toolkit users on its usefulness can be provided to the Provincial Wellness team (Ferdinand.Bomvana@westerncape.gov.za or Karen.Nieuwoudt@westerncape.gov.za) to explore and include aspects to address respective needs.
- To measure the success of the toolkit implementation and activities sharing with partners and target audience, through mentioned channels is a first step.
- Feedback reports can further be used to document successes and measure impact. Showcase activities in the reports by adding picture with the relevant permission.
- For the above purposes, as an example the following indicators can be used:
 - Number of beneficiaries for activities
 - Number of key messages or IEC material distributed via different platforms, including social media.
 - For social media sharing on platforms, statistics can be gathered to identify number of views, likes or engagement on the platforms.

11 Key messages

- The following material can be used to raise awareness on sexual reproductive health. Use the suggested key messages to start conversations and refer to the suggested material in the zip folder for more details.

11.1 Raise awareness on STI's, Condoms and Pregnancy

- Use the below to raise awareness and see STI, and teenage pregnancy leaflet in zip folder.
 - Condoms prevent transmission by reducing the risk of exposure to HIV or STIs during sex. Laboratory studies show that the materials used to make most

condoms (such as nitrile, latex, polyurethane, and polyisoprene) do not allow bacteria, viruses, or other germs to pass through them.

- Therefore, condoms act as a barrier to HIV and STI infection by preventing the mouth, vagina, penis, and rectum from being exposed to:
 - bodily fluids (such as semen, vaginal fluid, and rectal fluid) that can contain HIV and STIs and/or skin infected by an STI (such as herpes and syphilis sores or genital warts).²²
- Use the below educational messages on STI, Condoms and Pregnancy.²³

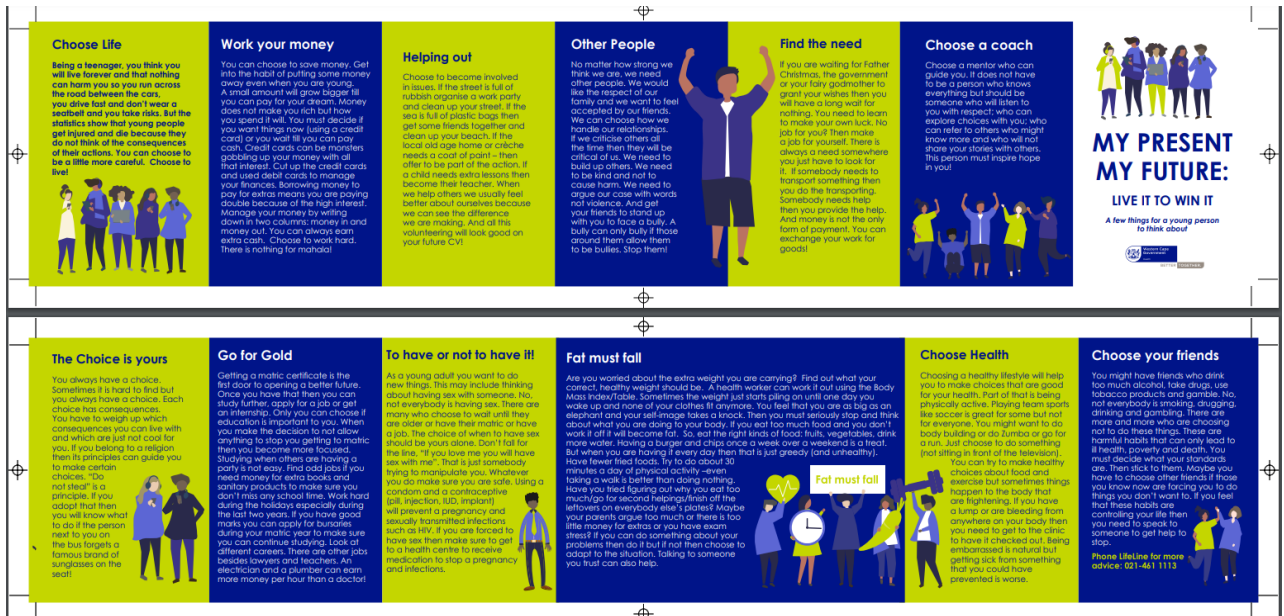
STI & CONDOM MESSAGES	PREGNANCY EDUCATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Abstain and delay the beginning of the FIRST sexual debut - Be mutually faithful to one sexual partner - Use condoms correctly and consistently every time you have sex to protect yourself from unwanted pregnancy and STI, including HIV - Know your HIV status by testing every three months - Know signs and symptoms of STIs (burning urine, abdominal pains, smelling discharge and sores around the genitals) - Seek medical help with the sign of STIs - Inform your partner/s when infected with STIs to receive early treatment - Always communicate your health status (including HIV and TB status) to the healthcare provider to receive appropriate intervention and for you and your partner to be checked and tested for STIs including HIV - Know your TB status by going for TB screening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Know your HIV and TB status and that of your partner before planning pregnancy - Plan pregnancies before 35 years of age to decrease the risk of foetal abnormalities - Abstain and delay sexual activity and other risky behaviours (multiple partners/drugs/alcohol abuse) as a young person - Use contraception in addition to the use of condoms - Always use condoms correctly and consistently when having sex even during pregnancy - Eat healthy and exercise regularly - Stop drinking any alcohol, smoking, or taking illicit drugs to prevent foetal abnormalities - Stop self-medication /taking any medication not prescribed by the health care provider. Take and adhere to prescribed medication - Take folic acid together with your contraceptive method three months before pregnancy to prevent foetal abnormalities - Be aware of your health status and medical condition before planning pregnancy - Visit the nearest health care facility when not feeling well - If HIV positive and pregnant, take and adhere to antiretroviral (ARV) treatment, to stay healthy and to prevent infecting the child with HIV - Carry your Health Card when going to the facility

²² See footnote 20

²³ See footnote 20

11.2 Highlight a Young person's choices

- Use the leaflet on a young person's choices to empower youth. Attached in zip folder and image below.



11.3 Raise Awareness on emergency contraception

- Use and share the below infographic on Emergency contraception (see zip folder to access infographic).
- The below will help in engaging young people as users of Sexual reproductive Health services.

Emergency Contraception

Did you have unprotected sex?
 Did you have sex against your will?
 Did the condom break during sexual intercourse?
 Did you forget to take the pill?

If yes

- Do not worry. Go to the clinic and ask for emergency contraception (the morning after pill).
- Emergency contraception prevents an unplanned pregnancy.
- Emergency contraception must be taken as soon after unprotected sex as possible but within **5 days**.
- It is safe to use it as many times as needed.
- Side effects are not severe.
- It does not reduce the likelihood of pregnancy in the future.

Emergency contraception is available at all primary health care facilities on weekdays during working hours.

For access after-hours and on weekends, please visit Vanguard Community Health Centre (Southern Western Sub-Structure), Michael Mapongwana Community Health Centre (Khayelitsha Eastern Sub-Structure, Mitchells Plain Community Health Centre - (Klipfontein Mitchells Plain Sub-Structure, or Kraaifontein Community Health Centre (Northern Tygerberg Sub-Structure).



11.4 Speak to a Health care worker about TOP

- Use the below flyer as a key message to encourage talking to a health care worker about safe and legal termination of pregnancy (TOP). This flyer is included in the attached zip folder.

SPEAK TO ONE OF OUR HEALTH WORKERS IF YOU WANT A SAFE & LEGAL TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY.

- A health worker will confirm if you are pregnant by doing a free pregnancy test
- You will receive counselling about your decision
- If you decide to terminate the pregnancy you will be referred to a specific facility for a safe, legal termination
- After the procedure you will receive advice about contraceptives
- When you are ready to fall pregnant then you can stop using the contraceptives

Let's look after your health together. Do not consider back street abortions. They are dangerous and can lead to serious health complications. Discuss termination of pregnancy with a health worker.



12 Additional resources

- Integrated Youth Development Strategy. Available at https://static.pmg.org.za/210602_NYDA_IYDS.pdf
- Directory of Services for Victims of Crime and Violence. Available at https://www.westerncape.gov.za/assets/departments/social-development/vep.directory.of_services.2021_0.pdf
- Family Planning (Contraception). Western Cape Government. Available at <https://www.westerncape.gov.za/site-page/family-planning>

13 Reference list

- Youth Month concept document. Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities. Available in accompanying zip folder.
- National Youth Policy 2020-2030. Available in zip folder.
- Mid-year population estimates. 2019. Available at <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0302/P03022019.pdf>.

- Teenage pregnancy. 2022. Western Cape Government. Available at <https://www.westerncape.gov.za/general-publication/teenage-pregnancy>
- Number of child, teen moms soar - Stat SA. 2021. Available at <https://www.news24.com/news24/southafrica/local/peoples-post/number-of-child-teen-moms-soar-stat-sa-20211123>.
- Contraception needs and pregnancy termination in sub-Saharan Africa: a multilevel analysis of demographic and health survey data. Adde, K.S., Dickson, K.S., Ameyaw, E.K. et al. *Reprod Health* 18, 177 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12978-021-01227-3>.
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- Reproductive Health Month. See Zip Folder for National Health concept document.
- Western Cape Government Health launch Youth Friendly Services. 2017. Available at <https://www.westerncape.gov.za/news/western-cape-government-health-launch-youth-friendly-services>.

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