

## Teenage Pregnancy

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Every year, over 20 million girls between 15 and 19 fall pregnant in the third world. To improve the chances of prevention of pregnancy, teenagers should be education and allowed to make free decisions about their sexual and reproductive health and well-being, according to the South African Medical Research Council.

Yesterday I interviewed one of the teenagers from Grahamstown High Street, her name is Nthabiseng Nkonyane. She mentioned factors that cause teenage pregnancy. She mentioned being sexually active at a young age, the lack of contraceptive information, and that some pregnancies are due to rape or sexual abuse, but that some teenagers will make an excuse and say contraceptives make them sick, without them trying to use them.

She also said that teenagers are struggling since she has friends who are struggling and she said, "My friends will miss classes, and for them to find some people who will help them with their kids is a struggle." She also said, "I just feel like we cannot help people not to have sex but the only thing that can do is to [advise them to] take their parents' advice or take contraceptives because you can be a baby[mama] while you're still a baby."

She said, "Mentally and physically wise, they are not prepared, they need their parents' support, in some case[s] when the child cries they also cry. As [a] consequence, you must just drop out of school and you might give up on life, you might continue doing bad things."

As for society, people need to at least complete matric because without matric it affects society, they cannot employ anyone in highly skilled positions. The effect of having a baby at a young age is nothing to glorify, whether you have a support system or not. This is because it is like we entertain teenage pregnancy. Teenage pregnancy adds to the rate of girls dropping out of college as only 50% of teenage mothers graduate from high school compared to 90% of non-pregnant adolescent women, according to sources such as the Center for Disease Control.

*This article is an opinion piece submitted on 28 March 2023. The views expressed by the author do not necessarily reflect those of Karibu! Online or Khanya College. You may republish this article, so long as you credit the authors and Karibu! Online ([www.Karibu.org.za](http://www.Karibu.org.za)), and do not change the text. Please include a link back to the original article.*