

Handout A: teenage pregnancy and contraception¹

Teachers, health workers and social workers have noticed a steep rise in recent years in the number of teen pregnancies occurring among young women attending a publicly funded high school for ages 12 to 16.

The high school has a sexual education module, delivered as part of the Health and Physical Education curriculum strand. This module describes human reproduction and has some coverage of relationship issues, but from a framework of sexual abstinence before marriage and monogamy afterwards. The Department of Education requires that all schools provide sexuality education but schools are able to develop their own individual learning and teaching programs.

There is a local family planning office, but it is not being used by young women.

The school and community members have expressed concern at the rise in teen pregnancies and are looking for support in understanding why this is occurring and how they might prevent it.

¹ This case study is based on the situation in relation to sexuality education in schools in the State of Victoria, Australia, but is intended as a generic example.