

# Causes of Teenage Pregnancy in Kakamega Central Sub-County, Kenya

## Abstract.

Teenage pregnancy is a global concern with far reaching impacts on education and the health status of the girl child. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) reports about 21 million cases of teenage pregnancy are recorded annually with majority of the cases being reported in Sub-Sahara Africa. Kenya is among the countries in Sub-Sahara Africa affected the burden of teenage pregnancy. It is estimated that approximately 3000 girls drop out of school annually in Kenya due to teenage pregnancy. Among the Counties in Kenya, Kakamega is one of the most affected in terms of teenage pregnancies. Hence this study aimed at identifying the root causes behind the high cases of teenage pregnancies in Kakamega Central Sub-County. The study was conducted in the 17 secondary public schools in Kakamega Central Sub-County. Structured questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data from principals, expectant teens and teen mothers, guidance and counseling teachers and class teachers. The collected data was analyzed on descriptive and frequencies using the statistical package of social sciences (SPSS) version 20. The analyzed data showed that peer pressure, poverty levels, parental negligence, drug abuse, ignorance among the adolescents and bodaboda riders are among the causes of teenage pregnancies in the region. The study showed that, Peer pressure among the adolescents, sexual violence, parental inefficiencies/ negligence and drug abuse were the most prominent causes of teenage pregnancies in the region. Bodaboda means of transport was also emerging as a new cause of teenage pregnancy in the region. As a measure to control or reduce the cases of experienced teenage pregnancies in Kakamega Sub-County and the entire Country, the study proposes frequent awareness of peer pressure and sexual education both in schools and in our homes so that the children are well exposed to the dangers of early sexual activities. The County government and the National government should empower the families below the poverty levels so that the parents are able to provide the basic and social needs to their adolescent girl children. The issue of bodaboda riders luring the young girls into sexual activities and resulting to early teenage pregnancies should be handled seriously by the court of law such that the culprits are dealt with by the full wrath of the law

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