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BABY DUMPING

Sex education is the key

YET another abandoned newborn has been found, this time in Nilai ("Month-old baby abandoned at flats" — NST, Feb 4).

An average of 100 babies are abandoned a year, based on reports filed with the police. What about the number disposed of without a trace?

It also does not take into account the number of abortions in private clinics.

The baby found at the flats in Nilai was lucky in that she was wrapped and was still alive.

Babies dumped in churches, mosques and temples have survived. However, babies dumped in toilet bowls, rubbish dumps and abandoned buildings have not.

Babies are dumped by unwed mothers and under-aged girls who are young, naive, immature and frightened.

The pregnant girls find themselves in a difficult situation. Most dump the babies for fear of being disowned by their families.

Steps have to be taken to remedy this situation. Young

girls have to be told clearly and vividly that premarital sex is a sin.

The trauma of going through an abortion or an unwanted pregnancy and dumping the unwanted baby will haunt them for the rest of their lives.

Sex education should be introduced to schools at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Boys and girls should be given adequate instruction on sexually transmissible diseases (HIV among others), unwanted pregnancies (teenage

pregnancies) and the sanctity of marriage (sex within confines of marriage only).

When unwed girls find themselves pregnant there is virtually no help from the family.

These girls should be able to seek help and guidance from the authorities, such as the Welfare Department and the Women, Family and Community Development Ministry, who should counsel the family to accept the inevitable truth.

They should be referred to non-governmental organisa-

tions such as Kewaja, which looks after the welfare of these unwed mothers during their predicament.

A strong religious and moral foundation has to be instilled in children during their formative years.

Sex and sexuality are taboo subjects in our society but depriving children of sex education will only result in more cases of teenage pregnancies and dumping of babies.

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