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Compulsory sex education for all from Year One next year

KUALA LUMPUR: Sex education will be taught in all primary schools from Year One next year.

Called Social and Reproductive Health Education, the component will be taught for 30 minutes every week during Physical and Health Education lessons, said Deputy Education Minister Datuk Dr Wee Ka Siong. It will be compulsory for all pupils.

Earlier last week, Wee said sex education would be taught in secondary schools as part of the curriculum from next year. However, he said it would be introduced in primary schools as well.

"This new component will be taught to pupils from Years One to Six," he said.

He said the sex education component would focus on family values and protecting oneself, and not merely on sex.

He said sex education was first introduced four years ago in secondary schools as part of co-curricular activities. The module is called "I'm in Control".

The module will continue to be used, with focus on high-risk groups, HIV and other social issues.

This is in addition to the sex education that will be introduced in all secondary schools.

"The module is not compulsory but classroom lessons are," Wee said. He said the sex education component would be taught for 40 minutes weekly in secondary schools during Physical and Health Education classes.

During these sessions, he said, pupils would learn about the reproductive system, precautions, learning to say no and sexually transmitted diseases.

"If a pupil is out for lunch with someone, at least he or she will know how to behave appropriately. It is to create awareness."

For years, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) pushed the Government to introduce sex education in schools. They had said the government could give the subject any other name so that people would be more comfortable with it.

Wee said the subject would be taught by teachers who had undergone training.

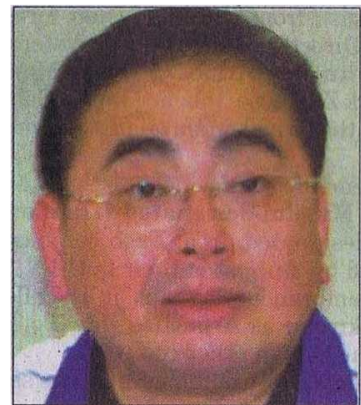
He added that the Ministry had enough competent teachers to teach the subject.

"Now, it is a matter of exposing them to the subject content."

This new social and reproductive health education component is part of the new curriculum called Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Rendah, which will be introduced from next year.

Wee said the content of the social and reproductive health component was designed after discussion with NGOs and other players.

"We gathered feedback from all parties, including parents, before reviewing the Physical and Health Education textbooks."



Dr Wee