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No sex subject

Puad: It's already covered in the school curriculum

SEX education will not be taught as a specific subject in schools as it is covered in many other subjects, the Dewan Negara was told.

Deputy Education Minister Dr Puad Zarkashi said sex education, also known as the Reproductive Health and Social subject, was covered in biology, science, additional science, moral education and Islamic education, among others.

The ministry, he said, was in the process of training some teachers in the subject at the national level, adding that they could in turn teach their counterparts at state level.

"The main training provides exposure on the implementation of reproductive health and social subject so that a suitable teaching and learning approach can be found," he said in reply to Senator Doris Sophia Brodi.

Dr Puad said the role of parents was

vital in ensuring its success.

"Parents' openness in discussing matters related to sex with their children and support from other parties could enhance the effectiveness of the curriculum in schools," he added.

"It will reduce the sensitivity of the subject to enable it to be accepted as a natural process that must be seen in the correct perspective."

In an immediate response, National Union of the Teaching Profession (NUTP) secretary-general Lok Yim Pheng said teachers should be properly trained to implement the existing sex education modules under the Reproductive Health and Social sub-

ject (Pendidikan Kesihatan Reproduktif dan Sosial) in primary and secondary schools.

She said the subject was already being taught over one period in both primary and secondary schools on a weekly basis.

"The set of modules which was given by the ministry to schools in 2006 is a comprehensive teaching guide on various areas, including gender, HIV and AIDS," she said when contacted yesterday.

Lok said the union was in full support of the ministry on the matter, adding that it was important to ensure that the ministry trained teachers to impart knowledge on the subject properly.

"The ministry should also ensure the social part (of the subject) is not neglected. It is important for students to learn about respecting each other too," she said.