

Speech by KZN Health MEC, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo on the occasion of the launch of the Sugar Daddy Billboards at Hlabisa in UMkhanyakude District

19 January 2012

We recognise and thank all the Leadership; Izinduna; Amakhansela; Abefundisi and all the responsible men who have come to support this campaign aimed at stopping all the abuse and misuse of the young girls in our communities.

Our Honourable Premier, Dr Zweli Mkhize has given his full blessing and support in this exercise and is pleased that we chose to launch this campaign here at UMkhanyakude District which is a Frontier district that is very wide and bordered by Mozambique, Swaziland and also connects to other Districts and Provinces within our country.

Dear citizens, it is a big worry and great concern to all of us that this Presidential Node District has an **HIV and AIDS prevalence of 41.9%**. In real terms the HIV epidemic has reached catastrophic proportions in this District

It is also with sadness and trepidation in which we note and report that **51, 3%** of the adults who die in this District perish as a result of HIV and AIDS. For the same adult group **TB** has its own fair share of **7. 8%**.

The children also fall victim of these twin maladies with **21, 8%** dying of HIV and AIDS; TB accounting for **5, 1 %** and **3, 8%** decimated at prematurity.

Programme Director, allow me to also inform the citizens here that giving birth has ceased to be a time of joy and celebration in this District as just last year alone **18 mothers died** because they made a *'mistake'* of falling pregnant!

It is in this District that it is truly demonstrated that the ability of young women to protect themselves from HIV is compromised by a combination of biological, social, cultural and economic factors.

The worst scandal of all is the issue of teenage pregnancy which is brought about what we are here for today. It is shocking that just last year alone in our health care facilities we saw **1575 births** being delivered by girls under the age of 18.

Where we are at Hlabisa, we also have these terrifying figures:

YOUTH PREGNANCY AT HIGH SCHOOLS AROUND HLABISA FROM JANUARY - DECEMBER 2011

HIGH SCHOOL	GRADE 8	GRADE 9	GRADE 10	GRADE 11	GRADE 12	TOTAL
SHIYINKOSI	-	5	2	6	2	15
NONDUMISO	-	1	3	12	9	25
SOMFULA	-	-	2	4	-	6
MMISO	-	-	1	1	-	2
GODLOZA	5	-	4	6	5	20
SIBONGAKONKEE	2	-	4	10	5	21
KWABULAWAYO	-	-	-	1	6	7
MBOPHA	-	-	-	1	5	6
GRAND TOTAL	7	6	16	41	32	102

Now allow me to inform you what really happens when a teenage girl falls pregnant:

- She hides pregnancy for as long as possible feasible as she fears the wrath of the parents
- She books late on not at all for Antenatal care, thus missing every opportunity of clinical intervention for illnesses that encroach on her or the baby
- Those that present themselves for delivery normally have Pregnancy complications e.g. PIH complicating to eclampsia, UTI, and are mostly found to be HIV positive
- They also normally experience difficulty during labour due to anxiety
- At post-delivery stage we also see a lot of Cot deaths due to these girls not able to handle babies properly
- Child Feeding Problems are also a norm as these are children themselves
- In almost all instances these girls are not in possession of identity documents and this has negative bearing on:
 - = child's identity
 - = Child Support Grant
- Lastly, teenage pregnancy means goodbye to school and hello to perpetual misery, dependency and helplessness.

Programme Director, the above clearly illustrates the damage and harm the SUGAR DADDY syndrome brings about in our communities.

There also has been a study conducted by CAPRISA that informs us that teenage girls are not impregnated by boys their age. If school going age girls were sleeping with boys their age, they would simply just fall pregnant and it would end there but now horror of horrors, they also test HIV positive.

CAPRISA informs us that:

- at ages 10 ---14 both boys and girls are all HIV negative
- at 15 ---19 boys are still safe but 6 out of 100 girls test HIV positive
- at 20 ---24, 8 out of 100 girls now test positive with boys following at 3 per 100
- at 25 ---29 boys overtake the girls at 9 per 100 whilst girls are starting a decline

What this means is that at an early age elder males sleep with young girls but then at 20 to 24 girls start realizing their folly and revert to boys their age not knowing that they have already been infected. The vicious circle then begins!

Through this Bill Board Sugar Daddy Campaign we are then saying, let caring and responsible men revolutionize the whole HIV prevention effort.

As men, let us ensure that none amongst us prey on the young vulnerable ones.

Let us debate this issue among ourselves, let us name and shame men who are bent on deflowering the pride our nation – let us isolate them!

We all have a task of reducing new infections. We have to use all avenues open to accomplish this. It is very worrying that out of all Circumcision Camps that have been opened and operational at Bethesda; Manguzi; Mosvold; Mseleni and Hlabisa, only **3084** young men have come forward to partake! Where are the real men who know and appreciate that circumcision means cleanliness?

Let it be the responsibility of us as men to drastically reduce to sexual transmission of HIV.

Let us agree that no one else except men can put an end to the AIDS-related maternal deaths

We all know that HIV epidemic is associated with a number of behaviours that put women at risk of acquiring HIV. These include the inconsistent condom use and unprotected sex; sexual violence; transactional sex; migration; remaining unmarried while sexually active; multiple sexual partnerships as well as the high level of alcohol consumption leading to reckless sexual engagements.

Real men must take responsibility in ending gender inequality and violence against women.

Phansi no Sugar Daddy Phansi!!!

Bantwana bamantombazane you are fortunate that you are in the District that offers Nursing training in 5 of its Hospitals:

- Manguzi - Midwifery
- Bethesda - Bridging Course and PHC Nursing
- Mseleni - Enrolled Nursing Auxiliary
- Mosvold - Enrolled Nursing Auxiliary

- Hlabisa - Bridging Course and Enrolled Nursing Auxiliary

You are also blessed that you are in the District that initiated the Umthombo Wolwazi Youth Development Foundation which was established as Friends of Mosvold in 1995 to facilitate health development and to inspire learners to dream about what seemed impossible for children growing up in these deep rural areas of uMkhanyakude district. In 1998 it became a scholarship scheme to solve long term problem of qualified health care professional and to date it has produced 118 graduates which are now serving communities here as Doctors; Pharmacists; Dentists and Nurses.

Shiya phansi u Sugar Daddy and dream big!!