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# Will teaching about birds and bees in school sting students?

By Shanti Gunaratnam

shanti@nst.com.my

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Are teachers trained to teach sex education in schools?

National Union of the Teaching Profession (NUTP) general secretary Lok Yim Pheng says no.

Former union general secretary Datuk N. Siva Subramaniam says yes.

Siva Subramaniam said: "Teachers are trained to do so. Who has done research to say teachers are not prepared to teach sex education in schools?"

"Sex education must be taught simply because a lot of children are starting to have sex as early as 10 and, frankly, many of them do not know what they are doing.

"Teachers are the best people to help them understand things. The Education Ministry has been studying this issue for more than a decade, but nothing has transpired. It should not drag its feet any longer."

Lok said, however, that it was not a teacher's job to teach students

about the "birds and bees".

"That is the role of parents. To teach sex education in schools, we should get someone with a medical background and with sound religious knowledge.

"However, sex education will not help curb social ills among the young. The onus is on the parents to keep an eye on their children and their activities."

She said parents, and not teacher, should spend more time with their children.

"Once students leave the school compound, we cannot monitor them. And, mind you, they are not having sex in schools.

"Let the ministry study the matter and get the right people for the job."

The NUTP is the country's biggest teachers' union representing 160,000 teachers.

Deputy Education Minister Datuk Wee Ka Siong said there were counsellors in school to talk to students about sex.

"I agree with Lok's suggestion that experts should be brought in to teach sex education in schools. But



Experts can be brought in to teach this sensitive subject in schools.

as a parent, I feel sex education should somehow be incorporated into the syllabus.

"There is a group headed by the director-general of Education studying the matter."

Sex education has become an important issue of late, with an in-

creasing number of unwed mothers, many of them students, and cases of abandoned babies.

Women, Family and Community Development Minister Senator Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil had said that she would push for the introduction of sex educa-

tion in schools.

"It has to be speeded up. We had submitted the proposed curriculum to the ministry several years ago. We must not sweep the issue under the carpet just because we are shy. This cannot be delayed any more."