



# Policy Poster 7: ROLES



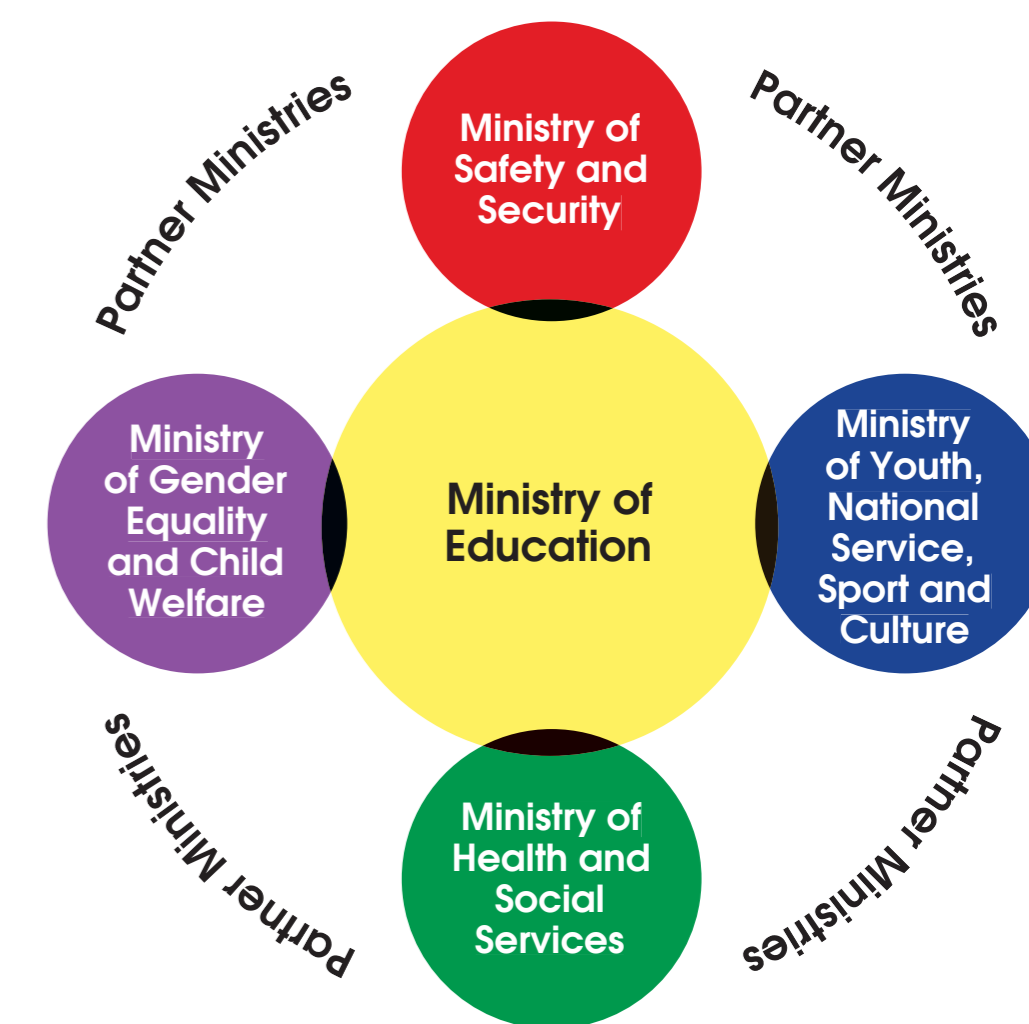
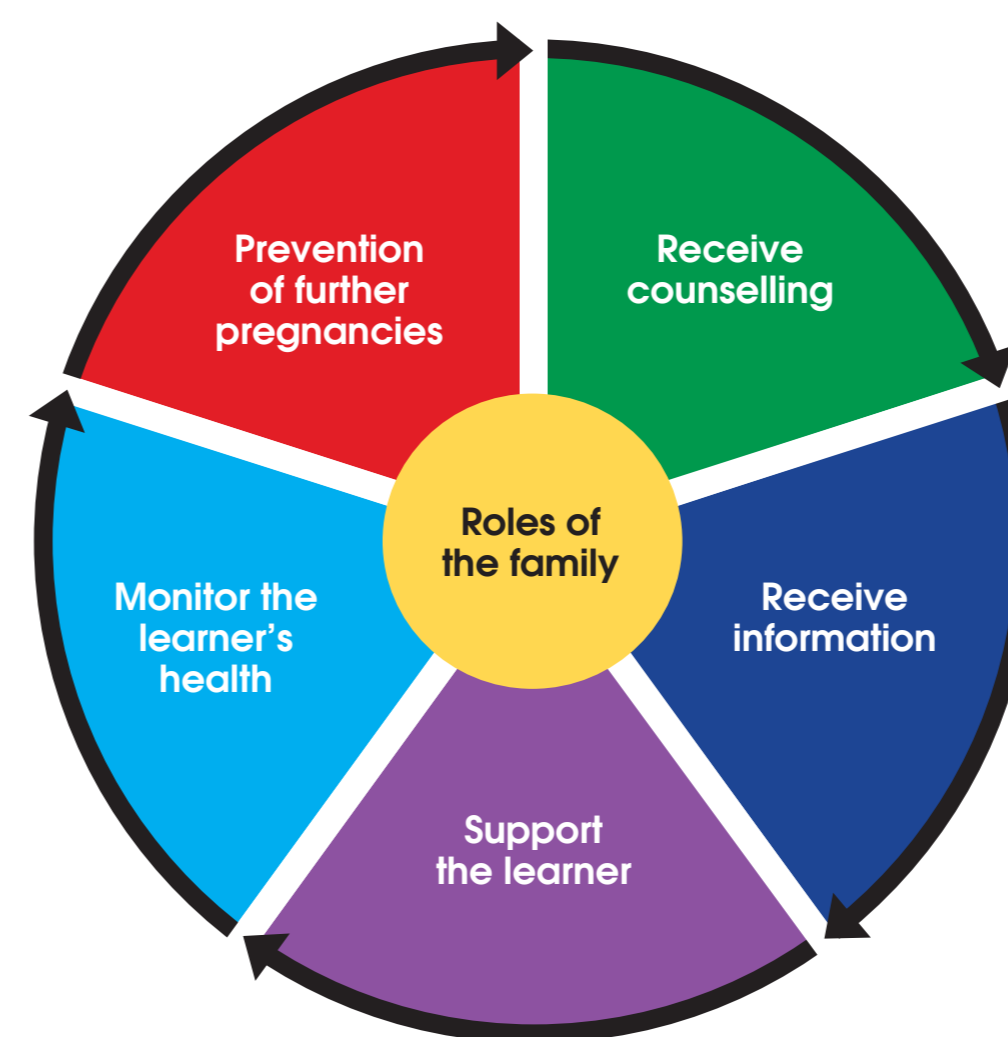
Poster produced by the Legal Assistance Centre for the Ministry of Education, with support from the Ministry's HIV and AIDS Management Unit. Windhoek, Namibia, May 2013

## Education Sector Policy on the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy

### Roles of the School

Schools shall **provide support to pregnant learners, expectant learner-fathers and learner-parents** in the following ways:

- **Psychosocial support:** The school shall encourage learners to finish their education, support them with parenting skills, and monitor and evaluate how the learners are coping.
- **Educational support:**
  - The school shall be flexible on school attendance by tolerating occasional absences, and shall be flexible on participation in extra-curricular activities and physical training.
  - Class teachers shall provide curriculum packages for use during the pregnant learner's or learner-mother's leave of absence, and upon her re-entry to school, if she requests this, to help her to keep up with the syllabus. The school shall also help her to find tutoring assistance if needed.
  - If learner-parents are unwilling or unable to return to formal schooling, then the school will help them to find other options for completing their schooling or to find training that could increase their employment prospects in the future.
- **Health and nutritional support**
  - If possible, schools should include pregnant learners, learner-mothers and breastfeeding mothers in school feeding programmes to ensure proper nutrition for both the mother and the infant.
  - The learner-parents, their parents or their primary caregiver and the support person should discuss the most suitable options for child care and infant feeding. The support person may ask the principal and/or the teacher-counsellor to assist in discussing this issue.
- **Environment:** The school shall maintain a culture of non-discrimination and tolerance, and shall enforce an enabling environment for all learners.
- **Teacher training:** The Ministry of Education shall provide pre- and in-service training on supporting and counselling pregnant learners, expectant fathers and learner-parents for at least two teacher-counsellors per school.
- **Networking:** The school shall involve families, learners, school board members, regional officials, health service providers, social workers and other counsellors, police (specifically members of Woman and Child Protection Units), and trusted community members in the effective implementation of this policy.



### Roles of the Family

Schools shall **involve the families** of the pregnant learner, the expectant father and learner-parents in these ways:

- **Counselling:** The school will refer the learners' parents and/or primary caregivers and/or legal guardians to a teacher-counsellor, social worker or community organisation for counselling on the situation, and will keep in touch with each family to monitor the situation and to encourage the learner-mother's return to school.
- **Support:** The school should encourage parents to be involved in helping learner-parents with their burden of responsibility. If parents are *willing* to help, the school should discuss with them ways to best support the learner-parents. If parents seem *unwilling* to help, the principal should attempt to discuss the situation with them and try to convince them to be more supportive.
- **Information:**
  - The teacher-counsellor (or other support person) should discuss with the parents/caregiver/guardian child care option, and how to obtain state maintenance grants and maintenance from the child's father.
  - The principal shall ensure, with a social worker's assistance if possible, that the family is given information on the laws on rape, immoral practices, incest and indecent assault, and how to support a learner who wants to lay a charge with the police. Legal abortion or legal adoption shall also be discussed if required.
- **Health:** Parents should support and monitor their child's health and progress. So, they should ensure that:
  - the school is timeously informed about their child's condition;
  - a pregnant learner or a learner-mother and her infant attend a health clinic; and
  - health reports are communicated to the school where relevant to school attendance.
- **Prevention of further pregnancies:** The parents of learner-parents shall be asked if they would like to assist in educating other learners about teenage pregnancy.

### Roles of the Partner Ministries

- **Ministry of Health and Social Services**  
This Ministry will provide:
  - adolescent-friendly health services (including mobile services where needed);
  - pre- and post-natal medical care;
  - medication;
  - information;
  - counselling on HIV infection and mother-to-child transmission;
  - information on, and access to, legal abortions and other related services;
  - family life empowerment services;
  - promotion of effective parenting; and
  - information on pregnancy prevention.
- **Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare:** This Ministry will provide social services to expecting learner-parents, and will liaise with schools regarding the management of the best interests of all stakeholders.
- **Ministry of Safety and Security:** This Ministry (specifically the Woman and Child Protection Units) will provide prompt and sensitive social services, and investigate cases involving rape and other crimes.
- **Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture:** This Ministry will help schools to provide entertainment options for learners in a safe and alcohol-free environment.