

PRESS RELEASE**DepEd statement on DOH's distribution of condoms in schools**

While the Department of Education (DepEd) recognizes the need to promptly address the surging spread of HIV/AIDS among the youth, the Department will have to hold thorough and careful discussions with the Department of Health (DoH) regarding the health agency's plan to distribute condoms in schools next year.

Through the series of discourse, the Department will want to identify and study whether this move to arrest the epidemic is appropriate to cover schools and learning institutions, and if not, what are other measures that we can explore without compromising, first, the parents' right and responsibility to educate their children against the dangers of engaging in pre-marital sex, and second, the State's mandate to protect minors from any form of abuse. DepEd will also have to look into how and why, despite progressive mindset in other countries, this approach is not implemented by all.

The Department, for its part, continues to uphold the values rooted in the country's culture and how these remain relevant amid the changing times, and to enrich sex education within the frameworks of human rights, safety and well-being of learners through age-appropriate and developmental reproductive health education as early as Grade 1.

END

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