

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
19 September 2024

Save the Children Philippines calls Senate for urgent passage of Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Bill

Senate of the Philippines – 19 August 2024 – Save the Children Philippines is urging the Senate to swiftly pass the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Bill to address the alarming rise in teenage pregnancies in the country, especially among children 15 years old and below.

With over 500 adolescents becoming pregnant and giving birth daily in the Philippines, Save the Children, the leading child rights organization in the Philippines, is sounding the alarm on the disturbing fact that girls as young as 10 years old are already giving birth.

The escalating rates of adolescent pregnancies, revealing a 35% surge in live births among 15 below age group from 2021 to 2022, are trapping thousands of young Filipino girls in a vicious cycle of poverty, discrimination, and lost opportunities, with many dropping out of school and forced into the responsibilities of parenthood - ultimately robbing them of their childhood and future.

"These statistics reflect more than just numbers—they represent the lives of young girls who are being thrust into adulthood prematurely. These young mothers are forced to provide for their children while they are still children themselves," said Wilma Banaga, Child Protection Advisor of Save the Children Philippines.

As the Philippines commemorates the 34th anniversary of its ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child this August, Save the Children stresses that the enactment of the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Law is a duty of the Philippine government in upholding the rights of every Filipino child.

"Many young people hide their pregnancies out of fear of discrimination and stigma, hindering their access to essential health services and support," said youth advocate Sydney.

"It's crucial for adolescents to be aware of their sexual and reproductive health and rights and receive quality services that will empower them to make informed decisions. No young person should have to sacrifice their future due to unintended pregnancy. We urge lawmakers to prioritize the passage of the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Bill to ensure that every young Filipino has the opportunity to reach their full potential."

The Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Bill is due for interpellation in the Senate on August 19 and awaits approval on second reading. Meanwhile, it is already approved on 3rd Reading at the House of Representatives.

"Adolescent pregnancies are often the result of coercion and unequal power dynamics between young girls and older men. Passing this bill is essential not just for educating and empowering our youth, but to also protect them from exploitation and ensure that they have the support and resources needed to reclaim their childhood and build a better future," Banaga said.

Save the Children Philippines is one with the nation in urging the Philippine government to expedite without delay, the passage of the bill to prevent adolescent pregnancy to create a safer, fairer, and better world, for and with children.

-END-

NOTES TO THE EDITOR:

- **About Save the Children Philippines**
Save the Children Philippines is committed to ensuring that every child has the opportunity to survive, learn, and be protected at all times. Through our programs and advocacy efforts, we work to create a world where children's rights are fully respected and upheld.
- More than 500 adolescents are becoming pregnant and giving birth every day as per UNFPA Policy Brief January 202. Source: https://philippines.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/UNFPA_Policy_Brief_Teenage_Pregnancy_%282020-01-24%29.pdf
- Total live births among girls aged 15 or under rose by 35 % from 2,320 live births in 2021 to 3,135 births in 2022 - Philippine Statistics Authority. Source: <https://psa.gov.ph/>
- Spokesperson available

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Ms. Kay I. Yeban Maatubang

Brand & Integrated Communications Manager
Save the Children Philippines
Mobile: 0917. 162. 1503
Email: Felycora.Maatubang@savethechildren.org

George Oliver G. De La Rama

Director for Advocacy, Campaigns, Communications, and Media
Save the Children Philippines
Mobile: +63 917-570-0523
Email: George.Delarama@savethechildren.org