

**Department of Education, Culture and Sports
BUREAU OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION**

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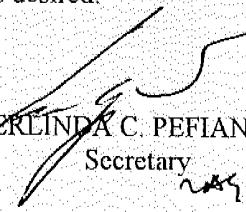
March 6, 1998

DECS MEMORANDUM
No. 87, s. 1998

1998 GIRL CHILD WEEK CELEBRATION

To : Bureau Directors
Regional Directors
Schools Division Superintendents
Heads of Private Elementary and Secondary Schools

1. In the pursuance of Proclamation No. 759, declaring the fourth week of March as Protection and Gender-Fair Treatment of the Girl Child Week, this year's celebration will be observed on 23 - 27 March. The theme is "Girl Children Have Rights, Too!" ("Mga Batang Babae, May Karapatan Din!").
2. The focus will be on the rights of the girl child in school, family and community as set forth in the Convention of the Rights of the Child. (Enclosed is a fact sheet on the Girl Child.) All are enjoined to undertake the following action steps to celebrate the occasion.
 - a. organize a network group to plan and implement the program on the rights of the girl child, her needs and potential
 - b. review current programs and plans for female children
 - c. launch an information campaign against all forms of discrimination facing the girl child
 - d. conduct forum, convocation or conference to reeducate the public toward changing values and attitudes about the girl child
 - e. hold symposia, panel or focused group discussions on the liabilities of parents and caregivers arising from forced labor, violence, abuse and negligence
 - f. organize cultural shows, sports fests, day camps for the girl child
 - g. conduct poster making or cartooning contests on the rights of the girl child
 - h. hold photo exhibit, film/ slide showing on issues confronting female children
 - i. write letters to the editor, essays and other literature on the theme
 - j. conduct research or survey the school and the community on the presence of exploited and/or neglected girl children
3. Reports on accomplishments of these activities may be forwarded to Dr. Lidinila M. Luis-Santos, Director IV, Bureau of Elementary Education, DECS, Pasig City.
4. Immediate and wide dissemination of this Memorandum is desired.


ERLINDA C. PEFIANCO
Secretary

Incl.:

As stated

Reference:

None

Allotment: 1—(D.O. 50-97)

To be indicated in the Perpetual Index
under the following subjects:

CELEBRATIONS & FESTIVALS
PUPILS



The Girl Child

14

World trends

- More than 15 million girls, aged 15-19, give birth each year (*The State of the World's Population*, United Nations Population Fund, 1994).
- Teenage girls make up 25% of the 500,000 who die each year from pregnancy and childbirth (UN Children's Fund, 1994).
- A study in India revealed 51% of boys were breastfed compared with 30% of girls (UNICEF, 1994).
- In the developing world the HIV/AIDS rate is higher for girls aged 15-19 than boys (UNICEF, 1994).
- The International Labour Organization, using data for 124 nations, estimated that 80 million children under age 15 were involved in child labor. The total for all nations may be double that (*The Progress of Nations*, UNICEF, 1995).
- In Africa and Asia girls aged 10-14 put in 7 hours a day in household chores and domestic work (*The Girl Child: An Investment in the Future*, UNICEF, 1994).
- An official survey in China, which has a one-child population policy, revealed that 12% of all female fetuses were aborted or otherwise unaccounted for, mainly as a result of ultrasound screening to determine the sex of the fetus (*Facts and Figures*, UNICEF, 1995).

Philippine situation

- The Philippines is a young nation since 45.8% of its 62 million population are children and youth. 27.2 million of them are female (National Statistics Office, 1990).
- There were from 5 to 7 million working children within the 5-14 age group, 3.9 million of whom were in rural areas. In the garments industry alone, there were an estimated 2 million female child workers (Bureau of Women and Young Workers, 1987).
- Young girls work from an early age, combining domestic chores with paid or unpaid family labor and schooling (de los Angeles-Bautista, 1994).
- Television and print images of vulnerable Filipina girls trapped in prostitution or who are victims of rape, incest, sexual abuse and murder are perhaps the most powerful and disturbing evidences of their vulnerability and exploitation (de los Angeles-Bautista, 1994).
- Filipina girls were among the estimated 50,000 to 60,000 prostituted children under the age of 18 in 1991 (End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism, 1994).
- Studies in 10 Philippine cities reported that between 1 to 3% of the child and youth population were street children. Some 50,000 to 75,000 were in Metro Manila (UNICEF, 1993).
- The age of street children ranged from 8-17





years. They spent most of their waking hours on the streets, often in gainful though potentially hazardous economic activities such as vending, working as laborers, scavenging, begging and car-watching (UNICEF, 1993).

17% of female children and 9.8% of male children 7 years and below were underweight. For those who were 7 to 10 years, 6.3% of female children and 4.1% of male children were underweight (UNICEF, 1993).

In 1990 maternal mortality rate for mothers under 15 years old was 592.3 per 1,000 live births (UNICEF, 1993).

The proportion of teenagers, 16.5%, who had induced abortion was greater than those who had normal delivery, 11.5%, and spontaneous abortion, 6.2% (Valenzuela, as cited in Perez).

10% of births in the country occurred out of wedlock. About 21% of the total estimated illegitimate births occurred among mothers in the 15-19 age group, and 53% among the 20-24 age group (Raymundo, National Demographic Study).

The incidence of adolescent pregnancy has remained at 40%, a certain percent of which was the result of sexual abuse (Institute for Social Studies and Action, 1993).

Metro Manila youth aged 12-21 indicated that barely two-thirds lived with both father and mother (McCann-Erickson Philippines, 1993).

Government actions on the girl child

implemented the Convention on the Rights of the Child

adopted the National Programmes of Action to achieve the mid-decade goals and the goals for the 1990s for the survival, protection and development of children, including the girl children

expanded family planning services to cover adolescents, including counselling and education on family life, early marriages and sexuality and its consequences

adopted interventions to address the vulnerability and special needs of girls who are in emergency situations of armed conflict, street children, sexually abused children, working children and victims of trafficking

Platform for Actions goals on the girl child

Eliminate all forms of discrimination against the girl child

Eliminate negative cultural attitudes and practices against girls

Increase public awareness on the value, needs and rights of the girl child, including the girl child with special needs and in difficult circumstances, and the need to strengthen her self-image, self-esteem and status

Eliminate discrimination against girls in education, skills development and training

Eliminate discrimination against girls in health and nutrition

Eliminate the economic exploitation of child labor and protect young girls at work

Eradicate violence against the girl child

Strengthen the role of the family in advancing the status of the girl child

Data from: A Look at the World through the Girl Child's Eyes: Info Kit published by the Defense for Children International-Philippine section, Streetchildren and Child Workers Support Center-Philippines, and the Community of Learners.

