



August 11, 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY 2022

Intergenerational Solidarity: Creating a World for All Ages

The Caribbean Observatory Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in collaboration with the Caribbean Family Planning Affiliation (CFPA), salute all Youth in the Caribbean and join the rest of the world in celebrating International Youth Day 2022. This year's theme: *Intergenerational Solidarity: Creating a World for All Ages* highlights the importance of recognizing our need for unity across generations and diversity - race, gender, ethnicity, religion and geographical location that prevent us from learning from and leaning on each other to overcome barriers that prevent us from learning from and leaning on each other as we strive to build a better Caribbean for all.

Caribbean adolescents face major barriers to access sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services and comprehensive sexuality education (CSE). This has contributed to the early sexual debut and one of the highest adolescent fertility rates in the world: 60.2 births per 1,000 girls aged 15-19 (2010-2015 period). According to a PANCAP 2018 report, "Young people as a whole, and specifically young people from key populations, are disproportionately at risk for HIV infection, STIs and other sexual and reproductive health problems."

Age-specific consent laws restrict adolescents' access sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services, including access to essential information and guidance required to make informed decisions. Integrating age-appropriate CSE in the Health and Family Life Education (HFLE) curriculum is a positive step in equipping adolescents and youth with the knowledge, skills and confidence to make wise decisions and prevent early sexual debut, teenage pregnancy, STIs, GBV, suicide, and to protect vulnerable youth.

Ageism in the Caribbean and the culture of silencing youth, dismissing their voices and experiences and the right of decision-making regarding their lives and wellbeing has devastating consequences for them and the whole society. This is a major barrier to intergenerational solidarity in the face of challenges that threaten our collective future. The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us the importance of our interdependence, human solidarity and community. We are also reminded of the urgency to come together to find solutions in the face of our mutual vulnerability.

Youth are a vital priority for the CFPA and the Caribbean Observatory on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights. At the heart of our vision and mandate is our commitment to ensure that no one is left behind. In observance of #IYD2022, we will be hosting a Community Dialogue on August 12, 2022, at 11:30 AM (AST) to discuss how we can strive towards advancing the health and wellbeing of youth in the region. We call on governments, civil society, community and faith-based organisations to recognize and

commit to advancing the Rights of Youth, build intergenerational solidarity and to support them in making informed and wise decisions regarding their bodies and lives.

Happy International Youth Day!!

See Zoom link here to register

[:https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYvdOyvqT0sG925NgOCKqCb1pduvRCCNWkP](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYvdOyvqT0sG925NgOCKqCb1pduvRCCNWkP)

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