

Action Group brands syllabus on sex education 'too vague'

THE Education Action Group has branded as "general and vague" the Education Department's sex education syllabus for students.

And how much students are told about sex depends on how embarrassed teachers are when they have to talk about it, according to EAG secretary Mrs Millie Carroll.

Mrs Carroll said that after a close study of the Department's sex education syllabus they found it was too superficial.

"It is vague and general, with necessary specific details left entirely to the discretion and perhaps embarrassment of the teachers or school principals," she

said.

The EAG's criticism of the sex education programme came after statistics revealed that the number of illegitimate babies jumped from 1,058 in 1972 to more than 6,500 last year.

Lack of knowledge about sex has been cited by a psychiatrist and a psychologist as one reason for the sharp increase in illegitimate births.

Mrs Carroll called for more exhibitions, talks and discussions on sex.

"Since sex education at home seems to be taboo, it is therefore the duty of schools to teach young people about sex."

She said the success of last year's Sexual Health Exhibition run by the medical students disproved some people's belief that young people were not curious about sex.

And Mrs Pat Nicholl, chief counsellor of the Hongkong Marriage Guidance Council, warned that many more young unmarried girls could become pregnant if sex education were not improved.

Mrs Nicholl pointed out that more than half of Hongkong's population was aged under 25.

"Traditionally, sex is not very much discussed in Hongkong," she said.

"With the permissive society now, young people can be adversely influenced by pornographic books and magazines and 'skin-click' films.

"Sex education must be taught properly — young people are curious about sex."

Miss Rosemary Chin, secretary of the Society for the Protection of Birthright, agreed that there was not enough sex education in schools.

She said that unless parents and schools put more effort into sex education, youngsters would have to learn about sex from their friends and other unreliable sources.