Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Addressing the health needs of adolescents in Europe

Motion for a resolution
tabled by Baroness Doreen MASSEY and other members of the Assembly

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This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

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Adolescents are, in general, healthy. However they have specific needs which result from physical, emotional and mental changes as they achieve puberty.

Research shows that adolescents are more prone to take risks, and to suffer stress. Suicide rates, particularly amongst young men, are worryingly high. In some countries, teenage pregnancy rates give rise to concern.

The promotion of a healthy lifestyle from an early age is vital. This should include information and exploration of attitudes and values in order to develop self-confidence and self-esteem – characteristics which may protect young people against negative influences.

Some young people are particularly vulnerable – for example, those living in poverty, those who witness or suffer abuse, those in or leaving care, migrant children and those in youth justice systems. They should have access to special treatment, such as mental health services which should be well-resourced and made available at an early stage.

In informal settings such as schools and higher education counselling services should be provided, and programmes should be developed, and delivered by trained teachers and other professionals such as doctors and school nurses.

Governments should develop strategies to prevent poor health (mental, physical and emotional) amongst adolescents and to intervene promptly if problems arise.

The Parliamentary Assembly should explore good practice in member states as a means of ensuring that adolescents have access to health promotion programmes and to support for their health needs.

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed[1]*:*

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EC: European Conservatives Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialist Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left