

A STATEMENT ON THE BEHAVIOUR AND HABITS OF SOME OF OUR YOUTH-BY HONOURABLE ABENA DUROWAA MENSAH, MP FOR ASSIN NORTH

THANK YOU MR SPEAKER FOR GRANTING ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A STATEMENT ON THE BEHAVIOUR AND HABITS OF SOME OF OUR YOUTH

Mr Speaker, it is said that Charity begins at home but when one looks around the environment and sees the kind of lifestyle and behaviour our future leaders are exhibiting one would wonder if their parents are really living up to their responsibilities.

Mr Speaker, I have been observing with keen interest the kind of behaviour, attitude and improper dressing our youth have been exhibiting in recent times which leaves much to be desired. Out of youthful exuberance, our leaders of tomorrow have gone wayward and if care is not taken, they will blame us for their failures in future.

Mr Speaker, the lifestyle and physical appearance of our youth are unacceptable and unGhanaian. It was very disheartening to witness some of our youth (**both boys and girls**) between the ages of 14 and 18 years smoking and drinking alcoholic beverages at the Labadi beach, on the afternoon of 11th March, 2017. Mr Speaker, also, many of the vendors of these hard liquors and cigarettes were very young boys. Out of curiosity, I took the pain to interview one of these youth who was just 13 years old and he told me his mother was the one who had sent him to sell these items.

Mr Speaker, parents, teachers, chiefs, the clergy and the government as a whole have such a huge responsibility at our hands to protect the society especially the youth from these social vices. I am therefore appealing to this August House as a matter of urgency, to come-up with

pragmatic measures to help forestall this wayward behaviour of our future leaders.

Mr Speaker, the social media is also playing a significant role in this waywardness of our youth. Instead of harnessing the huge potentials these social media platforms offer for their social development and advancement, our youth are rather learning the bad side of western culture on whatsup, twitter, facebook and others.

Mr Speaker, the Children's Act enacted by this House frowns upon such acts of the youth and the law if enforced will bring irresponsible parents to book. I believe that the nation as a whole including parents, teachers, the arms of government and everyone alike are saddled with the irresponsible behaviour of our future leaders and as a result have a huge role to play in helping curb this growing social canker amongst our youth.

Mr Speaker, it is believed by psychologists that by age 6, a child would have formed his or her behavioural and cognitive skills which impact on their habits, so in order to curb this menace, it behoves parents to train up their children very well. Parents should also desist from exhibiting certain negative behaviours and practices in the presence of their children because children are fond of copying such habits.

Parents should be particularly interested in all activities their children are involved in, the kind of friends they make, their friends families and where they live and the kind of things they watch and follow on TV and the various social media platforms they are on. Closer supervision is very much a remedy needed in this regard to help monitor and correct such

negative behaviours identified in the youth especially in their early formative years.

Mr Speaker, parents should also instil confidence and trust in their wards to let them open up whenever they are faced with problems of any kind.

Mr Speaker, the behaviours of the youth can also be checked by organising training programmes for the various youth groups and by encouraging a lot more of our youth to participate in church or religious activities instead of allowing them to engage in such activities.

Etiquettes and proper training should also be included in the educational curricular to help minimise the incidence of these vices.

Mr Speaker, I believe if these proactive measures are adopted and assiduously worked at, it would help stem the tide of these unacceptable behaviours our youth engage themselves in.

Thank you Mr Speaker for the opportunity.