

Dear Auntie Stella

I am a 16 year old boy in Form 3. I have a big problem because I am very shy with girls. Sometimes I can't even look at them. My friends keep telling me if I smoke *mbanje* I will find it easier to approach girls. All my friends have girlfriends and I feel left out and lonely. I want a girlfriend, but I don't want to smoke *mbanje*, so what can I do?

Philani



TALKING POINTS

- Is shyness a problem for many teenagers? Is it more common in boys or in girls?
- Do a lot of people you know only want girlfriends or boyfriends because everyone else has them? Is this a good reason to have a relationship?
- Will *mbanje* help Philani? Why or why not? What about alcohol or other drugs?
- What advice can you give Philani...
 - a about overcoming his shyness?
 - b about making friends with girls?
 - c about smoking *mbanje*?
 - d about having girlfriends at his age?