Most pupils in eastern and southern Africa leave school before they have received an education equipping them with many essential life skills. There has therefore been much discussion of life skills as a key part of the primary curriculum; and about better equipping pupils to cope with unfavourable economic climates. They advocate that pupils acquire skills for survival after school, rather than the largely academic curriculum which is taught at present. This exploratory research from Kenya is part of a three-part study conducted in Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe. It focuses on the provision of teaching of life skills in primary schools, how the process of sexual maturation for boys and girls is handled in schools and at home; and explores whether there is a link between the lack of adequate sanitation protection for girls and dropout rates.