



Childline

Keeping Our Children Safe

Children are...

Precious Gifts

Treasures

Our Future

Our Responsibility

All Children are Our Children



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INTRODUCTION

42% of South African children and youth aged 12-22 were victims of crime or violence (Sept 2004 - Sept 2005)

This translates to about **4.3 million** young people

- 2005 National Youth Victimisation Study



Every day in South Africa,
approximately

- **64** children are raped
 - **3** children are killed
 - At least **71** children are assaulted
- www.sundaytimes.co.za 6 May 2007



BACKGROUND:

- There is a vast gap between rights enshrined in the the Bill of Rights in the National Constitution and the reality of children in the families and communities in which they live.
- Children are often voiceless, powerless, and they are dependent on adults for the fulfillment of their basic needs and protection.
- Children are sometimes viewed as possessions over which adults may exert power and authority.



- Children are more likely to be abused by family members or persons close to the family and child - people that the child and/ or family know and usually trust.
- Gender role stereotyping contributes to the high level of child abuse, particularly all forms of abuse of the girl child. Gender stereotyping cuts across all cultures in South Africa.
- However, below the age of 15, *as many* boy children are sexually abused as girl children.



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Children's Safety is OUR Responsibility

Although empowerment of children is essential, the responsibility for children's safety lies with the **ADULTS** in their lives.

All adults need to take responsibility for protecting **ALL** children from harm.



LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS:

- Open, honest and respectful communication.
- Encourage your children to come to you with their problems, and then *help them*. (Children are told to say "NO!" but this is most often impossible.)
- Be available - listen to your children. *If you don't have the time to listen to the small problems, they are unlikely to come to you with the BIG ones.*
- Be an integral part of your children's lives.



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- Spend your energy **building** your children's self-esteem. Children with low self-esteem are far more vulnerable to those who would do them harm.
- Be interested in and excited about your children's lives - *get to know them!*
- Equip yourselves with accurate knowledge about, eg. childhood development, sex & sexuality, technology.
- Empower your children with accurate info.



MAKING KIDS CRIME CONSCIOUS

- Find out what your children know about violence and crime, and how they interpret the messages they get from the media.
- When children ask if what they've seen on TV will also happen to them or the family, be honest and reassure them that you will do everything in your power to protect the family.
- Implementing safety at home should be discussed with the child at their level of understanding.



MAKING KIDS CRIME CONSCIOUS cont.

- Talk to your children frequently about safety, and make them feel like an important part of the team.
- Don't just talk, LISTEN.
- It is also important that parents identify anxiety in their children.

IF your child is anxious:

- help her/him to manage his/her anxiety in an independent & constructive manner.
- DON'T over-reassure.



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MAKING KIDS CRIME CONSCIOUS cont.

- Rules must be drawn up with your children.
- Expect children to break the rules.
- Don't threaten to call the police when children misbehave - they need to trust the police!
- Beware of "Stranger Danger" - getting help from a stranger may save your child's life.
- Teach children to trust their instincts.



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Key ingredients:

Love

Knowledge

Acceptance

Affirmation

Protection

And...

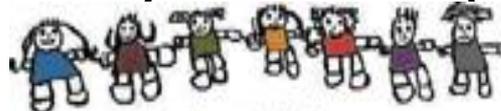
Being the best example you can be



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What Children Need to Know:

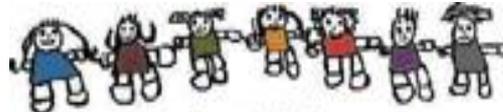
- That they are loved !
- Their address and your contact details.
- Important telephone numbers - Childline, SAPS
- Age appropriate info - rights & responsibilities, development, sex, drugs, technology, etc.
- What's ok and what's not - age appropriate knowledge about abuse and crime.
- Telephone / internet rules.
- Safety rules in and out of the home.
- That they can come to you for help & answers.



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Vulnerable Children

- Children whose physical, emotional and/or developmental needs are not met.
- Children with low self-esteem, who feel unloved and have no sense of belonging.
- Children who are unsupervised.
- Children with special needs.
- Children who lack necessary information.



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Correct Procedures to Follow:

If your child tells you s/he has been abused:

- **Believe** her/him
- Try to stay **calm**
- Do not judge/blame - it's **NOT** their fault
- **Affirm** them for speaking to you about it
- **Assure** them you're going to get help
- **Protect & Support** her/him - report the abuse, get medical attention, and counselling

CHILDLINE 08000 55555



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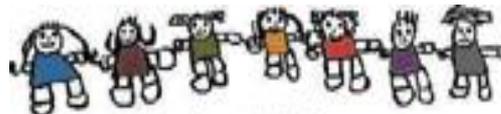
Correct Procedures to Follow Cont.

If your child witnesses or is with you when a violent crime is committed:

- Arrange debriefing, counselling or play therapy as soon as possible

CHILDLINE 08000 55555

- Allow the child to express her/his feelings.
- Help the child to regain a sense of security - involve them in plans to increase safety.
- Go for debriefing/counselling yourself so that you are better able to help your children cope.



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IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR CHILD, or ANY CHILD:

- Talk to them
- Call Childline TOLL-FREE

08000 55555

- ACT - if you know of or suspect abuse and do nothing, you are just as guilty as the perpetrator.



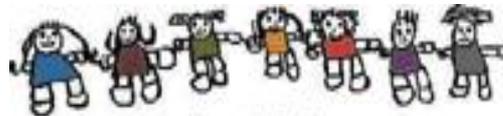
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Keep your child safe

- SMS watershed to 33930 and at a cost of R10 per month, you and your child will receive an emergency number from eBlockwatch to speed dial when in danger.
- Friends and family will be notified and caring community volunteers will assist.
- R1 will be donated to Childline!



QUESTIONS



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