

Child Abuse In The News - What Is It Telling Us?

Over the years, months and weeks, there have been several sensational stories in the news that have shined the light brightly on the issues of child abuse and neglect:

Child raped every 3 min - report

Johannesburg - One child is raped in South Africa every three minutes, a report by trade union Solidarity said on Wednesday. "The shocking reality, however, is that these figures do not nearly reflect the true extent of the problem." "Certain organisations, such as Childcare South Africa, work with more than two million children and their families on a daily basis. This means that the average social worker handles nearly 200 cases each year, while the accepted norm is 60." - SAPA News24 2009-06-03 21:06

Women, child abuse a concern - govt

Cape Town - The number of contact crimes committed against women and children remains of grave concern. The annual SA Police Service crime statistics showed increases in attempted murder, murder, and sexual offences against children between 2008 and 2009 and 2009 and 2010. – SAPA news24 2010-11-23 16:04

10 000 child prostitutes in Jhb

Pretoria - There are about 10 000 child prostitutes in Johannesburg alone, a group concerned with child abuse said on Wednesday. Alet Rademeyer and Philip de Bruin [Beeld](#)

Actor to appear for daughter's rape

Johannesburg - The bail bid of an actor accused of sexually assaulting his four-year-old daughter will continue in the Wynberg Magistrate's Court on Tuesday, the SABC reported.
- SAPA 2011-01-10 22:43 news24

Babies assaulted at day care centre

Johannesburg - A Pretoria day mother is facing two charges of assault, after she allegedly hit a baby on the buttocks, and slapped another so hard on the cheek that the mark was still visible five days later. - [Beeld](#) Virginia Keppler, 2011-02-14 09:44

Teen tells of rape by her carer

Pietermaritzburg - A 17-year-old teenager placed in a safe house has told how she was raped by the man who was supposed to protect her. Gabisile Ngcobo and Bongani Hans, The Witness 2011-04-21 08:25

MORE STORIES ABOUT Child abuse:

- Child labour in demand: UN - 10 Jun
- Date set for child porn family accused - 09 Jun
- Parents offer daughter, 8, for sex - 09 Jun
- Foetus found in dustbin - 09 Jun
- Dad of two held over child porn - 08 Jun

- **Taxi driver held for raping girl, 13 - 08 Jun**
- **Hostage-taker arrested in Cape Town - 08 Jun**
- **Govt gets tough on rapists, abusers - 07 Jun**

All have triggered strong public reaction. In response, we have seen the public apologies. We have seen the moral outrage. We have seen denial and defense of actions. We have seen the all-too-common labeling of "bad" parents. We have seen blame laid on the failure of the system. And we have even seen refusal by some to acknowledge what is obviously happening right in front of them.

But what we haven't seen is an overwhelming response of people taking action to help prevent situations like these from occurring in the first place. We have seen the shocked responses, but not the determination to prevent abuse. It seems there has been a great deal of the "it's terrible, but it's just not my problem to fix" mentality.

So what should this tell us? A lot. The appearance of story after story on our TV and computer screens is telling us that child abuse is a very real problem in our society. It's telling us that the "big" stories spark strong public outrage and disbelief. But it's also telling us that we can take action to change it.

No longer is it okay to sit by and shake our heads at a problem that seems too big to overcome. We just can't be concerned and have public conversation about child abuse after it happens. We just don't have that luxury. We, must take action to prevent these stories before they happen. Before our children are hurt. Before their lives are affected forever. Children in our communities need us now.

In order for our communities to thrive, we must all acknowledge and address child abuse. Whether it's physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, or neglect -- it's simply not okay for this to be happening. At all. Protecting children involves every person in every community -- it's not someone else's problem. It's everyone's responsibility. So what do we do next? Get involved. Every one of us can work through our sphere of influence to make things happen.

We can take the responsibility in our communities. We can increase the public consciousness about these stories and others like them and then use the momentum to spread awareness further and do even more.
It can be done!