



GAUTENG PROVINCE

EDUCATION
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MEDIA STATEMENT

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Att: News Editors

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JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT BY THE GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CRIME LINE AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE (SAPS)

YOUNG CRIME LINERS LAUNCHED FOR SAFER GAUTENG SCHOOLS

The Gauteng Department of Education, Crime Line and the South African Police Service (SAPS) have joined forces in a bid to equip learners with safe and reliable tools to report crime and social issues in Gauteng schools.

The “Young Crime Liners” initiative was launched today at Mosupatsela Secondary School in Kagiso on the West Rand where Gauteng Education MEC, Barbara Creecy delivered a keynote address.

“We are here today to ensure that crime has no place in our schools. We want you (learners) to report any form of violence, whether it be bullying, physical and sexual assault and corporal punishment in your school,” Creecy told learners at the school. She said the department recognizes that it has a responsibility to continually work towards a school environment in which learners, educators and school principals feel and are safe.

“The launch of the Young Crime Liners indicates our commitment to ensuring learning and teaching takes place in a safe environment, free from violence. The police can’t be everywhere, but YOU are there and you have a lot of information about criminal activity. We hope that this initiative will empower our learners to seek help and report crime happening in our schools,” said Creecy.

Creecy also indicated that the department will be rolling out the Young Crime Liners initiative school by school in Gauteng.

The Young Crime Liners is an additional intervention to the department's five year Schools Safety Strategy that guides schools and departmental officials in their work.

The five year School Safety Plan hinges on five pillars namely:

- Standardised school policy development and implementation
- Psycho Social support and promotion of alternative forms of discipline
- Advocacy Programmes
- Active Law enforcement in partnerships with law enforcement agencies
- Effectively securing the physical environs of schools

As part of implementing the strategy, the Department, has as of this year, put in place mechanisms in place to compile statistics of bullying and violence in schools.

At the Launch, members of the Kagiso Police and Crime Stop engaged with the learners through an exhibition of the avenues open to them to report crime.

The initiative comes in the wake of an alarming number of incidents that have dominated social media networks over the past week, illustrating the high levels of bullying and other criminal behaviour in schools.

"We have seen a number of videos go viral and stories dominating headlines of a variety of crimes perpetrated by or against children at schools in the province. They range from cases of sexual abuse, bullying, drug dealing and violence. Unfortunately these cases go mainly unreported with tragic consequences," said Head of Crime Line, Yusuf Abramjee.

Gauteng was rocked recently with videos that went viral of a grade 8 Glenvista learner attacking a teacher and the assault of a teen by two fellow pupils at Hoërskool Overkruin in Pretoria.

This was coupled with the news of a Hyde Park teacher that is believed to have been sexually grooming a teenager over a number of months.

A firearm was recently discovered at the Mosupatsela Secondary School in Kagiso where the Young Crime Liners initiative was held. Creecy urged learners to use the tip-off lines as "we were able to arrest learners who brought a gun to school, because of information you brought us."

"The Young Crime Liners initiative aims to empower learners with tools to break the silence around criminal and social issues that they face on a daily basis. It is also open to parents, educators and other members of the public to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our children," Abramjee added.

Crime Line's anonymous 32211 SMS service (Costs R1) and Crime Stop's 08600 10111 are open to Young Crime Liners to report crime without revealing their identity.

Tip-offs that refer to criminal behaviour will be dealt with by the police, while problems requiring social interventions will be escalated to the relevant support structures.

"The initiative aims to find ways that we can support and guide our children when crimes are committed against them. Children are often afraid to report certain crimes for a variety of reasons, but we are offering them a chance to speak up within a safe environment," Abramjee added.

The project was inspired by Lead SA's Bill of Responsibilities initiative, which forms part of the Life Orientation curriculum in schools.

"We are all responsible to ensure our rights as enshrined in our Constitution. Speaking up and doing the right thing goes a long way in ensuring that we break the cycle of violence, crime and abuse in our schools," Abramjee said.

The initiative will be absorbed into schools over the coming months as the Young Crime Liners programme will visit schools across the province.

Feedback and suggestions can be directed to info@crimeline.co.za. For the latest updates and alerts on #CrimeLiners follow @CrimeLineZA, @SAPoliceService and @EducationGP on Twitter.

For more information contact the Gauteng Department of Education's spokesperson, Gershwin Chuenyane on 011 843 6731 or 071 860 4496 OR Crime Line Coordinator Marisa Oosthuizen on 071 475 4414.

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