

Justice for our children: time for all South Africans to act

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Social crimes, including gender-based violence, at institutions of learning across the country are a matter of deep societal concern and require intensive preventative measures to support heightened policing.

More recently, there has been a worrying increase in reported crimes at learning institutions, including creches, schools, colleges and universities. The latest police stats show that between October and December 2024, there were 11 murders and 99 rapes reported.



“As an organisation that collaborates with the Department of Basic Education and the criminal justice cluster on crime prevention initiatives in schools, Safer South Africa Foundation is deeply disturbed and outraged by the heinous assaults on children. The recent reports of the rape of a seven-year-old girl and a six-year-old boy in Matatiele are a tragic example,” says Safer South Africa Foundation CEO, Riah Phiyega.

This act of violence against an innocent child is a stark reminder of the pervasive threat that gender-based violence poses to our society, particularly to our most vulnerable—our children.

Educational institutions should be sanctuaries of safety and growth, yet for her and many others, this sanctuary was violated most horrifically.

We stand in solidarity with her family and society at large during this profoundly difficult time. The overwhelming public support, evidenced by over 600,000 signatures on the petition

demanding justice, reflects the nation's collective condemnation of this atrocity and a unified call for accountability.

We urge all South Africans to continue this momentum by adding their voices to the petition and participating in peaceful demonstrations advocating for justice. Active citizenship is imperative in our fight against the scourge of violence targeting women and children. It is through our collective efforts that we can effect meaningful change and ensure that such tragedies are not repeated.

The Safer South Africa Foundation remains committed to its mission of creating a secure environment for our children. We call upon law enforcement agencies and the judicial system to accelerate their investigations and proceedings to deliver swift and decisive justice.

—ENDS—

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