



2017 CHILD PROTECTION WEEK DRAFT KEY MESSAGES

BRIEF:

National Child Protection Week is marked annually to raise awareness for the rights of children. It aims to mobilise all sectors of society to care for and protect children. Child Protection Week allows us to shine a spotlight on children's issues; highlight successes and identify what still needs to be done.

The campaign is led by the Minister of Social Development; however it is incumbent on all of South Africans to play a role in protecting children and creating a safe and secure environment for them.

The Bill of Rights in the Constitution specifically states that every child has the right to be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation. South Africa has also drafted legislation to protect children which is based on the United Convention of the Rights of the Child, and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

Protections are further reinforced through the Children's Act, which emphasises the State's role in the provision of social services to strengthen the capacity of families and communities to care for and protect children.

The Child Justice Act (Act No. 75 of 2008) establishes a separate criminal justice system for children in conflict with the law. The Sexual Offences and Related Matters Amendment Act (Act No. 32 of 2007) includes a wide range of crimes that commonly occur against children. While the Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act (Act 7 of 2013), deals with the global phenomena of child trafficking.

However, despite these and other protections many children still remain vulnerable to abuse, neglect and exploitation.

As a society we have a duty to do more to ensure that the most vulnerable in our society do not suffer abuse. It is in our hands to stop the cycle of neglect, abuse, violence and exploitation of children. By working together we can create safer and healthier communities so that our children can thrive.

Government calls on all South Africans to support Child Protection Week by wearing a green ribbon.

KEY MESSAGES	SUPPORTING STATEMENTS
<i>The protection of children is everybody's responsibility.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We all have a duty to care for the most vulnerable persons in society, especially, children. • Together we can and must do more to prevent neglect, abuse, violence and exploitation of children. • Government alone cannot eradicate this scourge and calls on all South Africans and sectors to partner with us in creating safer communities. • South Africans have a collective responsibility to create safer and healthier communities so that our children can thrive. • We call on everyone to show their support for Child Protection Week by wearing a green ribbon.
<i>Our social security net protects the most vulnerable in society.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 17 million people benefit from social grants which provide care and support to poor and vulnerable South Africans. • More than twelve million social grant beneficiaries are children. • We are committed to Early Childhood Development as a way to reduce inter-generational poverty. • A register of child and youth headed households was developed to provide support and care for affected children. • This register seeks to keep track of orphaned and vulnerable children and ensure that they receive necessary basic services from government. • To date, more than 12 455 children are registered in the Child Protection Register. • Identified Child Headed Households are allocated an adult supervisor who provides parental care; support and supervision.
<i>Together we can safeguard children's rights.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We should all be familiar with children's rights so that we can uphold and protect them. • The Bill of Rights in the Constitution specifically states that every child has the right to be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation. • South Africa has drafted legislation to protect children which is based on the United Convention of the Rights of the Child, and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. • The Children's Act creates an enabling environment for a comprehensive child care and protection system for South Africa. • The Child Justice Act establishes a separate criminal justice system for children in conflict with the law. • The Sexual Offences and Related Matters Amendment Act, includes a wide range of crimes that commonly occur against children. • The Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act, deals with the global phenomena of child trafficking.
<i>The integrated criminal justice system protects our children.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government has a zero-tolerance approach towards child abuse. • We must work together with police, prosecutors and courts

	<p>to ensure that those who hurt, exploit and abuse children are arrested and convicted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The 43 sexual offences courts nationally ensure that child victims are able to access justice in a victim-friendly environment.• Our police are trained on sexual violence to improve investigations, prosecutions and victim support.• There are more than 919 Victim Friendly Facilities providing a private place where survivors can be interviewed and statements can be taken.• Family Violence Child Protection and Sexual Offences Units countrywide offer specialised services to victims of abuse.• Thuthuzela Care Centres nationally serve as one-stop centres for rape victims in a quest to reduce secondary victimisation.
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