



GAUTENG PROVINCE

EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Enquiries: Cetshwayo Sipho
Ref: 5. ED133.

**TO: ADV. MPHO MALOKA
SECRETARY TO THE LEGISLATURE**

**FROM: MR. L I MAILE
MEMBER OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
EDUCATION AND SPORTS, ARTS, CULTURE AND RECREATION**

SUBJECT: QUESTION POSED BY LEGISLATURE QUESTION 5. ED133.

PURPOSE:

Regarding systems available to learners to report abuse in schools. Could the MEC please indicate:

QUESTION 1:

What formal mechanisms exist for learners to report abuse by educators or staff?

ANSWER:

The Gauteng Department of Education has established multiple formal mechanisms to enable learners to report incidents of abuse and to access appropriate psycho-social and protective services.

The Learner Psycho-Social Support Directorate of the Gauteng Department of Education has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Gauteng Department of Social Development. Through this partnership, one hundred and eighteen (118) social workers have been deployed to schools to provide prompt intervention in identified cases of learner abuse.

All schools have established School-Based Support Teams, which serve as the first point of receipt and management of reported cases. Cases received by School-Based Support Teams are referred, where appropriate, to social workers and District-Based Support Teams for further intervention and support.

In addition, learners may access support services through established toll-free and confidential reporting platforms, including Childline (116). The Gauteng Department of

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Education has also formalised partnerships with specialist child protection and child justice organisations that provide 24-hour telephonic and online counselling services, as well as face-to-face rapid response and trauma debriefing interventions.

These partner organisations include Childline (116), the South African Depression and Anxiety Group (0800 567 567), the Teddy Bear Foundation, and the National Association of Child and Youth Care Workers.

QUESTION 2:

Whether any anonymous reporting systems are currently available to learners, and if not, why not?

ANSWER:

Anonymous reporting systems are currently available to learners through the existing toll-free and confidential reporting platforms utilised by the Department and its partner organisations.

QUESTION 3:

How many reports of abuse have been received through these mechanisms in the past 10 years?

ANSWER:

In terms of the Children's Act, 2005 (Act No.38 of 2005), abuse in relation to a child, means any form of harm or ill-treatment deliberately inflicted on a child, and includes

- (a) assaulting a child or inflicting any other form of deliberate injury to a child;
- (b) sexually abusing a child or allowing a child to be sexually abused;
- (c) bullying by another child;
- (d) a labour practice that exploits a child; or
- (e) exposing or subjecting a child to behaviour that may harm the child psychologically or emotionally;

The total number of child abuse cases reported over the past ten years is not available. However, a total of 22 020 cases were reported during the period 2023 to 2026.

QUESTION 4:

What classification of abuse that was reported?

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Reported incidents reflect a broad spectrum of learner safety, protection, and wellbeing concerns within and beyond the school environment. These include physical, emotional, sexual, and financial abuse, as well as serious offences such as rape, attempted rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and exposure to or creation of abusive material.

Incidents further include violence such as assaults, stabbings, shootings, fights, and gangsterism, as well as bullying perpetrated by educators, fellow learners, parents, and other stakeholders. Additional matters relate to learner injuries and deaths, neglect, domestic violence, substance abuse, and mental health challenges, including suicide and suicide associated with bullying.

The classifications also include discrimination, including racism and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, misconduct by school officials and staff, unsafe or negligent school practices, and cases where learners are identified as victims, offenders, or witnesses.

QUESTION 5:

Please provide a breakdown of type of alleged abuse per year?

ANSWER:

The tables below reflect the types of alleged abuse recorded per year for all cases reported to the Special Investigations Directorate:

Learner abuse incident	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
Learner injured at school	1	0	0	0	1
Corporal punishment	1	2	4	8	15
Learner stabbed fellow learners	4	2	1	1	8
Learner stabbed educator	0	0	1	0	1
Learner injured due to road accident	1	0	0	0	1
Learner bullying by principal	0	0	0	1	1
Learner bullying by educator	3	1	1	2	7
Learner bullying by fellow learners	6	9	8	11	34
Learner bullying by parent of another	0	0	1	1	2
Learner bullying by bus driver	0	0	1	0	1
Learner assaulted by educator	0	1	0	1	2
Learner assault by private security personnel	0	0	0	1	1
Learner passed on at school	0	0	1	0	1
Sexual abuse by fellow learners	4	1	3	2	10

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Learner abuse incident	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
Sexual abuse by educator	1	0	0	2	3
Sexual abuse by principal	0	1	2	1	4
Sexual harassment by security personnel	0	0	1	0	1
Sexual harassment by parent's boyfriend	0	0	1	0	1
Sexual assault by staff member	0	0	1	0	1
Sexual harassment by SGB member	0	0	0	1	1
Sexual harassment of disabled learner by other disabled learners	0	0	0	1	1
Educator impregnated learner	0	0	1	1	2
Gangsterism	3	0	1	0	4
Discrimination based on sexual orientation	0	1	1	3	5
Learner suicide	2	0	0	0	2
Racism against learners	2	1	0	2	5
Learner fights	2	1	2	5	10
Death of a learner at school	2	0	0	0	2
Learner assault	1	0	2	0	3
Learner abuse by driver	0	1	0	0	1
Learner abuse/humiliation by educator	0	1	1	2	4
Learner left at sick bay	0	0	1	0	1
Learner injured at school	0	0	4	0	4
Learner death threats by another	0	0	1	0	1
Learner refused to used rest rooms/ told to pee in a bottle.	0	0	0	2	2
Suicide due to bullying	0	0	2	0	2
Learners refused to attend matric dance	0	0	1	0	1
Learners brought weapons at schools	0	0	1	0	1
Learner food poisoning.	0	0	0	1	1
Unprofessional conduct by principal towards female learners	0	0	1	1	2
Learner suspended for arranging protest	0	0	1	0	1
Learners attempted to burn classrooms	0	0	1	0	1
Pregnant learner was told to leave school	0	0	1	0	1
Learner locked in a sick room for 12 hours	0	0	0	1	1
Shooting incident at school	0	0	0	1	1
Total	33	22	48	52	155

The tables below reflect the types of alleged abuse recorded per year for all cases reported physically to the Learner Psycho-Social Support directorate:

CLINICAL COUNSELLING	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	TOTAL
Abuse - Anal Rape	32	30	36	98
Abuse - Attempted Rape	23	20	15	58
Abuse - Emotional	115	84	57	256
Abuse - Financial / Gambling	2	1	4	7
Abuse - Physical	49	70	60	179

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CLINICAL COUNSELLING	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	TOTAL
Abuse - Pornography - Creation	0	0	3	3
Abuse - Pornography - Exposure	5	9	7	21
Abuse - Rape	216	257	222	695
Abuse - Sexual Assault	176	142	105	423
Abuse - Sexual Harassment	17	29	28	74
Child Abuse Image - Creation	0	0	1	1
Child Abuse Image - Exposure	2	2	1	5
Child Offender	15	6	3	24
Child Witness	22	23	15	60
Domestic Violence	160	104	134	398
Gangsterism & Violence	1	2	2	5
Neglect	115	100	154	369
Substance Abuse	20	30	20	70
Suicide	92	119	65	276
	1062	1028	932	3022

The tables below reflect the types of alleged abuse recorded per year for all cases reported on the 24 hour help line :

24 HOUR HELP LINE	SUB-CATEGORY	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	TOTAL
ABUSE	Abduction:	46	13	18	77
ABUSE	Emotional Abuse:	2 003	1 212	745	3 960
ABUSE	Exposure to Criminal Violence:	58	46	19	123
ABUSE	Exposure to Domestic Violence:	300	228	137	665
ABUSE	Exposure to Porn/Child Abuse Images:	30	17	10	57
ABUSE	Harassment:	415	202	64	681
ABUSE	Inappropriate Sex Talk:	133	29	12	174
ABUSE	Physical Abuse:	1 026	562	418	2 006
ABUSE	Rape:	193	94	57	344
ABUSE	Sexual Assault/Abuse:	186	93	97	376
COMMERCIAL EXPLOITATION:	Child Begging:	18	7	5	30
COMMERCIAL EXPLOITATION:	Child Prostitution:	4	2	5	11
COMMERCIAL EXPLOITATION:	Child Trafficking:	4	1	3	8
COMMERCIAL EXPLOITATION:	Child used by adults in crime:	1	1	1	3
COMMERCIAL EXPLOITATION:	Child used in a criminal act:	2	3	1	6
COMMERCIAL EXPLOITATION:	Child Vendors:	3	0	0	3
COMMERCIAL EXPLOITATION:	Domestic Child Labour:	8	2	0	10
COMMERCIAL EXPLOITATION:	Farm Child Labour:	0	0	0	0
COMMERCIAL EXPLOITATION:	General Child Labour:	12	4	1	17
COMMERCIAL EXPLOITATION:	Involved in Child Pornography:	3	1	2	6
LEGAL ISSUES	Child Offender:	3	-		3
LEGAL ISSUES	Child witness:	0	1	1	2
NEGLECT	Child abandoned:	83	34	34	151
NEGLECT	Circumstantial Emotional Neglect:	91	50	44	185

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24 HOUR HELP LINE	SUB-CATEGORY	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	TOTAL
NEGLECT	Circumstantial Physical Neglect:	81	38	29	148
NEGLECT	Deliberate Emotional Neglect:	833	584	519	1 936
NEGLECT	Deliberate Physical Neglect:	898	579	518	1 995
POVERTY:	Child Starving:	315	196	60	571
POVERTY:	Insufficient / No Income:	262	152	59	473
POVERTY:	Lacks Clothing:	249	134	40	423
POVERTY:	Problems with Grants:	252	190	96	538
PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH:	Self Harm:	22	15	10	47
PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH:	Suicidal Feelings:	76	33	34	143
PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH:	Suicide attempt:	45	21	19	85
SCHOOL PROBLEMS:	Gangsterism:	8	2	2	12
SCHOOL PROBLEMS:	Harmful religious practices:	3	2		5
SUBSTANCE ABUSE:	Child Alcohol Abuse:	111	44	20	175
SUBSTANCE ABUSE:	Child Drug Abuse:	183	83	51	317
SUBSTANCE ABUSE:	Drug Dealing:	40	7	9	56
SUBSTANCE ABUSE:	Information on Alcohol & Drugs:	207	525	10	742
SUBSTANCE ABUSE:	Parent /Caregiver alcohol abuse:	355	251	148	754
SUBSTANCE ABUSE:	Parent /Caregiver Drug abuse:	144	123	106	373
SUBSTANCE ABUSE:	Substance Abuse Referral:	1 023	40	89	1 152
		9 729	5 621	3 493	18 843

QUESTION 6:

What is the average turnaround time for investigating such abuse?

ANSWER:

Section 110 of the Children's Act, 2005 (Act No. 38 of 2005), requires that all suspected cases of child abuse be reported immediately. Reports made in good faith must be submitted to the Department of Social Development or to a recognised child protection organisation within twenty-four (24) hours.

With regard to matters handled by the Special Investigations Directorate, turnaround times vary depending on the complexity of each case and, in particular, the availability and willingness of witnesses to provide the necessary information required for investigations.

QUESTION 7:

What steps will the Department take to introduce safe, anonymous reporting systems for learners?

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ANSWER:

The Gauteng Department of Education continues to utilise established toll-free and confidential reporting lines that enable the safe and anonymous reporting of suspected child abuse and learner protection concerns.

Kind regards



MR. L I MAILE, MPL

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CULTURE AND RECREATION**

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