

SafeStart South Africa: Protecting Children in High-Risk Communities (SafeStartSA)



OVERVIEW

"No violence against children is justifiable and all violence against children is preventable" (Dr. Krieger, Deputy Representative, UNICEF South Africa). The phenomenon of child sexual abuse (CSA) is a global problem and a growing concern in South Africa as one in five children is a victim of sexual abuse. This widespread problem impacts negatively on the victim, the family, the wider community and ultimately society. The emotional, psychological, and physical traumas that sexual violence victims experience can last for months, years, and for some, even a lifetime.

Children in South Africa often grow up exposed to high levels of violence in their homes, schools and neighbourhoods. It is acknowledged that the presence of various risk factors, such as family violence, crime, substance abuse and poverty in communities undermine efforts to develop effective prevention policies and the children in this community are more prone to become victims of CSA.

SUMMARY

- "No violence against children is justifiable and all violence against children is preventable" - Dr. Krieger, UNICEF South Africa.
- 1 in 5 children in South Africa is a victim of sexual abuse.
- High levels of violence in homes, schools, and communities contribute to the problem.
- Risk factors like family violence, crime, substance abuse, and poverty increase vulnerability.
- Join us to develop culturally adapted strategies for prevention.
- Together, let's protect our children and create a safer South Africa.

AIM AND GOAL

The prevention of sexual violence against children is increasingly being prioritised as a global priority but is still a neglected area. Although evidence-based strategies and programmes from other countries and regions that appear to hold promise should be considered, they must be adapted to the culture and context of South Africa's children and families. Therefore this study aims to develop evidence-based multilevel culturally adapted strategies for preventing child sexual abuse (CSA) in high-risk communities.

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