

#Kuzoba
Safe
Esigela

Learner-led and Whole-School
Violence Prevention Programme

FACILITATOR'S MANUAL



basic education
Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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agape
YOUTH MOVEMENT



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SECTION A – FET (Schooling)

Identification and detection of violence in high schools

Violence in schools is a complex and multi-faceted issue that can affect learners' physical, psychological, and emotional well-being. Early identification and effective detection of violent behaviour are critical for creating a safe learning environment.

School safety and violence prevention takes a whole-school approach to identifying, preventing and reporting (referral) to improve safe learning environments.



Violence is not limited to physical aggression. According to the World Health Organization (2002), violence is “the intentional use of force or power, actual or threatened, that results in—or is likely to result in—injury, death, psychological harm, poor development, or deprivation”. Violence can happen and come in different forms:

- Violence against oneself: self-harm and suicide.
- Person-to-person violence: bullying, assault, and interpersonal conflict.
- Collective violence: actions by groups, gangs, or organized bodies affecting communities and schools.
- Psychological and verbal violence can escalate into physical aggression, creating cycles of harm within schools and communities.

1.1. Types of Violence includes:

1.1.1 BULLYING

Definition:

Repeated use of power or influence to harm someone physically, emotionally, socially, or digitally. Bullying also manifest in different forms such as teasing – is causing physical and psychological harm. The difference between teasing and bullying lies in the relationship of the bully and victim, and in the intent of the interaction. Teasing tends to be good-natured; the intention is not to harm or make the other person feel bad. Teasing becomes bullying when a person deliberately sets out to hurt someone. Bullying comes in different forms:

PHYSICAL BULLYING

- Hitting, kicking, pushing, tripping
- Taking or damaging someone's belongings
- Physical intimidation (blocking the way, aggressive gestures)

VERBAL BULLYING

- Name-calling, insults, mocking
- Teasing in a hurtful way
- Threatening or intimidating language
- Making homophobic, xenophobic, or sexist remarks

SOCIAL BULLYING

- Excluding someone from groups or activities
- Spreading rumours or gossip
- Damaging someone's reputation or friendships
- Silent treatment or deliberate ignoring



Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying in schools is the use of digital platforms (**such as social media, messaging apps, emails, or online games**) by learners to harass, threaten, humiliate, or exclude others. It extends bullying beyond the classroom, often happening anonymously and spreading quickly to a wide audience.

EXAMPLES / "HOOKS" OF CYBERBULLYING

These are the ways it usually happens:

- **Harassing messages** – repeated insults, threats, or mean texts
- **Online shaming** – sharing embarrassing photos, videos, or personal information
- **Impersonation** – creating fake accounts to spread rumours or damage reputation
- **Exclusion** – deliberately leaving someone out of online groups or chats
- **Cyberstalking** – constant unwanted digital attention or monitoring
- **Rumour spreading** – posting lies or gossip to damage a learner's image,

Bullying and ways of Detection

PHYSICAL

- Headaches, stomach-aches, or sleep problems

SOCIAL

- Avoids certain peers or groups
- Reports of being laughed at, threatened, or excluded online

EMOTIONAL

- Sudden anger, sadness, or anxiety after using devices
- Withdrawal from friends or activities
- Avoidance of peers or areas of school
- Reports of theft or damage
- Fear, anxiety, or withdrawal

BEHAVIOURAL

- Avoids using devices or hides online activity
- Reluctance to attend school or participate in class

1.1.2 Corporal Punishment

Definition:

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child defines corporal punishment as any use of physical force intended to cause pain or discomfort, (however slight) to discipline a learner. This includes hitting with a hand or implement (e.g. belt, stick, shoe), as well as actions like kicking, shaking, pinching, pulling hair, or forcing children into painful positions. It can also involve burning, scalding, or forced ingestion. The Committee stresses that all forms of corporal punishment are degrading, and that non-physical punishments which humiliate, belittle, threaten, or frighten children are likewise incompatible with the Convention.

Important: Physical punishment is illegal in South African schools. Educators and learners must learn the importance of mediation and cooperation, to seek and negotiate non-violent solutions to conflict and differences and to make use of due process of law. (South African Schools Act)



DETECTION SIGNS:

- Unexplained bruises or injuries
- Fear of teachers
- Hitting, pinching, or forced physical activity

1.1.3 Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Definition:

GBV in schools refers to harmful acts of physical, sexual, psychological, or emotional abuse directed at learners based on their gender, gender identity, or perceived gender roles. It includes:

- Sexual harassment or assault (unwanted touching, verbal harassment, rape)
- Bullying and intimidation based on being male, female, transgender, or non-binary
- Bullying and discrimination based on being male, female, transgender or non-binary
- Discrimination in opportunities (excluding learners from activities because of gender)
- Violent actions (including physical) targeting a specific gender

Gender Based violence comes in different forms:

- **Physical:** e.g., partner beating another.
- **Sexual:** forced sex, harassment, trafficking, rape.
- **Psychological:** shaming, intimidation, insults against identity.
- **Economic:** withholding money, food, or resources to coerce someone.

Gender-based violence can also be understood in its different contexts;

- Domestic violence: abuse within the family.
- Intimate partner violence: one partner harming another.
- Traditional practices: early or forced marriage.

DETECTION SIGNS:

- Avoidance of certain areas or individuals
- Reports of harassment, unwanted touching, or sexual jokes
- Sudden withdrawal or anxiety

Notes: Understanding Sex vs. Gender:

- **Sex:** Biological characteristics (fixed)
- **Gender:** Socially learned roles, can change over time

GENDER STEREOTYPES:

- Limit learners' potential and contribute to GBV
- **Examples:** boys expected to be aggressive; girls expected to be submissive

PERPETRATORS AND VICTIMS:

- Most perpetrators are male; victims are often female
- Boys and LGBTQ+ learners can also be victims

Sexual abuse (online and offline)

- Sexually assaulting or allowing assault of a child.
- Using, forcing, or exposing a child for sexual gratification or pornography.
- Exploiting a child for commercial sexual purposes.



SEXUAL OFFENCES (CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2007):

FORMS OF SEXUAL OFFENCES IN SCHOOLS:

Sexual Assault: Any unwanted sexual contact, such as touching, groping, or kissing without consent.

Rape: Forced or coerced sexual intercourse without consent.

Indecent Exposure: Intentionally exposing private parts to others.

Child Grooming: Manipulating or luring learners into inappropriate sexual behavior (often through gifts, promises, or trust).

EXPLOITATION BY AUTHORITY FIGURES

Educators or staff using their power to demand sexual favors in exchange for marks, privileges, or protection ("sextortion").

Sexual Bullying: Spreading sexual rumours, making degrading remarks about a learner's body, or pressuring someone into sexual acts.

Unlawful Sexual Relationships:

Sexual relationships between learners and teachers or between older and younger learners where consent is not valid due to age or power imbalance.

Use of Pornography:

Forcing or coercing learners to view or participate in pornography.

Cybersexual Offences:

Sexting, sharing intimate images without consent ("revenge porn"), or online grooming.

NB: In South Africa, these acts are not only violations of school rules but are criminal offences under the law.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT:

- Unwelcome sexual attention, behaviour, or remarks (verbal, physical, or electronic).
- Can involve intimidation, humiliation, or offensive conduct based on gender/sexual orientation.
- May include promises of reward or threats for sexual compliance.

SEXUAL ABUSE DETECTION SIGNS: BEHAVIOURAL SIGNS

- Sudden withdrawal or isolation from friends and activities.
- Fear of going to school or specific teachers/learners.
- Sudden drop in academic performance.
- Age-inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviour.
- Reluctance to change clothes for sports/physical education.
- Frequent absences or requests to leave school early.
- Overly secretive use of phones or internet

EMOTIONAL SIGNS

- Unexplained fear, anxiety, or panic attacks.
- Sudden mood swings, depression, or aggression.
- Low self-esteem, shame, or guilt.
- Nightmares, difficulty sleeping, or bedwetting (in younger learners).
- Signs of trauma when certain topics or people are mentioned

PHYSICAL SIGNS

- Unexplained bruises, scratches, or injuries, especially in sensitive areas.
- Difficulty walking, sitting, or sudden complaints of pain.
- Torn, stained, or bloody clothing.



- Frequent urinary tract infections (UTIs) or genital infections.
- Sudden changes in personal hygiene (e.g., obsessive washing or neglecting hygiene).

SOCIAL SIGNS

- Avoiding certain peers, teachers, or school areas.
- Involvement in risky behaviour (substance abuse, running away).
- Displaying distrust towards adults, especially authority figures.

Important Note for Parents &

Teachers: A single sign alone does not always mean abuse, but a pattern of signs should raise concern. However, any suspicion should be taken seriously and reported immediately to school authorities, child protection services, or the police.

1.1.4 Physical Violence

ASSAULT AND FIGHTING

Definition: Intentionally applying force or threat of force to another person.

Detection Signs: Unexplained injuries, possession of weapons, repeated conflicts

- Sudden changes in behaviour, mood, or school performance
- Reluctance to attend school
- Withdrawal, isolation, or being bullied
- Sudden aggression or bullying behaviour

1.1.5 Gang-Related Violence

Definition:

Is violence driven by gang identity, rivalry, or influence, affecting the safety, learning, and well-being of learners and educators. It is associated with group membership, territorial control, or intimidation.

Detection Signs: Graffiti, hand signs, peer intimidation, carrying weapons. The following signs are also prevalent in school gang-related violence:

- Sudden change in dress style (wearing certain colours, symbols, or specific clothing linked to gangs)
- Use of hand signals, slang, or coded language associated with gangs
- Aggressive or intimidating behaviour towards peers and educators
- Frequent absence, truancy, or dropping grades
- Carrying weapons or being caught with drugs

Peer and Social Dynamics

- Formation of cliques or groups with exclusive “territorial” behaviour
- Increased tensions or conflicts between certain learner groups
- Reports of recruitment attempts or peer pressure to join gangs
- Learners showing fear of certain peers or areas in school

PHYSICAL SIGNS IN SCHOOL

- Graffiti, symbols, or gang names on walls, desks, or toilets
- Vandalism linked to gang “tags” or making territory
- Frequent fights in or around the school involving the same groups
- Gathering of learners in “corners” or specific areas that others avoid



EMOTIONAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL SIGNS

- Learners display fear, anxiety, or withdrawal (maybe victims or targets)
- Sudden change in friendship or isolation
- Learners avoiding particular routes to school or areas within it

1.1.6 Xenophobia and Homophobia

Xenophobia: Refers to negative attitudes, prejudice, discrimination, or hostile behaviour that learners direct towards classmates or peers who are perceived as foreigners or from different national, ethnic, or cultural backgrounds. It often shows up as:

- Verbal abuse (mocking accents, language, or origins)
- Bullying or exclusion (refusing to play, work, or sit with foreign learner)
- Stereotyping (labelling peers as criminals, “outsiders,” or inferior)
- Physical violence or intimidation against learners from other countries

Homophobia: Refers to any form of prejudice, discrimination, bullying, or aggression directed at learners who identify as lesbians, gay, bisexual, intersexual, or other diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. It takes the form of:

- Verbal abuse – insults, slurs, mocking, or spreading rumours
- Social exclusion – isolation or rejecting learners because of their identity or perceived identity
- Physical violence – harassment, assault, or threats

- Psychological harm – intimidation, humiliation, or constant pressure to “hide” who they are
- Institutional discrimination – lack of protection, unequal treatment, or failure by educators/peers to address the abuse

DETECTION SIGNS:**Emotional & Psychological Signs**

- Sudden withdrawal, isolation, or avoidance of group activities
- Visible anxiety, sadness, or low self-esteem
- Signs of depression (loss of interest, lack of motivation)
- Fearfulness around certain peers or reluctance to attend school
- Increased sensitivity to jokes, comments or teasing

Behavioural Signs

- Frequent absenteeism or truancy (avoiding hostile environments)
- Sudden changes in friendship circles or sitting alone
- Aggressive outbursts or defensive behaviour (as response to bullying)
- Changes in dress or self-expression to “fit in” or avoid attention

Academic Signs

- Declining grades or loss of concentration in classes
- Reduced participation in discussions, sports, or group work
- Dropping out of school activities they once enjoyed

Physical & Health-Related Signs

- Unexplained injuries (may signal physical bullying)
- Complaints of frequent headaches or stomach aches (stress-related)
- Signs of self-harm or talk of hopelessness



Note: These signs alone don't prove discrimination, but when several appear together – especially with reports of teasing, bullying, or exclusion, they strongly suggest the learner is facing discrimination based on sexual orientation.

2. Prevention of violence in schools

Violence prevention in schools refers to the deliberate strategies, programs, and practices put in place to stop violence before it occurs, reduce risk factors, and create a safe, supportive learning environment. It involves identifying the root causes of violence, such as social, economic, and cultural factors, and implementing strategies to address them. Effective violence prevention efforts can help reduce the incidence of violent behaviour, mitigate its harmful effects, and foster a culture of respect and empathy. **It goes beyond reacting to fights or misconduct, it focuses on:**

- Promoting positive behaviour (respect, empathy, problem-solving).
- Teaching conflict resolution skills to handle disagreements peacefully.
- Building strong relationships among learners, teachers, parents, and the community.
- Creating safe physical emotional spaces and systems that are reliable and trustworthy where every learner feels valued and protected.

2.1 Identification of Different Types of Violence

2.1.1 Bullying

Preventative measures:

- **Stay in groups:** Avoid walking alone in isolated areas.
- **Know trusted adults:** Identify trusted teachers, counsellors, or staff to report incidents.
- **Be aware of surroundings:** Pay attention to what is happening around you.
- **Speak up:** If you witness bullying, speak up or report it.
- **Report incidents:** Report bullying incidents to teachers, counsellors, or parents.
- **Stand up against bullying:** Support those being bullied and promote a positive school culture.

2.1.2 Corporal Punishment

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES:

- **Know Your Rights:** Familiarize yourself with laws and policies regarding corporal punishment in schools. Corporal punishment is prohibited, and learners have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
- **Report Incidents:** If you experience or witness corporal punishment, report it to a trusted teacher, school counsellor, or administrator. Many schools have reporting systems in place to handle such incidents.
- **Seek Support:** Talk to parents, guardians, or a trusted adult about your concerns or experiences with corporal punishment. They can provide emotional support and help you navigate the situation.



2.1.3 Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES:

- **Participate in Awareness Campaigns:** Join or organize awareness campaigns, workshops, or events to educate your peers about gender-based violence, its impact, and the importance of respectful relationships.
- **Support Survivors:** Believe and support survivors of gender-based violence, offering them a safe and non-judgmental space to share their experiences.
- **Challenge Harmful Gender Norms:** Encourage critical thinking about traditional gender roles and stereotypes, promoting a more inclusive and respectful environment.

2.1.4 SEXUAL ABUSE AT SCHOOL

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES:

- **Know your Rights:** Understand that you have the right to be safe and respected at school. Familiarize yourself with your school's policies and procedures for reporting sexual abuse.
- **Trust your Instincts:** If you feel uncomfortable or unsafe around someone, trust your instincts and seek help.
- **Know the Reporting Process:** Familiarize yourself with the reporting process for sexual abuse incidents at your school and know what to expect.

2.1.5 Gang-Related Violence

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES:

- **Stay Focused on Education:** Prioritize your education and set academic goals to achieve a positive future.
- **Join Positive Activities:** Engage in extracurricular activities, sports, or clubs that promote teamwork, discipline, and positive relationships.
- **Learn About Gang Prevention:** Educate yourself about the risks and consequences of gang involvement and the benefits of positive alternatives.

2.1.6 HOMOPHOBIA

HOMOPHOBIA

- **Educate Yourself:** Learn about LGBTQ+ issues, history, and experiences to promote understanding and empathy.
- **Respect Others:** Treat others with respect and kindness, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- **Support LGBTQ+ Peers:** Be an ally to LGBTQ+ peers and offer support and acceptance.

3. Reporting Violence in Schools

If learners feel safe, are heard, and supported, they are far more likely to report and help create a school culture where abuse and harassment are not tolerated. Reporting violence in schools by learners involves a structured process that ensures the incident is communicated safely, clearly, and



effectively to appropriate authorities or support systems. **Below is a breakdown of what's typically involved in reporting process:**

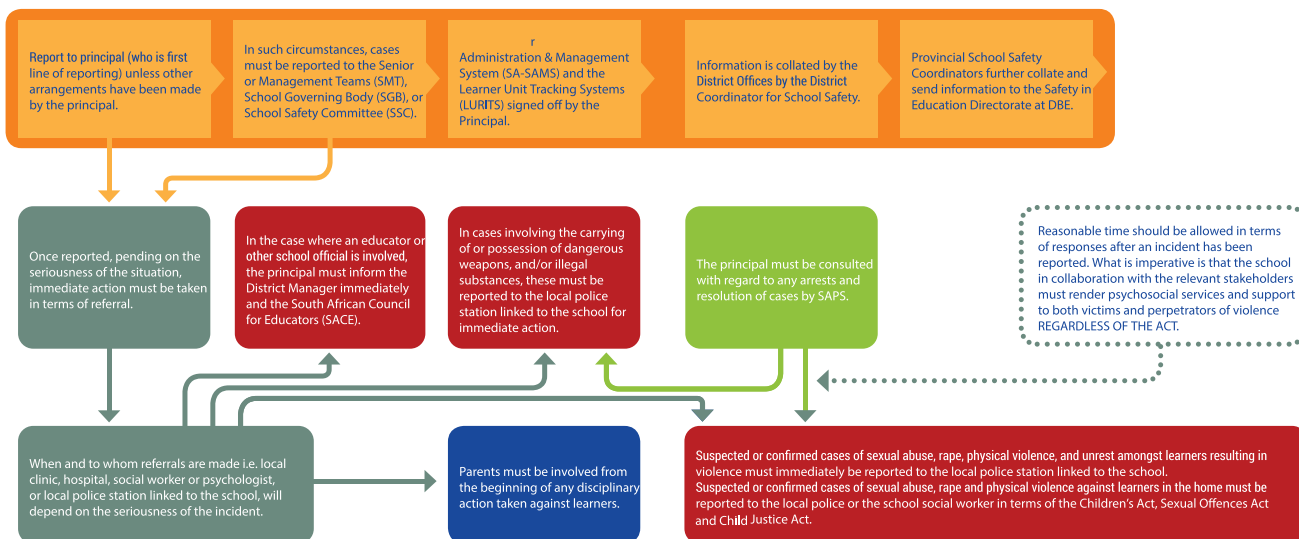
LEARNERS CAN CHOOSE TO REPORT THROUGH:

- Speaking directly to a trusted adult (e.g., teacher, school counsellor, principal).
- Writing a statement and submitting it to a reporting box or complaint register.
- Using digital or anonymous tools (e.g., online forms, apps, school safety platforms).
- Confiding in a peer support group or student leader who helps escalate the matter.

THE LEARNERS MUST PROVIDE DETAILS OF THE INCIDENT BY SHARING THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

- What happened (nature of the incident)
- When and where it happened
- Who was involved (including witnesses if any)
- Whether it has happened before

Note: Learners should never be pressured to share more than they are comfortable with, especially in sensitive cases like sexual harassment.



To go to People – Internal

Institutional School Channels

DESIGNATED SAFETY OFFICERS:

STAFF MEMBERS APPOINTED TO HANDLE SAFETY AND ABUSE CONCERNS:

- Choose a teacher you feel safe with to report the issue.
- Speak with a member of the School-Based Support team (SBST):
- Get emotional support and report violence confidentially.
- Approach the School Principal or Deputy
- For serious incidents, go directly to school leadership.

Outside Help – Call a free number like [See back page]

- National Child Toll Free Crisis Line: **080 005 5555**
- Childline South Africa – WhatsApp Number: **083 371 2104**
- SAPS Crime Stop: **08600 10111**

School Violence Reporting Procedures

A. Anonymous Reporting Tools

- Online Incident Reporting Form: Accessible via the school website or student portal.
- Anonymous Tip Line: A phone number or SMS service maintained by the school or partnered with local authorities.
- Physical Drop Boxes: Secure boxes placed in discreet locations for written reports.

B. Direct Reporting

- Trusted Staff Members: Encourage Learners to report incidents to teachers, counsellors, or principals.
- Parent and Guardian Reporting: Provide a dedicated email and phone number for parents to report concerns.
- Peer Reporting: Empower Learners to report observed violence or warning signs involving classmates.

C. REPORTING PROCESS

Step 1: Submission

- Reporter provides details (who, what, when, where and witnesses).
- Option to remain anonymous (except when required by law).

Step 2: Initial Triage

Designated staff (e.g., school safety coordinator or counsellor) reviews the report within 24 hours.

Determine the level of threat (low, moderate, high).

Step 3: Investigation

- Interviews with involved parties and witnesses.
- Review of relevant footage, social media posts, or physical evidence.
- Maintain confidentiality and protection for reporters and involved parties.

Step 4: Documentation

- Create a confidential incident report.
- Store securely in compliance with student privacy laws (e.g., POPIA).



Step 5: Response and Intervention

- Implement consequences according to the school discipline policy.
- Notify parents/guardians as appropriate.
- Involve law enforcement if necessary.
- Provide counselling or conflict mediation services.

FOLLOW-UP

Monitor the situation post-incident for potential retaliation or recurrence.

- Provide support for victims and educate aggressors where appropriate.
- Review and revise safety or intervention plans.

4. Tips for Educators**Preventive Strategies:**

- Promote positive role models
- Encourage equal partnerships and respect
- Challenge stereotypes to reduce GBV
- Watch playgrounds, hallways, and bathrooms closely.
- Ask children gentle questions: "Is something happening that makes you Encourage anonymous reporting (how to-see section: reporting as school policy)
- Keep behaviour logs to see repeated incidents.
- Teach children respect, fairness, and kindness.

Physical Punishment**Action Steps:**

- Ensure discipline is positive, constructive, and non-physical
- Follow legal guidelines prohibiting corporal punishment in South African schools

Gender-Based Violence (GBV)**Action Steps:**

- Promote gender equality in classroom activities
- Teach respect and inclusive behaviour
- Report incidents per school policy
- Follow mandatory reporting procedures immediately
- Provide safe spaces for disclosure
- Document all observations carefully

Fighting and Assault**Action Steps:**

- Intervene immediately and safely
- Separate involved learners
- Report serious incidents to school management

Gang-Related Violence**Action Steps:**

- Identify high-risk areas (playgrounds, bathrooms, dark corners)
- Monitor group interactions



Xenophobia and Homophobia

Action Steps:

- Keep a behaviour log to track repeated incidents
- Observe interactions in playgrounds, hallways, and classrooms
- Conduct gentle check-ins with learners showing distress
- Implement anonymous reporting systems where appropriate

Classroom and School-level Prevention

- **Promote Positive Relationships:** Encourage teamwork, empathy, and conflict resolution.
- **Challenge Stereotypes:** Teach gender equality and respect for diversity.
- **Model Safe Behaviour:** Teachers should demonstrate respectful communication.
- **Safe Reporting:** Ensure children know who they can safely talk to.
- **Follow-up:** Monitor learners after interventions to ensure safety and improvement.

Sources

- The NSSF is a guiding strategy that creates a system to improve schools to respond to violence.
- Protocol for the management and reporting of sexual abuse and harassment in schools
- Protocol to Deal with Incidences of Corporal Punishments in Schools
- Speak Out-Youth report sexual abuse
- Online Safety in South African High Schools, Curriculum Guideline for Grade 8-12
- #asiyifuni Learner-Leader Guide for GBV-Free Schools
- Violence in Schools: Learner Book
- Facilitator Guide on Violence in Schools
- DBE Stop Bullying Flyer – STOP – Walk % Report!
- Addressing Bullying in Schools – Workbook
- Challenging Homophobic Bullying in Schools

