

Be Inspired INSPIRE: Seven Strategies for Ending Violence Against Children in South Africa

INSPIRE: Seven strategies for ending violence against children is an evidence-based technical package to support countries in their efforts to prevent and respond to violence against children aged 0-17 years.

Each letter of the word INSPIRE stands for one of the strategies, which are: Implementation and enforcement of laws; Norms and values; Safe environments; Parent and caregiver support; Income and economic strengthening; Response and support services; and Education and life skills.

The Institute for Security Studies and Save the Children South Africa partnered to convene a series of workshops in 2019 to gather information about how the country is responding to prevent violence against children. Workshops were represented by:

- Civil society sector including implementing organizations
- Researchers and academics
- National and provincial government departments
- The children's sector, including provincial representatives from Children's Parliament

In 2017, South Africa became a Pathfinder country under the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children.

In doing so, the government, NGOs, the research community, international development partners committed to accelerated action to prevent and reduce violence, neglect and exploitation experienced by children.



THIS IS WHAT WE FOUND:



Footnotes

1. South African Child Gauge 2018: Children, families and the State. Children's Institute.

2. Child Rights International Network 2016. Global Report on Access to Justice for Children, 2016. https://archive.crin.org/sites/default/files/cr_in_a2j_global_report_final_1.pdf

3. Humanium Realization of Child's Rights Index, 2016 <https://www.humanium.org/en/rcri/>

4. Grassroot Soccer <https://www.grassrootsoccer.org/gender/>

5. UNICEF South Africa 2017 Highlights. https://www.unicef.org/southafrica/S_AF_resources_annual2017.pdf

6. Jamieson L, Mathews S, & Berry L (2017) Strengthening the child protection system in South Africa. Cape Town: Children's Institute, University of Cape Town. [Policy brief]

7. WHO. Series of briefings on violence prevention. Preventing violence by developing life skills in children and adolescents

I IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS

- There is a strong legislative and policy framework for responding to violence but little research to assess the effectiveness of the laws.
- While the country's child protection laws and policies are fairly comprehensive, there is a lack of co-ordination across government departments responsible for implementation.
- The two overarching pieces of legislation are the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Children's Act.
- In ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, South Africa agrees to:

- prevent violence against children (Article 19 & 37)

- protect children from further harm if they have already fallen victim to violence (Article 19 & 37)

- support and treat children who have experienced violence (Article 39)

- The Children's Act 38 of 2010 provides for a holistic range of interventions for children and their families, including: prevention and early intervention programmes; child protection services; and therapeutic and aftercare services.



A summary on the latest developments in policy and legislation affecting children can be found in the South African Child Gauge 2018.¹

South Africa ranks 12th out of 107 countries on the Access to Justice for Children Index - a measure of its legal system.²



However, South Africa scores 7/10 - a 'difficult situation' - on the Realization of Children's Rights Index - a measure of whether children rights are real and respected.³

N NORMS AND VALUES

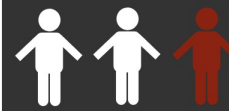
- Harmful norms are addressed through individual and group-based programmes, mostly through implementing NGOs
- Government invests in campaigns and communication strategies around reducing harmful norms and values
- There is very little research assessing the impact of communication strategies and campaigns, and very little evidence overall of what is required to effectively change norms that support the use of violence, or entrench gender inequality.

By the age of **16** **70%** of girls see violence in relationships as acceptable

1 in 3 boys have already perpetrated some form of intimate partner violence⁴

S SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

- A number of government departments and NGOs have strategies and programmes to increase physical and online safety
- Research often provides data about area-based crime and violence.



1 out of 3 children experience some form of violence in their lifetime.⁵

P PARENT AND CAREGIVER SUPPORT

- NGOs across the country deliver parenting support programmes, many of which have been evaluated.
- There is a strong and growing evidence-based in relation to the effectiveness of these programmes.
- Several government departments are addressing the need for parent and caregiver support.

Families & households in South Africa take on increasingly diverse forms¹

↑ Households headed by women

↑ Households in which children do not live with either parent

↓ Marriage rates

I INCOME AND ECONOMIC STRENGTHENING

- Government has a range of interventions and strategies to reduce poverty, including a social grant system.
- Research exists about the use and impact of social grants.
- Children expressed concern over the use - and misuse - of social grants in households, calling for some form of monitoring of expenditure

65% of children live below the upper-bound poverty line¹

90% of children benefit from social services in South Africa⁵

R RESPONSE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

- Government, NGOs and researchers engage in a number of activities, programmes, policies and research in relation to response and support services for victims of violence in South Africa.
- The demand for direct services to victims and child perpetrators of violence currently far outstrips the existing capacity.
- Collaboration between the different stakeholders and coordination of services is a challenge

A Child Abuse Tracking Study followed abuse cases reported to social services to assess whether they were referred to the police, and whether cases reported to the police were referred to social services. This assessed the level of collaboration between the two services.⁶

No collaboration **8%**

Collaboration **68%**

No information on file **23%**

E EDUCATION AND LIFE SKILLS

- The Department of Basic Education is addressing the need for improved life skills training through the Life Orientation curriculum.
- NGOs offer a range of life skills programmes in communities and schools in some provinces and areas in South Africa.
- Several government departments are addressing the need for parent and caregiver support.

Developing life skills⁷ in young children can:

Prevent over-aggression

Improve social skills

Boost educational achievement

...leading to reductions in violence.