

**CENTRE FOR CHILD LAW DISMAYED AT DISTASTEFUL AND THOUGHTLESS  
REPORTING OF THE SEXUAL ASSAULT OF A NORTHERN CAPE LEARNER**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 10 February 2015**

**Statement endorsed by: The Teddy Bear Clinic for Abused Children and Childline South Africa**

The Centre for Child Law is outraged and dismayed at the distasteful and thoughtless reporting of the sexual assault of a learner at a school in the Northern Cape. The Centre has come across media reports that contain photographs of the sexual assault. This is clearly subjecting the victim to secondary trauma.

This type of reporting is extremely unethical and violates the human rights of the victim as guaranteed by the Constitution. The victim's rights to human dignity and privacy have been violated in the most insensitive manner. Such reporting is a criminal offence as it is in contravention of section 153(3) and 154 of the Criminal Procedure Act to publish any identifying details of any victim of a sexual assault.

There appears to be a lack of clarity on the age of the victim. The Centre would like to state in no uncertain terms that it does not matter if the victim is 18 years old. He is still a victim of a sexual assault and should be treated with respect and dignity.

It is clear that the impact of the secondary trauma of the victim as a result of the publication of the photographs was not taken into account.

The Centre acknowledges that some media have endeavoured to report the incident carefully and in a manner that respects the rights and wellbeing of all parties. The Centre urges media to use caution as they report on the incident, as this case involves a number of criminal offences which, amongst other things, involve a victim of sexual assault and child offenders.

**Ends.**

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