

FPB calls for campaign against child pornography

[The Film and Publication Board](#) (FPB) is engaged in a campaign against child pornography, targeting schools and children in an effort to educate children about responsible use of technology platforms, as well as to educate parents about the dangers related to unmonitored use of cellphones and the Internet.

The CEO of the FPB, Yoliswa Makhasi has expressed dismay at the numerous incidents over the last month where children within schools have been caught filming sexual acts amongst peers and distributing these.

She is further appalled by recent reports on the alleged involvement of educators in the distribution and reproduction of child pornographic images. The recently reported cases of sexual abuse reflect the growing irresponsible and dangerous use of new media technologies by children and the apparent disregard and ignorance that has clouded parents and educators from taking action.

"It is completely unbecoming that the very people whom we entrust with the safety of our children could be the very same people involved in illegal acts such as the distribution of child pornography. It cannot be enough that we merely suspend the culprits from work, but we must ensure that the authorities charge them in line with the Film and Publications Act to ensure that they are prosecuted for these crimes against children," she said.

The Film and Publication Act prescribed a maximum prison sentence of 10 years for offences relating to creation, possession, distribution, importation and broadcasting of child pornography. The act has been amended and the cap of the maximum removed which means that perpetrators could receive prison sentences of 10 years or more. The FPB trusts that the courts will set the example in these cases, should the accused be found guilty.

Call to Department of Education

"We call upon the Department of Education to take the matter of cyber safety education seriously and ensure that it is integrated to the life skills curriculum. It is crucial that a sustainable mechanism of engaging with learners on matters of technology is developed and there can be no better way other than integrating with curriculum; as technology develops and gets more advanced.

"As the FPB we encourage schools to invite us for awareness raising workshops and members of the public to make use of our toll-free line +27 (0) 800-148-148 to report acts of child-pornography," concludes Makhasi.

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