

# Denying education is child abuse

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The Government Communication and Information System's (GCIS) Gauteng regional office visited the communities of Hekpoort and Smoke Down in Mogale City to provide them with information that may help curb child abuse in the areas.



GCIS's Phumla Williams says communities need to have a greater awareness about child abuse. Image: GCIS

The visit was part of a series of road shows by the Gauteng GCIS aimed at raising awareness about child abuse and children's rights during Child Protection Week, observed annually to raise awareness around the rights of children and mobilise all sectors of society to ensure that children are cared for and protected.

"The importance of Child Protection Week is to raise awareness about the different forms of child abuse that occur mostly in informal settlements and other communities," said organiser of the roadshows, Matshidiso Mokoka.

She said the Gauteng GCIS had embarked on the roadshows to to engage and educate the communities in a language that they understood and provide them with relevant information that would help them stamp out the abuse of children.

## Greater awareness needed

The police are working hand-in-hand with victim empowerment NGOs to help curb the problem of child abuse in the area.

Many of the children and parents who had gathered at the event said they were surprised to learn that denying a child education was a violation of their rights and a form of child abuse for which they could be prosecuted.

During Child Protection Week, government strongly condemned the abuse of children, stating that it would not tolerate child abuse.

Acting Chief Executive of GCIS, Phumla Williams, advised communities to be vigilant about child abuse.

"Let us play our part, as citizens by reporting any suspected child or women abuse within your respective communities," William said.

The road shows, which have also visited Tsakane and Daveyton, will continue until 17 June. Other districts include Hammanskraal, Soshanguve, Onverwacht, Ekangala and Sebokeng.

The Gauteng GCIS team will end the campaign in Diepsloot and Olivenhoutbosch.

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