CREATING PROGRAMS FOR SAFE SCHOOLS:

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN RELATION TO

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

OLLY MLAMLELI *Free State Department of Education, SA*; PONTSHO MABELANE
Mpumalanga Education Department, SA; VERNET NAPO *Gauteng Department of
Education, SA*; NTOMBI SIBIYA, *formerly of Mpumalanga Department of
Education, SA*, VALERIE FREE *McGill University*

ABSTRACT. In this article we describe some of the strategies and initiatives
within Departments of Education in South Africa to change attitudes and
behaviours around gender-based violence and harassment and bring about
systemic change. We look specifically at the role of the National Department
of Education (NDoE), teachers, learners, and school policy. The areas
selected reflect the work and interests of the National Department of
Education's Gender Equity Directorate and the gender focal persons in three
provincial Departments of Education: Free State, Gauteng, and Mpumalanga.

RÉSUMÉ. Dans cet article, nous décrivons certaines des stratégies et initiatives
prises par les ministères de l'Éducation d'Afrique du Sud en vue de modifier
les attitudes et les comportements qui entourent la violence sexospécifique et
le harcèlement et de provoquer des changements d'ordre systémique. Nous
nous penchons en particulier sur le rôle du ministère de l'Éducation nationale,
des professeurs, des élèves et de la politique scolaire. Les domaines choisis
reflètent les travaux et intérêts de la direction générale sur l'équité entre les
sexes du ministère de l'Éducation nationale et des personnes-ressources de
ministères de l'Éducation de trois provinces: Free State, Gauteng et Mpumalanga.

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This article focuses on the problem of gender-based violence and sexual
harassment in South African schools by presenting different perspectives of
educational administrators from the national and provincial departments of
education.[1] This provides a way of looking at the diverse challenges to
ensuring learners have a safe learning environment as well as the variety of
opportunities for bringing about change. Ntombi Sibiya, writing of the
Gender Equity Directorate within the National Department of Education,
describes an array of recent initiatives from reaching out to the media to
forming partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), all
with the aim of raising awareness about violence prevention and sexual
harassment issues. Working in tandem with the Gender Equity Directorate
are the nine gender focal persons within each of the nine provincial Depart-
ments of Education. The perspectives of three of these provincial gender

focal persons are represented here. Olly Mlamleli of the Free State Department of Education has worked to establish a district network equipped to tackle gender equity issues. She examines the context for teachers and outlines the types of activities they can undertake inside their classrooms. Pontsho Mabelane, the gender focal person with the Department of Education in Mpumalanga, presents key arguments for building the capacity of youth leadership. Vernet Napo, who recently helped to formulate the Gender Policy in the Gauteng Department of Education (1999), presents legislative aspects of developing a school policy on gender-based violence and harassment.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE, SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SCHOOLS IN SOUTH AFRICA

> Gendered or sex-based violence, in the broader context of discrimination, constrains the freedom of movement, choices and activities of its victims. It frequently results in: intimidation; poor levels of participation in learning activities; forced isolation; low self-esteem or self-confidence; dropping out of education or from particular subjects; or other physical, sexual and/or psychological damage. It erodes the basis of equal opportunity realised through equal access to education. (Wolpe, Quinlan, & Martinez, 1997, p. 219)

QUESTIONS REGARDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT

1. What do you think sexual harassment is?
2. These are some of the ways that learners get harassed elsewhere:
   - sexual comments, jokes or gestures
   - negative comments about being female or male
   - having sexual rumours spread around the school about you
   - being teased with sexually suggestive pictures from magazines
   - being forced to kiss someone
   - being teased about being gay or lesbian
   - being stared at in a sexual way
   - being insulted about having a male or female body
   - being pressured to go out on dates
   - being pressured to have sex
   - being sexually assaulted
3. Do you think any of this behaviour happens to girls in your school or other South African schools?
4. Do you think any of this behaviour happens to boys in your school or in other South African schools?
5. Can you think of an example of a girl/boy being sexually harassed?
6. Could you do a drawing of this?
7. How does sexual harassment make people feel?
8. Do you think sexual harassment is a problem in your school?
9. Who do you think does most of the harassing in a school setting?
10. Who is most likely to be harassed - girls or boys? Why?
11. What do learners do when they are sexually harassed?
12. What would you do if you were sexually harassed?

The questions in the box on the opposite page are all questions that groups of learners in several provinces discussed either directly or indirectly when they participated in workshops in May, 1999 with June Larkin, author of *Sexual harassment: High school girls speak out*. As must be evident in some of the examples of sexual harassment noted in question number two, many of the forms it takes are not always obvious. Out and out examples of physical abuse and sexual assault are also not always reported, but they are more likely to be taken as a crime.

Some of the learners' answers to question number six are represented throughout this paper. The fact that so many of the drawings showed physical abuse very graphically suggests that it is far easier to recognize and represent the extremes, while day-to-day behaviors such as being stared at in a sexual way or being teased with sexually suggestive pictures may simply be regarded as normalized activity. June Larkin (1994/97) reinforces this view that violence is not necessarily rooted in conflict. As she observes, when a young woman walks down a school hallway and demeaning comments are directed towards her, she is being singled out because she belongs to a specific group: she is female.

There is no shortage of reports, studies, personal anecdotes, newspaper accounts and the like to indicate that sexual harassment – sex-based and gender-based violence – is a key barrier to equality in schooling in South Africa. As is noted in the workshop on gendered violence contained within *A School-based module on managing sexual harassment and gender-based violence* (CSAEMP, forthcoming):

> Based on the findings of a study conducted by the international NGO, Community Information, Empowerment and Transparency (CIET), in partnership with the Southern Council, one in three girls living in Johannesburg's Southern Council area have experienced violence in school. CIET Africa interviewed 1500 students of both sexes from grade eight to matric at schools in Soweto, Eldorado Park, Orange Farm and Lenasia. Almost half the boys said they had friends who were sexually violent and three in every ten males said they could be violent towards a girl. (Larkin, cited from Tabane, 1999)

"Jackrolling" is a growing form of gendered violence directed at schoolgirls. This practice is a ritualistic display of male power through the forceful abduction and gang rape of young women (Larkin, cited from Gouws & Kitzenger, 1995). On November 3, 1997, Cape Times education writer Troye Lunde reported on the horrific gang rape of a 17 year old at a South African school:
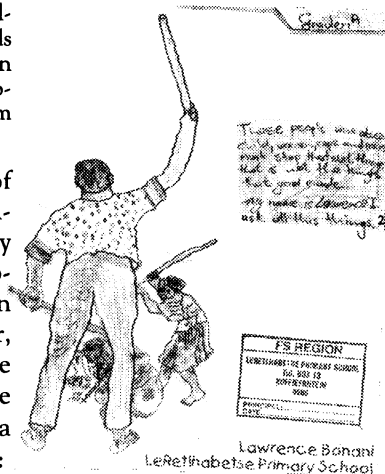
> She was raped at gunpoint at school by four classmates. They dragged her into an empty classroom and barricaded the door. (Larkin, cited from Tabane, 1999)

> She also includes in her background paper the following statistics: In South Africa, at least one woman is killed every six days by her male partner (femicide).

> In a study involving interviews with 24 pregnant women (average age 16.4 years) in Khayelitsha, 23/34 described assault as a regular feature of their sexual relationship.

> According to South African Police Services (SAPS), in 1995 there were 34, 783 reported rapes. SAPS estimates that only one in 35 rapes is reported.

> SAPS estimates that a woman is raped every 35 seconds.

> Rape has the lowest conviction of all crimes of assault. (Larkin, cited from ANC Women's Caucus, np)

It is important to note that males can also be victims of gendered violence, as can be seen in the incidence of gay-bashing and homophobia. Michael Goodman (1998), in his work on homophobia, has noted the ways in which heteronormativity has served to normalize gay-bashing within South African schools. Several other South African writers including Robert Morrell (1998) and Alan Thompson (1999) have pointed out that males who do not appear to subscribe to aggressive forms of masculinity are particularly at risk. In the CSAEMP module there is the report of a nineteen year old male student who was victimized and harassed for being gay:

> At one stage we were put into a separate class because everyone knew we were gay and did not like us for that. Teachers told us they could not teach us because we were spirits of the devil and because they were Christians. Sometimes they would just ignore us if we wanted to contribute in class. Instead they would play practical jokes on us for everyone to laugh. (Bekizulu, 1997)

A key document which helped to publicize the impact of gender-based violence and create support for work in gender equity in education was the Gender Equity Task Team (GETT) Report published by the National Department of Education in 1997. The report helped to focus attention on the gender and power dynamics underlying the violence and sexual harassment prevalent in schools at a point when the Department of Education was starting to restructure the inequitable and unwieldy bureaucratic machinery inherited from the apartheid regime, and devising new policies and programs. The GETT Report also pointed out that the laudable goal of equal opportunity for both girls and boys in education is severely hampered by gender-based violence and harassment. The authors of the Report stress that child abuse, sexual harassment and violence "need to be acknowledged and

recognized. It is only when this is done that adequate ways of eliminating these social scourges will be able to be developed in the education system" (Wolpe et al., 1997, p. 93). More than anything though, a fundamental assumption of the GETT Report was that "the ways in which access to and outcomes of education are affected by sex and gender-based violence and harassment are often not considered in educational policy or planning" (Wolpe et al., 1997, p. 219). Thus strategies and initiatives described in the remainder of the paper all have the aim of drawing attention to the dire need to create an environment free from gender-based violence and harassment if we are to bring about opportunities for increasing access to and improving outcomes for all learners.

MANAGING SAFE SCHOOLS: A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE (*Ntombi Sibiya*)

The Constitution of South Africa confers certain legislative powers to the National and Provincial Departments of Education whereby the National Department is responsible for setting norms and standards and the Provincial Departments, guided by the national policy, are responsible for setting their own priorities and implementation strategies. This requires that a collaborative partnership framework based on theoretical and practical assumptions be developed by both parties.

When the National Department of Education (NDoE) was established in May 1994, it was faced with a number of challenges with respect to the absence of a culture of teaching and learning in the schools: a lack of discipline caused by crime, poverty, substance abuse; a lack of parental and community support; poor leadership and management, and a general lack of motivation, honesty and professionalism. There was also a marked absence of business and private sector involvement. Not the least of these challenges was the lack of teaching and learning resources.

In addition, recent developments show the national rate of HIV prevalence is at 22.8% (Anthropology News, 1999). The epidemic in South Africa is among the most severe in the world and it continues to increase at an alarming rate. Prevailing attitudes about sexuality and gender exacerbate the problem as Mitchell and Smith (2000) observe in a recent paper on the links between HIV/AIDS and gender-based violence. In that paper they note that "(g)ender-based violence directed towards girls and young women often finds lethal expression in the increasing rate of HIV/AIDS amongst this population" (p. 3). They go on to describe the ways in which aggressive masculinity as a feature of violence "subverts" popular messages about the "ABCs" of HIV/AIDS prevention. As they observe, "Young women who are being forced to engage in sex have no power and are hardly in a position to negotiate a non-sexual relationship or one in which the male partner uses a condom" (p. 5).

Opportunities for change: Creating safe schools and the call for action

The Minister of Education in his *Call to Action* statement and the National Department of Education Implementation Plan for *Tirisano* (2000) has called for Provincial Departments of Education and the Civil Society to join hands in establishing safe school environments free from gender-based and sex-based violence. Through the establishment of the COLTS (Culture of Learning, Teaching and Service) initiative, the NDoE embarked upon a number of programs in an effort to intensify the urgency and participation to its commitment to quality education, briefly outlined below:

• Confronting School Based Obstacles to Learning and Teaching (Initiated 1997): The NDoE in collaboration with the Joint Enrichment Project encouraged schools to explore non-threatening and creative ways to portray conditions in individual schools, particularly that made it difficult for effective learning and teaching to take place. Various activities in the form of drama were initiated. The drama presentations have served to provide an insight into what makes schools dysfunctional, as reflected from the perspective of school-based education stakeholders.

• *Yizo-Yizo* (Initiated 1999): The COLTS Directorate in conjunction with SABC (South African Broadcasting Commission) televised a 13 part drama series aimed at creating awareness on social and personal issues that affected learning and teaching, developing positive role models, and modeling the process of restoration in a typical secondary school. Modeled on the genre of the popular soap opera genre (Mitchell, 1999; 2000), a "second run" of the series is currently being developed by the South African Broadcasting Commission (in conjunction with the NdoE).

• Miracles in Education Project (Initiated 1997): The Sowetan newspaper, Read Education Trust, ISCOR, SABC and the NDoE initiated this project with an aim of identifying and publicizing role models for learners, educators and managers. The project encouraged communities to nominate individuals or schools that were making an effort in improving the quality of education. Winners on various categories were made public in the Sowetan as well as in other local newspapers.

A pillar of the COLTS Campaign is the Creating Safe Schools initiative which supports the development of crime – and violence free learning sites. Additionally, partnerships within government departments and the Office on the Status of Women (OSW) have been established with an aim of developing a comprehensive plan for addressing issues of violence in our societies. For example, the National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS) consists of a series of projects. COLTS has participated in the development of the NCPS and focused on three sub-projects: Public Awareness and Information, Victim Empowerment and School Safety.

Another collaborative project is the development of a school-based module on sex-based and gender-based violence developed under the auspices of the Canada-South Africa Education Management Program (CSAEMP). The module supports what the GETT Report has endorsed, namely that there is a need to develop a "whole institution" approach, led by management and within a legislative and policy framework.

The Gender Equity Directorate has also participated in various national activities aimed at reducing violence in the school communities. These include the 16 Days of Activism on Gender Violence held every December, the White Ribbon Campaign, and participating in the implementation strategy on the Domestic Violence Act of 1998. The Commission on Gender Equality and other Non-governmental organizations, such as the National Network on Violence Against Women (NNVAW), the Sexual Harassment Education Project (SHEP) and the Forum for African Women Educationalist South Africa (FAWESA) have formalized links with the National and Provincial Departments of Education in order to facilitate collaboration on the sexual harassment action.

The Ministry of Education has acknowledged the seriousness of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and is committed to reducing the social, economic and developmental consequences of HIV/AIDS in the education system. The Ministry recently introduced the National Policy on HIV/AIDS for Learners and Educators, which seeks to promote effective preventative and curative measures on HIV/AIDS within the education system.
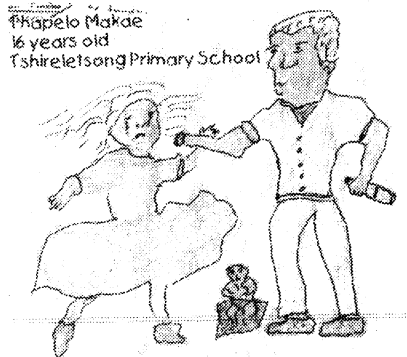
Challenges

Sex-based and gender-based violence and the spread of HIV/AIDS are the result of the socialization process and assigned roles, which determine how boys and girls experience reality and how they learn appropriate gender roles and stereotypes. Many challenges to creating safe schools have to do with creating a gender-sensitive environment which can change attitudes and behaviours. It is of course important to develop a school policy on sexual harassment and have action plans developed, as well as to have in place a

means of reporting and recording a system on incidences of violent behaviour in schools and the hired counselors to respond, yet a key starting point is changing a mind set that accepts violence as normal.

MANAGING SAFE SCHOOLS:
PROVINCIAL PERSPECTIVES TEACHING FOR CHANGE *(Olly Mlamleli)*

Millions of children and young adults in South Africa attend schools daily. Facilities available in these schools vary dramatically. For most South African learners, the guarantee of access is to poor facilities, overcrowded classes and almost no learning resources. The environment in schools lends itself to a situation where harassment thrives. The culture of human rights promotion of the child is absent and the prevalence of sexual harassment reflects the absence of a culture of learning, teaching and service (COLTS).

Challenges: Teachers and sexual harassment

It is important for teachers to help raise awareness of what is meant by sexual harassment and for males in particular to have opportunities to learn how it makes females feel to be harassed. Yet female teachers themselves are subjected to sexual harassment and have yet to speak out forcibly against it. A recent report by the Forum for African Women Educationalists South Africa (FAWESA, 1998) draws attention to research which shows that "male principals, teachers, students, and parents of students sexually harass women teachers" (p. 2, cited from Hercules, 1993). Wolpe et al. (1997) also describe a not uncommon practice by male teachers and others in schools who "put their hands up [girls'] skirts, touch their genitalia and sniff their fingers" (p. 51).

Some research suggests that the lack of strong concerted action is partly accounted for by the teachers' own perceptions of sexual harassment: it is regarded as simply the way that men naturally behave (FAWESA, p. 4, cited from Hercules, 1993). Teachers demonstrate a lack of understanding of gender and sexual harassment issues and are ill-equipped to educate children about these issues according to the FAWESA document, which reported on a sexual harassment project between two collaborating Departments of Education, the Western Cape and Gauteng. It became evident that teachers require training about gender issues before they approach learners about gender and sexual harassment and that without adequate teacher

training the success of school-based projects is severely constrained. While it is important for district employees to attend seminars on sexual harassment, they need first to familiarize themselves with basic theoretical and practical assumptions regarding gender.

Opportunities:
The role of educators to promote a conducive learning environment

As noted above, gender is poorly understood by the majority of educators. The following excerpt from the CSAEMP *School-based Module on Managing Gender-based Violence and Sexual Harassment* (forthcoming) stresses the importance of raising awareness about gender equity issues alongside sexual harassment:

> In schools, the issue of harassment should never be separated from the larger issues of educational equity. Are we sending out messages that some learners are more valuable than others? Who takes up most verbal space in classroom discussions? What groups are highlighted in the curriculum? Do males and females have equal access to sports, computers and other resources? Do we communicate with all learners in a respectful way? (p. 26)

Teachers need to familiarize themselves with gender-sensitive teaching that empowers girls. Using gender sensitive language, for example, is an important strategy. Learners should also be introduced to people whom they look up to and who can serve as role models in pursuing education and employment opportunities. Gender-sensitive teaching empowers girls to see they can do things for themselves. Learners need to acknowledge the ways that both women and men contribute to the society, their families and the economy. They need to learn that biological differences between males and females should not dictate an individual's opportunities in life (Mlamleli, 1999). In becoming familiar with concepts of equity and democracy, learners are helped to become more conversant in thinking for themselves about what is meant by values such as personhood, justice, and freedom from violence.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP (*Pontsho Mabelane*)

Safe schools projects seek to ensure that interventions to prevent crime prevention in schools fit within the National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS). Key messages of NCPS include the need to address crime in an effective and integrated way across government sectors and establish strategic partnerships between police, local communities, school and business (NCPS, 1998). Since this venture demands a holistic approach, it also demands that all possible people that can assist in achieving the ultimate goal of safe schools must be engaged. One key group in this holistic approach are the learners themselves.

Challenges: Lack of awareness

Unfortunately, youth leaders too live in communities, homes and schools that are violent and that often cause them to lack the knowledge that non-violence is a better action to take. Without downplaying the impact of violence on learners, there is frequently a connotation of despair which undermines the inner power of student leadership to contribute significantly towards attaining a learning environment free of violence and crime. Learners may contribute to violence by engaging in the following psychological defenses:

DENIAL:
We do not have a problem with violence, but that other school does.

MINIMIZATION:
Name-calling and pushing and shoving are just normal behaviour for kids. Kids will always be kids.

BLAME:
Teachers spend most of the time not attending to the learners.

AVOIDANCE:
Violence in the school is for the administration and the police to deal with, I am just a learner.

Since these defenses tend to cause violence to continue, some coping skills such as blaming, protecting bullies or perpetrators, hiding, ignoring and suppressing their feelings of anger, fear, frustration or guilt emerge. The victims believe they must be deserving of the mistreatment. When learners experience how violence is accepted, they assume it is "all right" and begin to think that they are entitled to engage in it or otherwise they will become victims themselves.

Opportunities: Proposed strategies for creating a learning environment conducive to effective learning

Creating razor security fences, installing metal detectors, hiring guards and searching lockers are very expensive measures that have not proved to be sufficient in stopping crime in schools. The important role of youth leadership can assist in curbing violence in school by shaping learner's beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours before violence becomes an automatic manifestation of their anger.

Leadership by example is a powerful ingredient of youth leadership. The student leadership role will be exemplary in choosing nonviolent behaviours and assisting in spotting unacceptable behaviour because they are more exposed to other learners in the learning situation and other areas of

the school. Youth leadership could encourage learners in several ways. Learners could be encouraged to condemn violent practices by perpetrators. They could strengthen their relationships with the police stations that have adopted the schools. They could learn conflict handling skills and partici- pate in workshops and groupings that seek to prevent violence at schools. One example – SHREWs (Sexual Harassment Resisters Everywhere) – seeks to enlighten learners about what sexual harassment entails and what a learner can do to stop a perpetrator.[3] Learners could also participate in school drama festivals and debates which illustrate the detrimental effects of violence and how to stop them.

Involvement by all stakeholders is vital in cooperative governance of each school and here youth leadership can play an exemplary role too. The South African Council of Educators (SACE) specifies the functions of School Governing Bodies in Sections 20 and 21. The following are relevant func- tions in terms of formulating a sexual harassment policy:

• To develop a mission statement of the school. A gender perspective should be brought in and the school community should understand it.

• To adopt a code of conduct for learners at the school.

School governing bodies have been given powers to determine policy (in line with the National and Provincial policies). Section 8 (1) of the South African Schools Act (SASA) states that "a governing body of a public school must adopt a code of conduct for the learners after consultation with the learners, parents and educators of the school" (SASA, 1996). A code of conduct is meant to ensure that all stakeholders in a public school agree to the establishment of a disciplined and purposeful school environment in order to achieve and maintain quality education in such a school. Youth leadership can play a vital and necessary part in implementing safety meas- ures including actively contributing to a safety policy, development of the code of good conduct at school, and the implementation of school policies.

SAFE SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL POLICY (*Vernet Napo*)

The legislation which has been proposed is that of "vicarious liability." It means "that all managers of organisations, or those with delegated respon- sibilities – which in this case includes teachers – are responsible for taking all reasonable steps to prevent harassment or discrimination from occurring. Where they are deemed to have done so, they cannot be held liable" (Wolpe et al, 1997, p. 221). This principle ensures the allocation of clear responsi- bility for preventative and proactive action. Such legislation should empha- sise proactive responsibility on the part of education managers to take positive steps to create a positive human rights environment.

Opportunities: Policy considerations

There are numerous South African policies and Acts which can form the basis of formulating a school-based Safe Schools policy. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996, with specific reference to clauses of the Bill of Rights, is a cornerstone of democracy in South Africa (1996 Constitution). It enshrines the rights of all people in our country and affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom. The Human Rights Commission Act (no. 54 of 1994) promotes the observance of, respect for, and the protection of fundamental rights. The National Education Policy Act (no 27 of 1996) contains principles of particular relevance to the policy on safe schools in par. 4 (a):

> Every person has a right to be protected against unfair discrimination within or by an education department or education institution on any ground whatsoever.

> Every person has a right to basic education and to equal access to education institutions.

The South African Schools Act (SASA) (no. 84 of 1996) preamble states that "the country requires a new national system for schools. . . which will combat racism and sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance. . . ." In so doing, SASA provides important backing as does the support of the South African Council of Educators (SACE) to take a firm stand against sexual harassment. The following paragraphs of Section 3 of the policy are worth noting:

> Every educator should:

> 3.5 avoid any form of humiliation, and refrain from any form of child abuse, physical or psychological

> 3.6 promote gender equality and refrain from any form of sexual relationship with learners or sexual harassment (physical or otherwise) of learners

> 3.7 use appropriate language and behaviour in his or her interaction with learners, and act in such a way as to elicit respect from the learners.

> 3.8 Take reasonable steps to ensure safety of the learners (and should therefore participate in policy formulation and implementation of vicarious liability).

The policy also promotes gender equality amongst educators and takes strong exceptions toward educator-educator forms of sexual harassment and abuse.

It is important too when considering policy documents to take into account provincial legislation. The Gauteng Provincial Government for example as well as other Provincial Governments have formulated various sexual harassment policies which have a bearing on the workplace (but do not have a direct impact on learners), and the Gauteng Department of Education Gender Policy (1999) reinforces the elimination of sex-based and gender-

based violence from schools. (See Appendix A for further policy develop-
ment considerations).

Challenges

A brief look at the recommendations from the GETT Report (Wolpe et. al,
1997) shows that many strides have already been taken. The National
Department of Education, in collaboration with the Canada South Africa
Education Management Programme, has started to develop clear definitions
of all kinds of behaviour that constitute sexual harassment. However, clear
definitions and examples of education specific, direct and indirect forms of
discrimination still need to be developed. Yet it must be remembered that
sexual harassment is complex and not always easily defined. What one
individual in the city of Johannesburg may experience as degrading may not
be considered such by a person in a rural area of the country. The following
words from the CSAEMP *School-based Module on Managing Gender-based
Violence and Sexual Harassment* emphasize the point that "no list of harassing
behaviour can cover the complexity and range of social interactions that
can be gender demeaning. The social and cultural influences supporting
harassment are not easily captured in legal terms" (p. 73). We need to bear
this in mind when considering relevant policies in the development of
school policy on sexual harassment.

CONCLUSIONS

As we begin a journey of identifying gender-based and sex-based violent
practices and the effects of HIV/AIDS in our schools, we open up a new
chapter in creating safe schools and education institutions. In this article we
have looked at the diverse ways of creating safe schools and increasing
awareness about gender-based violence and harassment, ranging from a
popular, nationally televised drama series, school dramatizations and a
national crime prevention strategy to the role of teacher training, develop-
ing a code of conduct with learners' involvement, and the legislative con-
siderations in developing school policy.

In this journey we need to acknowledge that the paths we follow may take
different courses according to the different roles related to bringing about
change. These roles should be unifying rather than separating. The roles
should focus on all stakeholders as elements of a single process based on a
single mission, namely the mission to create safe schools. The NDoE can
assume the roles of policy maker, protector of professional conduct, supplier
of resources and an advocate for change. The teacher can assume a role of
an investigator, problem-solver and creator of learners' learning experi-
ences. The need to provide intervention through parental and teachers'
involvement in creating safe schools programs is essential. Learners and
parents can assume the role of exploring and experimenting with effective

strategies of coping and dealing with violent behavior, including developing and implementing a code of conduct and policy on sexual harassment for their school. Each school's journey is likely to be unique in some ways in that the manifestation of violent behaviour differs from school to school.

An unfortunate reality is that many School Governing Bodies, School Management Teams, educators and learners may not have the resources or expertise to break the cycle of violence or to assess whether the programs they have chosen are appropriate. The key is to know which types of programs should be offered to whom by whom. Creating and maintaining safe schools can be brought about through systemic planning which includes multiple strategies aimed at ensuring that all stakeholders have a share in making the entire school a safe place. There is no one formula.

NOTES

1. Additionally each of these individuals is working under the auspices of the Canada-South Africa Education Management Program (CSAEMP), a partnership with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Faculty of Education at McGill University, and the National Department of Education in South Africa.

2. Those people who dose child, women, rape murder must stop those evil things . That is not the things that god made. My name is Lawrence. I ask all this things.

3. Here we are grateful to June Larkin for introducing us to the term SHREWS which has now come to be adopted in provincial programming around sexual harassment and gender-based violence.

REFERENCES

ANC *Women's Caucus Campaign to End Violence Against Women and Children*. A fact sheet produced with assistance from People Opposing Women Abuse (POWA), Sexual Harassment Education Project (SHEP), Rape Crisis and Resources Aimed at the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (RAPCAN).

Anthropology News. (1999, October). Vol. 40, No. 7.

Bekizulu, M. (1997, April 12). Gay pupils harassed. *The Saturday Paper*. Cited in Reddy, V. (1998). *Negotiating Gay Masculinities, 37*, 65-70.

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996.

CSAEMP (forthcoming). *School-based module on managing gender-based violence and sexual harassment*. Montreal: Author.

FAWESA, Forum for African Women Educationalists South Africa. (1998). *Sexual harassment project: Collaboration with Western Cape & Gauteng Departments of Education*. Cape Town: Author.

Gauteng Department of Education (1999). *Gender policy.* Johannesburg: Author.

Gauteng Province (1999). *Sexual harassment policy.* Johannesburg: Author.

Goodman, M. (1998). *Combating homophobia in a secondary English classroom.* Unpublished masters thesis, Department of English, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

Gouws, A. & Kitzenger, A. (1995). Sexual harassment of students: A case study of a South African university. *SA Sociological Review 7, 2.*

Hercules, A. (1993). *Exploring the status of black women teachers in the Western Cape, as viewed through their experience in high schools.* Unpublished honours thesis, Department of Sociology, University of Cape Town.

Human Rights Commission Act (No. 54 of 1994), Pretoria.

Larkin, J. (1994/97). *Sexual harassment: high school girls speak out.* Toronto: Second Story Press.

MacDougall, J. (1993). *Violence in the schools: Programs and policies for prevention.* Toronto: Canadian Education Association.

Mitchell, C. (1999). *Hijacking popular culture for social change.* Unpublished manuscript. Department of English. University of the Witwatersrand.

Mitchell, C. (2000, May). *The bold and the restless. Teaching popular culture in an English studies class in a South African university.* Faculty seminar, University of the Witwatersarand.

Mitchell, C. & Smith, A. (2000, July). *HIV/AIDS and gender-based violence. Who has the power? A challenge for management in South African schools.* Paper presented at the XIIIth World Congress on HIV/AIDS, Durban.

Mlamleli, O. (1999, July). Gender-sensitive teaching as a tool to mainstream gender equity. *Gender Matters: A Newsletter on Gender in South African Education, 3.*

Morrell, R. (1998). Introduction. *Agenda: Empowering women for gender equity, 37,* 7-12.

National Crime Prevention Strategy (1998, April). Department of Welfare, Pretoria.

National Department of Education (2000). *Implementation plan for Tirisano.* Pretoria: Author.

National Education Policy Act (No. 27 of 1996), Pretoria.

Nicholls, G. (1997) *Collaborative change in education.* London: Kogan Page.

SASA, South African Schools Act (No. 84 of 1996), Pretoria.

SSTA, Saskatchewan School Trustees Association (1994). *Research Centre Report #94-05:* One incident is too many: Policy guidelines for safe schools.

Tabane, R. (1999, January 8). *The Star.*

Thompson, A. (1999). *A study of masculinities at a boys' school.* An unpublished master's thesis, Faculty of Education, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

Wolpe, A., Quinlan, O. & Martinez, L. (1997). *Gender equity in education: Report of the gender equity task team* (GETT). Pretoria: National Department of Education.

APPENDIX A
POLICY DEVELOPMENT

An effective school policy should have the following characteristics:

• Include a clear set of expectations for all members of the school community. The behavior expected of all students, teachers, administrators, other staff members and visitors to the school should be explicitly stated.

• Be comprehensive and inclusive. All forms of violent behaviour (including extreme physical violence) should be addressed.

• Be proactive and not reactive. It should create expectations for a positive school climate.

• Emphasize prevention through the curriculum, programmes and practices.

• Include strategies to promote a secure and friendly climate. These include high visibility of administrators and staff and access to extra-curricular activities of students

• Provide intervention strategies, general guidelines for administrators and a range of consequences for infractions (SSTA, Saskatchewan School Trustees Association, p. 11, cited from MacDougall, 1993).

Stakeholders in education should be engaged throughout the process because they are the foundation of an effective policy in the community. In many instances, the development is led by a small representative working group of staff members, District and Head Office officials. The importance of a safe schools policy should be emphasized throughout the process. The following steps are important during the planning process:

• Identifying the need and develop a rationale for the policy.

• Consulting with other education departments or schools that have developed similar policies.

• Developing strategies for getting input from other stakeholder groups.

• Identifying strategies to keep the education department informed.

• Beginning developing the policy by getting inputs from other stakeholder groups.

• Preparing second and third drafts of the policy, getting inputs from stakeholder groups.

• Finalizing the policy.

• Using the policy as a springboard for ongoing discussions about the characteristics of safe schools and violence prevention (through e.g. lessons, workshops and seminars) about violence particularly about the less obvious types of violence such as sexual harassment, verbal abuse, bullying, etc. (SSTA, Saskatchewan School Trustees Association, 1994).

After the policy has been completed, it should be used as a foundation for ongoing public education about all forms of violence. Dialogue with the community should be continuous about the need of such a policy. There needs to be emphasized to the community that the responsibility for prevention of violent incidents and appropriate handling of those that do occur rests with everyone. Structures need to be created so that people with interest and concern in this area can learn from each other. This may include making the policy the focus of in-service seminars, staff meetings or conferences (SSTA, Saskatchewan School Trustees Association, 1994).

OLLY MLAMLELI is the Gender Focal Person of Free State Department of Education. She has conducted research in the area of Women and Leadership. Her current work is in the area of gender and teacher development.

PONTSHO MABELANE is the Gender Focal Person of Mpumalanga Department of Education. She has a particular interest in the area of Labour Relations.

VERNET NAPO is an Equity and Access Development Officer and Gender Focal Person of Gauteng Department of Education. She is currently completing her doctoral studies at Rand Afrikaans University in the area of policy and employment equity.

NTOMBI SIBIYA has worked for the Gender Equity Directorate in the National Department of Education and as well is the former Gender Focal Person for the Mpumalanga Department of Education. She also helped to establish the Gender Equity Directorate in the National Department of Health.

VALERIE FREE works on the gender equity component of the Canada-South Africa Education Management Program (CSAEMP) in the Faculty of Education, McGill University.

OLLY MLAMLELI est la responsable des relations entre les sexes au ministère de l'Éducation du Free State. Elle a mené des recherches sur les femmes et le leadership. Elle travaille actuellement sur l'équité entre les sexes et le perfectionnement des enseignants.

PONTSHO MABELANE est la responsable des relations entre les sexes au ministère de l'Éducation du Mpumalanga. Elle s'intéresse en particulier au domaine des relations de travail.

VERNET NAPO est agent du développement de l'équité et de l'accès et responsable des relations entre les sexes au ministère de l'Éducation du Gauteng. Elle termine actuellement son doctorat à la *Rand Afrikaans University* dans le domaine des politiques et de l'équité en matière d'emploi.

NTOMBI SIBIYA a travaillé pour la Direction générale de l'équité entre les sexes au ministère de l'Éducation nationale et a été responsable des relations entre les sexes au ministère de l'Éducation du Mpumalanga. Elle a également aidé à la création de la Direction générale de l'équité entre les sexes au ministère de la Santé nationale.

VALERIE FREE s'occupe du volet de l'équité entre les sexes du programme de gestion de l'éducation entre le Canada et l'Afrique du Sud à la faculté des sciences de l'éducation de l'Université McGill.

MJE

McGILL JOURNAL OF EDUCATION
REVUE DES SCIENCES DE L'ÉDUCATION DE McGILL

3700 McTavish Street, Montréal (QC) Canada H3A 1Y2
Tel: (514) 398-4246 Fax: (514) 398-4529 E-mail: keenana@education.mcgill.ca.

I wish to subscribe / Je désire m'abonner
1 year/1an Canada $35* – Foreign/Pays étrangers C$45**

* Subscriptions mailed to a Canadian address, add GST $2.45 ($37.45)
   Subscriptions mailed to a Quebec address, add QST $2.81 ($40.26)

   Pour les abonnements envoyez à une addresse canadienne, ajoutez la TPS de $2.45 ($37.45)
   Pour les abonnements envoyez à une addresse au Québec, ajoutez la TVQ de $2.81 ($40.26)

** 1 year subscription by Air Mail C$55
   1 an par la post aérien C$55

NAME
NOM   _____

STREET
RUE   _____

CITY
VILLE   _____

POSTAL CODE
CODE POSTAL _____

☐ Remittance enclosed   ☐ Please send invoice
   Paiement ci-inclus   Envoyez la facture

Published 3 times yearly • Publié 3 fois par année