



**8 JULY 2020**

## **MINISTER MOTSHEKGA CONDEMNS RAPE OF LEARNER, CALLS FOR END TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**

The Minister of Basic Education, Mrs Angie Motshekga, has condemned the rape of a 12-year old learner in Bulwer, KwaZulu-Natal, on Monday.

Police say the 12-year old learner in Grade 7 was reportedly raped after having gone home to fetch her face mask she had forgotten.

The Minister has condemned in the strongest terms this heinous crime against a defenceless and innocent child.

“Rape is a crime whose perpetrators deserve the stiffest punishment. This rape of a learner once again shines the light on the scourge of Gender-Based Violence ripping our communities apart. We reiterate our profound sadness and anguish over this painful and shameful event. Gender-Based Violence is a profound human rights violation with major social and developmental impacts for survivors of violence, as well as their families, communities and society more broadly,” said Minister Motshekga

On an individual level, GBV leads to psychological trauma, and can have psychological, behavioural and physical consequences for survivors. Many survivors of Gender Based Violence and rape in this particular incident are unable to access the help they need. Families and loved ones of survivors can also experience indirect trauma, and many do not know how to provide effective support.

“We commend the swift action by the Donnybrook SAPS in apprehending the 17 year old suspect and the seriousness with which they are handling the case. The Department will continue to ensure that the learner who is a minor receives the necessary psycho-social support from the District Auxiliary Support Services and her identity is protected as she comes to terms with this painful and regrettable ordeal,” she said.

Through our Provincial and District officials we shall continue to appraise ourselves of the facts surrounding the school and learners compliance with the DBE Health and Hygiene Protocols and support our schools to maintain a balance between public health-safety and bodily safety and integrity especially in the far-flung village communities we serve.

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**ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION**