



KENYA COUNSELLING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

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KENYA COUNSELLING & PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (KCPA) PRESS STATEMENT **REGARDING ACTS OF VIOLATION METED ON HELPLESS CHILDREN**

Kenya Counselling and Psychological Association (KCPA) condemns vehemently the behaviour of teachers of Itumbi Primary School, Nyamache Sub County who were caught forcing young boys to have sexual atrocities in public. We were treated to public sexual, moral and emotional abuse of helpless children suffering under those entrusted with protecting and educating them.

KCPA, the Umbrella body of counselling standards in Kenya notes that the act by the teachers has profound and long term effects on the personality, sexuality and identity of the youngsters who were forced to carry out profane sexual activities as authority figures watched hilariously. The Association notes that teachers are the custodians of children protection in all aspects including physical, spiritual, Sexual, relational and academic. They are also supposed to ascertain children healthy growth and development and to protect them from any harms inside and outside the school environment. As such, the teachers and by extension the school administration contravened their cardinal duty of care to children. The Association recommends that there should be monitoring of how children are treated in schools to secure their mental and emotional health which contributes to global health and performance.

World Health Organization (WHO) note that mental health disorders contribute to the largest disease burden among children and youth. Research indicates that 75% of mental disorders have their onset before the age of 25 with most of them remaining largely unrecognised and untreated in Africa. Moreover at least 90% of young people aged 15-24 who commit suicide have a diagnosable mental illness. Early childhood is crucial for developing social, emotional and sexual habits that are vital for mental well-being. The WHO note that physical, emotional and social changes, including exposure to poverty, abuse, or violence makes children vulnerable to mental health problems.

It should be noted that the prevalence of mental health illnesses has escalated with acts of children being exposed to violation whether familial, cultural, physical, emotional, sexual, spiritual

and intellectual. These acts on helpless children makes them traumatized, a condition they are not able to process unless with expert aid. When children are taken through such acts that cause them pain and embarrassment, their emotional health and self-esteem are injured and later affects their mental health. The act that the boys were being grilled into has the tendency of introducing such children to homosexuality and psychopathic tendencies later in life.

Protecting children from adversity, promoting socio-emotional and psychological wellbeing and ensuring access to mental health care are critical for their health during childhood. As the law takes its due cause, KCPA is ready to engage with the school through the KCPA Chairperson Margaret Mogaka and Dr Tom Onyango, the Cluster (region) Board Patron so that those children who were involved in those dreadful risky acts can be taken through psychological healing and the entire school can be debriefed while teachers are taken through dangers of children violation, trauma and children protection. The KCPA Kisii County together with the entire KCPA fraternity wishes to build partnership with Government in eradicating such violations that plunge the country into heavy disease burden in due course.



Prof Catherine Gachutha,

Chairperson, KCPA