

**Reducing the Risk of Becoming a Victim of
Crime in South Africa:
You Can Tell and Be Heard!**

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***Crime* against people with
developmental disabilities.....**

- Similar in scope ... women, children, & elderly persons
- Remains largely invisible and unaddressed.



***Research from the US* tells us that people
with developmental disabilities**


- 4 to 10 times higher risk of becoming crime victims
- Differences in victimization rates most pronounced for sexual assault (10.7 times as high) and robbery (12.7 times as high)
- High probability of repeat victimization
- 50% of women with developmental disabilities who had been sexually assaulted had been assaulted 10 or more times.



Research from the U.S. tells us that

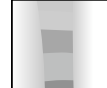

- Children with disabilities more than twice as likely as children without disabilities to be physically and sexually abused
- Roughly 5 million serious crimes are committed against persons with developmental disabilities in the U. S. each year
- No data collection programs for crimes against persons with developmental disabilities as there are for other specialized populations







Research from South Africa

- Virtually no statistics
- Other data from SA
 - Listed as the country with the highest incidence of rape per capita, 2nd highest incidence of murder, 10th in total crime
 - Crimes in SA under reported or not reported
 - Official crime statistics under represent the problem with respect to children



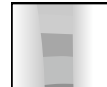

Why high incidence of crime?

- Victims with developmental disabilities are frequently invisible **because**
 - Considered vulnerable
 - Perpetrators - known to the victim
 - Believe victim unable to seek help or report crime
 - Victims fear backlash from known perpetrators




Why high incidence of crime?

- Misconceptions about sexuality of people with developmental disabilities
 - Belief sexually innocent -- children forever
 - Little or no understanding of their bodies
 - Myth of being oversexed and uncontrolled
 - In SA - notion of Virgin Cleansing - cure for HIV/AIDS
 - Belief by some in SA -- if have sex with a person with ID, perpetrator become powerful and wealthy



Why?

- Victims with developmental disabilities are frequently invisible **because**
 - Handled administratively not through courts
 - Cannot report their offenders
 - Crimes often go unreported
 - Reports are often discredited
 - Alleged offenders less likely to be tried and found guilty
 - When found guilty, offenders often receive a "lighter sentence"
 - Limited spoken communication
 - Limited access to vocabulary to report crime



Purpose of our research

- Improve communication access by
 - Developing communication boards
 - Needed vocabulary to report and ask for help
 - Pictographic symbols (illiteracy)
 - 4 of 11 official SA languages
 - Research based



How we did it

- Focus groups
 - Professionals and people with disabilities
 - Generate needed vocabulary
 - Prioritize vocabulary - goal approx. 50 words
 - Select overlap between languages (English, Afrikaans, Sepedi, isiZulu)



- Identify most commonly used symbol system in SA

How we did it

- Conduct discrepancy analysis

Shout / scream	A Z	4				
Stal	E A	2				
Swear	S Z	0				
Threaten	E Z	0				
Under	A S	1				

- Develop actual communication boards

Results

- Focus groups generated between 53 and 59 words
 - Only 5 words in all 4 language
 - 28 words common to 2 of 4 languages
 - 24 words common to 3 or 4 languages
- Used words that appeared in at least 2 languages for a total of 56 words
- PCS chosen because most commonly used in SA
- 219 symbols could represent all but 2 words (*swear* & *threaten*)
- Designed the communication board

Communication for ALL: You can tell and be heard / Poledisano ya BOHLE: O ka bolela o ka ba wa theeletšwa

This board contains 48 icons arranged in a 6x8 grid. Each icon has a corresponding English label and a Sesotho label. The icons represent various concepts including emotions (happy, sad, angry, scared), actions (eat, drink, sleep, work), and objects (house, car, school). Below the grid are three human figures (male, female, and a combined figure) and a copyright notice.

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Communication for ALL: You can tell and be heard / Poledisano ya BOHLE: O ka bolela o ka ba wa theeletšwa

This board features a numeric keypad (0-9) and an alphabet grid (a-z, ., SPACE). To the right of the keypad are three human figures and a copyright notice. The board is designed for users who can communicate through a numeric keypad.

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Communication for ALL: You can tell and be heard / Poledisano ya BOHLE: O ka bolela o ka ba wa theeletšwa


This board is identical to the one in the first block, containing 48 icons in a 6x8 grid, three human figures, and a copyright notice.

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Discussion

- Yes, there are limitations to this research
- Yes, Evidence-based vocabulary that is
 - Culturally relevant to SA context
 - Multilingual
 - Does not depend on strong literacy skills
 - Requires some training
 - Free and downloadable
- **Communication 4ALL: You Can Tell and Be Heard** boards based on SA research available at:

 <http://www.caac.up.ac.za>

 <http://disabilities.temple.edu/aacvocabulary/e4all.shtml#index>

Questions



Thank you!

Ke ya leboga!

Dankie!

Ngiyabonga!



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