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In any correspondence on  
this subject please quote No: ADM/92/308/01

August, 2015  
CIRCULAR NO.2/2015

To: Chief Administrative Officers  
District Education Officers  
Inspectors of Schools  
Heads of Early Childhood Development Centers  
Heads of Primary Schools  
Heads of Secondary Schools  
Principals of Primary Teacher Training Colleges  
Heads of Farm, Technical and Vocational Schools and Institutes.  
Principals of Health Training Institutes

### **BAN ON ALL ACTS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN IN SCHOOLS, INSTITUTES AND COLLEGES**

1. The Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports has noted with great concern the increasing acts of violence against children/learners in schools, particularly bullying, administration of corporal punishment (caning), sexual abuse such as defilement and rape, use of and distribution of pornographic materials, sexual harassment, emotional violence, neglect and negligent treatment.
2. Violence against children/learners undermines the security and safety of children in schools, inflicts pain and fear among children in schools, reduces children's retention and performance in schools, undermines their right to education, right to protection and a right to development.
3. The Government of Uganda through the 1995 Constitution Article 24, the Children Act Cap 59 (2008), the Penal Code (Amendment) Act 8 (2007), the Domestic Violence Act (2010), Employment Act (2006) outlaws acts of violence against children in schools.
4. The following measures must be observed by all the educational institutions, whether government aided, community or private.
  - a) All acts of violence against children/learners i.e. corporal punishment, bullying, neglect and negligent treatment such as failure to meet the children/learners physical needs like

food, water, menstrual hygiene related needs for girls; sexual abuse such as defilement and rape, speaking to children in a sexual manner, making marriage proposals to learners, fondling/touching in a sexual manner, subjecting learners to watch sexual scenes, audio and print materials of sexual nature; drug abuse; emotional violence; school fires among others must stop forthwith.

- b) Teachers/Instructors/Tutors should utilise their privileged relationship with children/learners to detect children at risk of violence, take measures to support children/learners to open up and report such cases to the Senior Woman/Man Teacher/Instructor/Tutor for guidance and counseling and any other support that can help prevent the cycle of violence.
- c) Schools/Colleges/Institutes should assign the Senior Woman/Man Teachers/Instructor/Tutor or School/College Counselor the role of the Violence Against Children in Schools (VACiS) Coordinator and put in place appropriate and child friendly communication mechanisms such as suggestion boxes, toll free telephone services/contacts to encourage children/learners report cases of violence in schools/colleges/institutes freely and confidentially.
- d) The Head teacher/Principal with the support of the Senior Woman/Man Teacher/Instructor/Tutor should record, report and follow-up all acts of violence against children encountered in schools/Institutes and colleges with other relevant actors:
  - i. Cases that are capital in nature such as defilement, rape, grave physical injuries must be recorded and reported immediately to police for investigation and prosecution.
  - ii. Cases that require administrative procedures within the Education Sector for breach of civil servants' rules such the Teachers' Professional Code of Conduct (2012), the Teaching Service Commission Regulations (2012), MoES Circular NO. 15/2006 on Ban on Corporal Punishments in Schools, Institutes and Colleges, Schools rules and regulations must be recorded and reported to the School Disciplinary Committees, District Education Officers and or Education Service Commission for appropriate action according to the relevant laws, rules and regulations.
  - iii. Cases that are civil in nature must be recorded and reported to Family and Children Courts for appropriate action.
  - iv. Teachers/Instructors/Tutors and Children/learners must report all children/learners that perpetrate violence against other children/learners such as bullying, verbal abuse, sexual abuse, drug abuse etc. to the Head teacher/Principal and to the Disciplinary Committee for action according to the schools/colleges/institutes' rules and regulations.
  - v. Every educational institution should review its rules and regulations with a view of introducing safe, child friendly and positive learning sanctions/actions to replace corporal punishment to children/learners. The Schools/Institutes/Colleges Management Committees/Boards should approve the revised rules and regulations.
  - vi. Schools/institutes/colleges should sensitize and educate children/learners, parents, teaching and non-teaching staff on the different forms of violence in schools/institutes/colleges, the existing laws and mandatory processes and procedures that have to be undertaken in the event of violence within the schools/institutes/colleges. Schools/institutes/colleges should orient children/learners,



teaching and non-teaching staff on the Reporting, Tracking, Referral and Response guidelines on violence against children in schools as well as the Alternatives to Corporal Punishment Handbook.

- vii. Schools/institutes/colleges should allocate some resources to cater for specialised support services for the Child survivors and victims of violence such as medical check-up and treatment in case of defilement, HIV/AIDS, grave physical injuries; counseling in case of emotional abuse; as well as meeting expenses associated with the follow-up of cases that are reported to other actors for action. Some of these may include medical examinations and treatment, appearing before police for further investigations, attending courts sessions along with the child survivor to give evidence and for cross-examination among others.
- viii. Schools/institutes/colleges should review their programmes to accommodate sessions on life skills development programmes and training for children/learners to help them develop social and personal skills (life skills) to protect themselves against violence. Some of the topics to cover in these sessions should include but not limited to sexuality and reproductive health education, self-confidence and esteem, effective communication and negotiation.
- ix. Schools/institutes/colleges should keep records on all cases of violence against children/learners encountered in schools/institutes/colleges including actions taken by the schools and other actors such as the Police, Probation and Welfare Officers, Local Courts and Health Workers.
- x. Schools/institutes/colleges should ensure full access and inspection of school facilities and records, permit unannounced visits and private consultations with children/learners and school staff on violence against children in schools/institutes/colleges by Institutions that are legally mandated to protect children against violence.
- xi. Where these guidelines are ignored or abused, the culprits will be held criminally responsible for their actions. They will face the law, in particular the Education Act (2007), the Public Service (Teachers) Act, the Children Act Cap 59 (2008), and the Penal Code (Amendment) Act 8 (2007).
- xii. It is expected that educational institutions should develop and apply safer, professional and acceptable methods of guiding and counseling children/learners, Teachers/Instructors/Tutors and parents in the use of non- violent learning and discipline and taking action against perpetrators of violence against children in schools/institutes/colleges.

  
Dr. Nassali Lukwago Rose  
**PERMANENT SECRETARY**

**CC** Members of the Inter Sectoral Committee on Violence Against Children in Schools  
All Chairpersons, Local Council V  
All Chairpersons of District Education Committee  
All Chairpersons of the District Child Protection Committees

All Secretaries of Education, District Local Councils  
All State Attorneys  
All District Police Commanders  
All District Directors of Health Services  
All Probation and Social Welfare Officers  
All Municipal Education Officers  
All Board of Governors, Primary Teachers Colleges, Farm and Technical Schools  
All Governing Councils of Colleges  
All Chairpersons of School Management Committees  
All Chairpersons of Parents & Teachers Associations  
All Chairpersons of Board of Directors in Private Schools  
All Chairpersons of Heads of Farm, Technical and Vocational Schools and Institutes.  
All Town Clerks  
All Local Courts