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You cannot reverse the effects of crime. Crime cannot be undone...

Schools' security vs sexual assault and other inner crimes

This article is aimed at schools, universities, and the parents.

Just when I think I have seen it all, I am once again shocked to my core. In the recent Carte Blanche video, it is easy to see how vulnerable and disregarded security has become in our very own schools, the place we send our children to get an education, and seemingly also scarred for life.

What other crimes happened in the schools that are being covered up? Without a Security Risk Assessment, how will you know? It is a scary thought, isn't it?

We have spread the word for many years now, but it seems as though schools all over South Africa still do not understand the value and importance of security in the school.

- They still do not realise the responsibility they have towards the children not only with regards to education but also a responsibility to keep the children safe in a secure environment.
- They still do not understand that schools also have "inner crime" and "outer crime".

We have stated over the last few years that schools do not have security, they do not have a Security Risk Assessment, nor do they have proper communication tools. It is discussed in detail in the Risk Assessment

This video proved that we are not wrong.

Security is not just the hardware such as the cameras or an electric fence, nor is it a Security Officer at the gate.

- Security is much more than that, and the most important aspect of this is to understand that you only have security when the hardware covers the security risk.
- If the hardware does not cover the risk, you do not have security.
- We are talking about the inner as well as outer risk.

Further to this, having a method of anonymous communication is one of the most underrated security measures available. People need to be able to report crimes and concerns without the fear of being victimised. This is where a dedicated Hotline comes in. Important: This is not an additional line that goes to the school, but a dedicated line with professionals on the other side. It is important that the correct procedures are followed. (It should be discussed in detail in the Assessment)

Throughout the world, school security is a top priority, but in South Africa, security is not even on the table for discussion.

- It is as if we want to wait until something horrendous has happened to one of our children before we do something about security. If a crime has already occurred, it is too late.

This is not only applicable to schools but universities as well.

Ask the girl who came forward in the Carte Blanche broadcast, if the scars of the abuse have healed? Did it get better? Does she ever forget that it happened to her? I doubt it. Crime leaves a permanent mark, and it cannot be undone.

This article is aimed at schools, universities, and the parents of these children.

- Security is everyone's responsibility and the time for standing alone and doing things the way it has been done for 50 years, is long gone. It is not working anymore.

An independently conducted Security Risk Assessment will address all the security-related aspects of the school, which includes the vetting of all personnel at schools.

- This document is an in-depth investigation into the school's security to identify all the risks that will lead to crime.

Remember, when you are dealing with children, sexual assault and kidnapping forms part of the security structure and protocols, controls, and communication in this regard, and it should be discussed in detail in the Assessment.

A Security Risk Assessment is the guideline and foundation of your security structure and it ensures that the school personnel, parents as well as the children speak the same security language and move in the same direction as they will all have the same understanding when it comes to security.

- Please read our article about the responsibility of security at schools.

It is sad to say but it seems as though the school's name, especially in South Africa, with regards to academic and sports prestige is far more important than the actual safety and security of the children. If the children do not feel safe in their environment, they will not perform on the academic or sports field.

I believe it is time to get the school's priorities straight and focus on the children's safety and security.

The children are our future, and it is our responsibility to keep them safe.

Do you have a Security Risk Assessment? Are the children safe in YOUR school?

- Understand the question: Do you have an Independent Security Risk Assessment?
- The question does not ask if you have security.
- **There is a difference.**

All the best, ... till we speak again

Andre Mandell

If you think security is expensive, try estimating the cost of ignorance