



Moses' Story

Moses was an 8-year-old boy at a Justice Club school in Kakamega. One evening, a villager walked into Moses' family's compound, forcefully grabbed him, dragged him into the nearby cane plantation and sodomized him. Moses didn't tell anyone about this incidence, even though he was going through a lot of pain and trauma. Moses couldn't hide his 'strange' walking style and behavior and some Justice Club members at school noticed his behavior and decided to privately talk with him. He opened up and described his ordeal. The matter was reported to the teacher, who called the boy's parents.

They reported it to the Kakamega Central police station. The suspect was arrested by the police. He is currently under detention and the case is ongoing at the Kakamega Law Court. Moses has received medical treatment and he is healing. *Note: Moses is not his real name.*



Boys as Survivors

While women and girls are most often subject to sexual violence, boys and men are also targeted by perpetrators. Boys will often be blamed and punished in violent ways after they have survived sexual abuse, even though it was not their fault. This partly comes from a climate of anti-homosexuality, where men having sex with men is seen as immoral, illegal or sinful. Boy survivors of defilement will often feel guilty and ashamed of their experiences, and **they are less likely than girls to tell anyone what happened to them.** Community members often will not believe boys who are survivors of sexual violence because people think that this only happens to women and girls. Male survivors of rape are likely to be self-conscious or ashamed about the fact that they were unable to prevent the rape, because they feel as though "strong" men and boys should not be victimized and should be able to protect themselves. This is a dangerous myth, because **a young boy is not at fault for being targeted by a perpetrator.**

Cycle of Abuse

Male survivors can sometimes grow up to become perpetrators of rape. This is called **the cycle of abuse, and it occurs because boys who have been traumatized did not receive the support they needed to recover or heal properly.** As a result, they put all of their unresolved trauma onto new victims - they feel that other people should suffer just like they did. Other times, they believe it's normal to force younger survivors into sexual acts, because they were forced themselves. It is important to recognize this cycle of abuse, so that it can be stopped. It's also important to note that **not all boys who have been victimized will choose to become perpetrators of sexual violence.**





Supporting Male Survivors

As with female survivors, research suggests that male survivors are likely to suffer from a range of psychological consequences right after the assault and for many years afterwards. This can include guilt, anger, anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, sexual dysfunction, sleep issues, withdrawal from relationships and attempted suicide. Studies of adolescent males have also found an association between suffering rape and substance abuse, violent behaviour, stealing and absenteeism from school. It is important that we support male survivors of assault and defilement in the same way that you would support female survivors. **If a boy tells you that he has been assaulted or raped, listen to his story and believe him.**

COMMUNITY CORNER

This week we asked the Justice Club leaders: *Before this lesson, did you know that boys could be survivors of sexual assault or defilement? Why do you think this topic is not often discussed? What do you think is the best way to help boy survivors of rape?*



Playful Sun from Homabay: "It is a very big surprise for me since I had never heard of the fact that boys can be survivors of rape cases. Because most people know that boys are strong and can protect themselves from defilement cases, and they also thought that boys cannot be defiled. Best way to help boy survivors is to report the case to the nearest police station and action will be taken."

Inventive Mercury from Kwale: "No, it's isolated because our communities expect boys to be resistant to serial abuses while that isn't the scenario. Truly, anyone can go through rape or defilement."



Proud Sun from Kilifi: "It is not often discussed mainly because boys think this thing happens to girls only and if it happens to them, they rarely report. And this is because people in the society don't believe boys and they blame them. The best way to help boy survivors of rape is to have trust in them, believe what they say and strongly support them."

To Report a Defilement

To download the free **160 Girls defilement reporting app**: scan the QR code (right) by pointing your phone's camera at the code. The app's web page will appear with an option to download the app. You can also search "160 Girls app" in your phone's app store or submit a "help request" on 160girls.org.



You can also connect with your local rape rescue partners:

CATAG (Homa Bay)

Tel: 0777 977 87/0723977987

E-mail: communityaidtag@gmail.com

Address: P.O. Box 419-40300,
Homabay

GVRC Hope Centre County Referral (Homa Bay)

Caroline Obonyo

Tel: +254724261869

ICRH (Mombasa, Kwale, Kilifi)

Tel: 0722208652/0734466466

E-mail: info@icrhk.org

Website: icrhk.org

They can offer support, and help you report the defilement to the police. You can also report to the police on your own, or talk to a trusted friend or relative.

