

in case there's an  
**Emergency**  
**10111**  
 Crime Stop: 086 001 0111

- EMERGENCY**
- Hillcrest SAPS: 031 765 116/9103
  - Kloof Police Station: 031 764 2334
  - Fire: 031 361 0000
  - Gillitts Metro: 031 767 1222
  - Rescueteck KZN: 086 167 2226
  - Together **SA CAN** Community Incident Management Centre: 08 616 SA CAN / 08 616 72226

- ANIMAL RESCUE**
- Kloof & Highway SPCA: 031 764 1212/3
  - Monkey Helpline: 082 411 5444 or 082 659 4711
- COUNSELLING**
- Life Line: 033 394 4444
  - Open Door Crisis Centre: 031 709 2679
  - Jes Food Foundation: 0861 333 449
  - Careline Crisis Centre: 031 765 1314 or 082 787 6452

- AMBULANCE**
- ER 24: 084 124
  - Netcare 911: 082 911
  - VEMA: 083 630 0000
  - Ambulance & Emergency Medical Centre: 10177

**SAFETY TIP:**  
 - Never leave windows and doors open at night.

# Breaking the silence against abuse

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**U**PPER Highway's Marc Hardwick started an organisation called *The Guardian* in 2009 after working as a policeman in the child protection unit for 13 years, with a vision to protect children. He strongly believes that every person has an obligation to assist children in enjoying their right to safety.

This obligation includes ensuring that, through education, pupils are protected from sexual assault, physical assault, substance abuse, neglect and harm so that their childhood can be filled with joyful memories and not nightmares.

"After working in the Child Protection Unit and Organised Crime against children for many years, I saw it fitting to do it privately. It was my Christian calling. I just believe that God is calling me to do this work with children in order to make a difference", said Hardwick.

Hardwick said that *The Guardian* began investigations and from that, they grew into doing training and now also do drug searches at schools.

"We stay on the forefront of child protection, from both a reactive and proactive perspective. Our workshops and products are based on what we learn from our investigations.

"Since children are placed at risk because of new trends and clever grooming techniques in both the real and cyber world, we pride ourselves in staying as close to these

changes as possible and disseminating the information learned as quickly as possible to children, parents and educators.

"If schools want us to, we come in with dogs and do drugs searches, clearances of teachers against the Sexual Offenders Register together with the Child Protection Register."

Hardwick said: "We do everything that centres around the safe guarding of children and the most recent thing that has come to our table is the Anonymous Reporting App.

"Children can now report about a lot of things, abuse, bullying, depression, domestic violence, drugs, alcohol, fighting, harassment, inappropriate behaviour, racism, sexting, sexual assault, money theft, and steroids. They could even put in a suggestion with whatever they are battling with.

"The pupil will log in to *The Guardian App*, select what they are reporting on, an explanation will appear regarding what you're reporting on, then you will write what is being done to you and you can select the evidence button and upload it. The report then goes to the pre-defined person in the school and they can deal with it accordingly, however, if they need more information, the teacher will communicate with the

pupil even though they reported anonymously."

Hardwick said that this App can offer immediate reaction to a problem. "Very often when you interview someone that the child told about the rape, you sometimes find out that the child told this person three or four years ago and they've never done anything with it because they are the child's best

friend, so they don't want to violate the friendship. But with the App, this can put an end to the silence without breaking the trust."

Hardwick said that it's not like the child doesn't want to tell anyone about their grievances, they are just afraid to expose the truth, which is why Hardwick created the App that will allow friends who know about incidents to report it anonymously.



Marc Hardwick, the founder of 'The Guardian' and inventor of the Anonymous Reporting App.

PHOTO: PHINDILE SHOZI

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