Rapists teach our children

FOR many South African children, going to school means facing their rapist every day. A damning report released on Friday reveals that an increasing number of children are being sexually abused by their teachers, who often get away with their crimes.

The research reveals how many teachers use their power and an “exaggerated sense of sexual entitlement” to rape or sexually violate those in their care. For many of the victims, who are usually girls, their school marks drop, some leave school and others fall pregnant. But the consequences for their perpetrators are often less harsh.

The research notes a “dramatic rise” in reported abuse by educators, exacerbated by the many government departments and officials who fail to ACCORDING to the South African Council for Educators’ annual reports and the Sexual Violence by Educators in South African Schools: Gaps in Accountability report.

2008: 10 sexual misconduct cases were referred to the council;
2009: 21 complaints of sexual misconduct were referred to the council;
Between 2010 and 2011: 126 complaints of sexual misconduct were referred to the council; and
Between 2012 and 2013: 104 complaints of sexual misconduct were referred to the council. Aarti J Narsee

The South African Police Service: Many children do not have faith in the police and do not report sexual abuse;
Pupils hold scepticism” that the police will believe them.
Also, according to the report, some police “drag their feet” as they do not view sexual violence cases as tough police work” and often have insensitive attitudes”;
The National Prosecuting Authority: According to the report, prosecutors are bring the wrongdoers to book.
“The absence of meaningful consequences for perpetrators lends legitimacy to their behaviour, arguably giving licence to this harm,” the research found.
It is a criminal offence to have sex with anyone under 16 – even with consent.
In addition, the Department of Basic Education has to fire any teacher found guilty of sexually violating children. But, the South African Council for Educators holds a separate inquiry – to determine if a teacher can remain registered as a teacher – and could find the same teacher not guilty, leaving him or her to “disappear and reappear in another province or district “ and teach there. Even if a teacher is removed from the register, private schools do not have access to the department ‘s register.
Disciplinary processes are also “frustrated ” by the “almost militant ” role played by some trade union representatives, who use “bribes and intimidation of witnesses ” to make complaints disappear.

Even though the law makes it a crime not to report a colleague who sexually abuses a child, many teachers don’t come forward.

One “frustrated ” teacher says she knows about the sexual abuse taking place at school, but has not reported it because she will become “disfavoured ” for “speaking out ” and she “fears for her life and her job “.

The Teddy Bear Clinic ‘s Shaheda Omar says the reality is that these child victims are damaged by the trauma of being violated by someone in a position of power.
“[ Children] feel guilty; a state of powerlessness, helplessness and betrayal by their educators. They do not feel protected or believed,” she says. inconsistent when deciding whether or not to prosecute a case.

It also notes that due to the lack of collaboration between the police and prosecutors, dockets go missing or become untraceable” once the police hand them to prosecutors; and
Magistrates: Some magistrates view children as unreliable witnesses” and are accused of showing bias in favour of teachers and are concerned that they will unfairly harm an educator’s reputation Aarti J Narsee