

EMPD Hosts a Domestic Violence Awareness Campaign

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The Ekurhuleni Metro Police Departments (EMPD) hosted a domestic violence awareness campaign meant to educate community members about the big problem of abuse and to encourage people to act. The EMPD officers reached out to the community members of Skoonplaas informal settlement and Leachville on 22 and 23 of July 2023. The aim was to address burning issues that affect the communities. Women and children are victims of abuse in South Africa and the EMPD saw the need to engage the community members to help curb cases of domestic violence.

It is also very important that the police department takes these cases seriously because several of the women and children in our community are victims of injustice whether by their abusive partners, the police themselves, or even the community at large. Most women do not report domestic violence cases because they are afraid of not being believed when they tell their stories.

A community member said that she was abused by her husband from the first month of her marriage, she did try to reach out to trusted family members about the abuse but was told to endure, in marriage there are always bad and good days, and she is not the only woman who has been abused in marriage.

It is a touching story since her arranged marriage by the church and her family, to a man who is 22 years older than her, she was beaten up by her husband. And, because of the ongoing beatings, it became difficult for her to continue with the job she had at the time and any other job she tried getting.

The woman is grateful that she never had children with her husband after she suffered a miscarriage in 2020 because she fears what her husband would have done to her children. This was never reported to the police because when she was 18 years old, she was raped and went to the police where a statement was taken but dropped the case after waiting for over two hours in the middle of the night for a doctor to get to the local hospital. The victim was taken to by the police to do a rape kit and when the doctor was explaining the procedure to her, she was told that she will be charged if the rapist is found not guilty leading to her dropping the charges. She has had to face everyday looking at the face of her rapist when she goes to the shops.

The EMPD's initiative to have a dialogue with the community is good but is it enough when the system is failing its victims? The covid-19 pandemic exposed how much the government is failing its citizens as domestic violence charges increased. It would be great to have a system that works, police that do their jobs and doctors who do their jobs instead of intimidating victims of violence and rape because that has given many young women a worse life. The woman still feels the system failed her.

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