We applaud the child who told a safe adult of an incident that made her uncomfortable, and the adults in her life who reacted responsibly.

Sadly, nothing about this case and his previous cases surprises SCARS!

- Child sex offenders deny their actions.
- Child sex offenders don't stop with one child.
- Child sex offenders blame children.
- Child sex offenders work hard at earning the trust and respect of their victims and their caregivers.
- Some untrained Advocates (Defense Lawyers) representing child sex offenders accuse victims of lying and thus re-traumatize the victim.
- Sentencing of child sex offenders in this country is not effective. Those who are sentenced to imprisonment do not receive sentences long enough for any meaningful intervention to occur. Parliament has already made the maximum sentences higher. It is time that those increased penalties are reflected in the actual sentences imposed on child sex offenders.

Our questions would be:

- What treatment did he receive the first time he resided at Westgate?
- How many clinical forensic psychologists and/or qualified experts in the field of the deviance of child sex offenders were involved in making this decision to first release him?
- Who deemed him to be at no or low risk to children before he was released? Shouldn't such assessments be by two professionals based on progress reports provided to the court and taken over an extended amount of time? Did that happen?
- Will he now receive extensive, robust, psychosocial, psychological, and psychosexual intervention during this sentence? Will he receive a treatment program called Healthy Sex Programme (HSP)?
- Knowing that he will be released one day, what will be his provisions upon release? What will be the monitoring protocol upon his release and for how long? What will be the criteria for him to be policed in this protocol.
- Will he have the freedom to live with children or frequent areas where there are children?
- Who will accept responsibility if he re-offends, and whose little life will be changed forever?

We should all be angry when we read cases like this of a habitual reoffender! When it comes to sexual crimes against children, sentencing for child sex offenders **must be** longer. Judges and magistrates must be provided with all the history of an offender, and should not be hindered in their discretion by guidelines or other previous cases. Oh, I know what the legal critics will say "It's unfair to my client". Well guess what? The risk for children should take precedent. How can anyone decide on anything if they aren't provided with all the facts?

If we say we are a country who care for its people, we need to begin with children and their future.

Children become adults and if they don't have an opportunity to grow up healthy and whole because of the warped sexual desires of adults who are provided with freedom to reoffend, because of our inadequate sentencing practices, then we need to look at our laws, both the statutes and the common law sentencing principles. I appeal to those politicians who pass law, and I appeal to those judges who interpret those sentencing laws. I appeal to those that have the power to find the money to bring the most effective treatment and management processes to our shore. I also appeal to those responsible for training the defense counsel. If nothing else, do it for our country's future health! It's a child's right to be protected and we as a country have a responsibility to ensure it happens. Some may think that child sex offenders deserve a second chance. Well guess what? Victims aren't afforded that when it comes to stolen innocence.