

REPORTING ON CASES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE THAT AFFECT CHILDREN

When reporting on sexual violence that affects children, the Defender of the Public gently reminds those who work in audiovisual media of the obligations stated in the Audiovisual Communication Services Law and other norms. The recommendations are the following:

- Respectfully report on rights rather than doing so in a sensational, spectacularizing manner.
- Aim at a rigorous coverage, not based on assumptions or wild guesses, but on pertaining, specialized sources.

-It is advised to identify the sources used so that the public knows about them.

-Provide precise information about judicial investigations or processes if any, respecting the private information that judicial authorities may have.

-Prioritize headlines that include relevant information about the case, rather than aiming at having higher ratings through the impact of the most traumatizing information.

- Aim at the specialists handling sexual violence cases ensuring respect for the rights of the victims.
- Do not broadcast information that allow victims to be identified since it may compromise their rights.

-Go to lengths to preserve the identity of children and adolescents.

-Avoid both direct (divulging personal information and footage, unblurred videos and photographs and unedited soundfiles) and indirect identification (divulging the names of parents and other relatives, footage of the school and other regularly visited places).

- Even when police and/or judicial sources give information about the case, avoid violating any rights.
- Avoid stigmatizing victims and the people close to them.
- Avoid any affirmation that blames the victims and discredits their demands.

- It is of utmost importance to respect people's privacy.

-Therefore, it is advised not to broadcast information, photos or contact details that are private, or scabrous details of the events, or which may affect their dignity or honor or future or cause further damage.

- Respectfully report on the situation of the victims and their relatives. To that end, it is important:

-Not to air or interview people in a state of shock or any other emotional state caused by the events that led to the report.

-Avoid close-ups to portray the suffering of those affected.

-Aim at not focusing on the repetitive description of scabrous, dramatic facts since this type of narrative causes the re-victimization of those affected by it.

- Provide guidelines and preventive information that helps the population tackle this issue.
- Contextualize the issues in order to contribute to social understanding and the creation of prevention strategies.
- Lastly, reporting must respect the rights of children and adolescents stated in the Convention on the Rights and Law no. 26,061 of Integral Protection of the Rights of Children and Adolescents, especially: a) the child's best interest; b) dignity and integrity of the person; c) privacy and family life; d) dignity; e) opinion and expression. This recommendation alludes to children and adolescents that are part of these cases as well as the public of audiovisual communication services.