



Childline

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## **Media Statement**

### **Childline South Africa has a New Shorter Number-116**

We have good news to share. The number **116** will become the new and exclusive Childline South Africa tollfree helpline number for both children and families to call with child-related matters.

We are excited because the new number is shorter and easier for children and adults to remember. In addition to the new number being used within the South African borders, it also works outside of South Africa, enabling us to join forces with other (African) countries in ensuring effective delivery of Child Protection Services to all children.

Childline South Africa is a non-profit organisation that works to protect children from violence and further the culture of children's rights in South Africa. Childline South Africa and its regional network offices runs a national, 24-hour, tollfree helpline, available 365 days and has been in existence for 35 years. As the world becomes more digitally advanced, Childline South Africa has had to keep up with the changes and developments. The issuing of the new number was gazetted as of [Government Gazette: Republic of South Africa, NO 43230 dated 15 April 2020.](#)

The **116** number is a regional number of all the Helplines in the African region. This means that if South African children were to find themselves in one of the African countries and in need of help, by dialling **116**, they would be able to get through to a Helpline, receive the necessary support and be effectively linked with a Helpline back home. The new **116** number therefore will provide better access to child protection services throughout the African continent and allows us to strengthen partnerships with child protection agencies.

Childline South Africa would like to thank the Government of South Africa and ICASA for taking heed of the 2009 recommendations by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) to consider a harmonized short code for Helplines for and about children. We also appreciate the Communications Regulatory Association of Southern Africa (CRASA) for its resolutions. Further appreciation is extended to the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies, the National Department of Social Development, Department of Basic Education, Telkom Foundation, Child Helpline International and the Helplines in the African region for supporting Childline South Africa in this process.

Childline South Africa will continue to work with our stakeholders to help prevent child abuse, promote and protect the welfare of all children and child support systems in South Africa. We look

forward to continue serving the most vulnerable in our society. Our helpline teams are ready. We offer the same service and passion for children and families. Dial 116 our new short number

Statement issued by

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The End.