



GALESHEWE STORIES

*With thanks to the people of Galeshewe,
Northern Cape for sharing their stories with us.*

Introduction

There has been a substantial amount of debate in the media about the role and impact of alcohol in our society. Although important, these debates do not bring the voices and perspectives of ordinary South Africans to us.

The Northern Cape Community Alcohol Advocacy project was started to fill this gap. Young people in Galeshewe in the Northern Cape were trained to gather data about alcohol advertising and the role of alcohol in people's lives.

The stories in this booklet are a small sample of the many stories that they collected from that community. They speak about the impact of alcohol on themselves, their families and their friends. They are a powerful reminder that alcohol advertising shows us almost nothing about the real impact of alcohol consumption.

Photographs in the booklet are not of the actual writers of the stories.



Impact on children and family

Male, 25-35 years

Alcohol is very dangerous, it separated my parents. It's even painful talking about it. It was in 2007, when my father started beating my mother. He would get home late under the influence and my mother used to cry all the time.

At times the police would be called to come and calm the situation but my father did not want to change his drinking habits. He drank every weekend and it affected my school work as well. I eventually left school at Grade 10 and had to move in with my aunt to another town.

There it was cool, but I longed for home because I missed the good times we had had before. My mother ended up filing for divorce and it tore us apart as now we are separated from him.



Domestic violence

Male, 16-25 years

It was on a Saturday night when my father came home drunk. He came home in a bad mood. He was really angry and it seemed as though he had been fighting where he came from.

He wanted food and when my sister handed him his food he said that his meat was like a child's meat. He started shouting at my mother. My mother got fed up and started shouting back at him.

He went up to his room and called my mother in. When my mother was in the room he started beating her. We just heard my mother screaming for help.

That's when my sister and I came in and he also wanted to beat us but we managed to escape out of the house and went next door to ask for help.

Self-respect

Male, 15-25 years

My mother drinks a lot and she does things without even herself being aware of these things – at times even asking me what she did when she is sober.

Not a day passes when she does not drink. I have to cook for her and my younger siblings every day even though she would not eat the food.

When she is sober I always try my best to talk to her but she never listens to me. She would just seem to understand my point and act like she heard me and that she is willing to change. For a day or two it would be really nice spending time with her.

I always hear my friends saying that they did this and that with their parents, yet I can't. It breaks my heart a lot. I wish she could change and I could at least have a better day and spend a lot of time with my friends.





Ill-health *Male, 25-35 years*

When I was thirteen, friends would make fun of me if I didn't have a drink. I just gave in because it was easier to join the crowd. I was really unhappy and just drank to escape my life.

I went out less and less and so started losing friends. The lonelier I got, the more I drank. I was violent and out of control. I didn't know what I was doing.

I was kicked out of home at the age of sixteen. I was ripping my family apart. I was homeless and started begging for money to buy drinks.

I was only sixteen but my liver was badly damaged and I was close to killing myself from everything I was drinking.

Relationship conflict *Male, 25-35 years*

It was on a hot summer day when my girlfriend and I made plans to meet up on a Saturday. It was hot as if we were in the oven of hell. I smoked my oke pipe with dagga as I drank alcohol at the same time.

My girlfriend arrived at around 6 pm. I was already under the influence of alcohol and I laid her down on the bed and we made-out. After 30 min we started to talk about our expectations.

She was sober-minded, and I was chemically off balance. Our discussion turned into an argument as we started playing the blaming game. The argument got personal and she snapped saying, 'you the one that infected me with this horrible virus.'



Interpersonal violence

Male, 25-35 years

On the 1st of September 2012 I was at a tavern enjoying myself with friends there. As we were sitting there I looked towards the doorway and I noticed a group of boys coming inside the tavern.

I looked again and I saw them calling out names of the other guys who were also in the tavern. As I was listening to the names being called out, some boys who were called out pulled out knives and went towards them. They exchanged words and suddenly one was holding his neck (after being stabbed) and ran outside and collapsed.

The rest of the people, including me were just looking doing nothing to help him. I then felt like a coward because I couldn't do anything. Then the police came and stopped the action.



Sexual assault

Female, 15-25 years

I was coming back from a match and headed home. On my way home I met three guys who were drunk. I knew one of them, so the thought of them hurting me never crossed my mind.

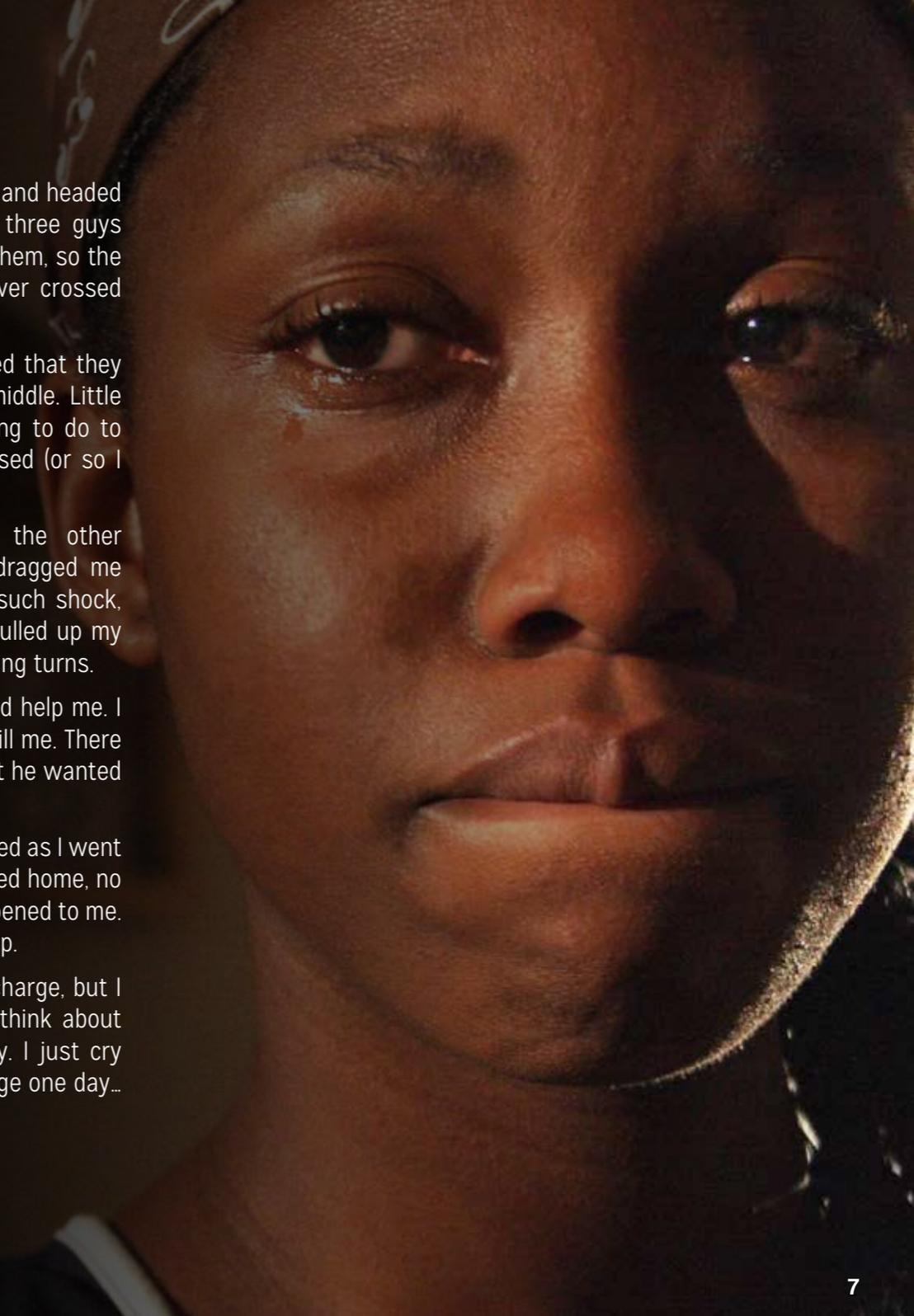
As they approached me, I realized that they split in order to put me in the middle. Little did I know what they were going to do to me. Ok, I greeted them and passed (or so I thought).

One grabbed my hand while the other covered my mouth. They then dragged me into the woods. Since I was in such shock, I just became very weak. They pulled up my dress and started raping me, taking turns.

I was screaming but no one could help me. I remember begging them not to kill me. There was one that was so hateful that he wanted to kill me.

After the ordeal, they left and I cried as I went home all by myself. When I reached home, no one took notice of what had happened to me. I took a shower and went to sleep.

Till this day, I have never laid a charge, but I still feel hatred towards men. I think about what happened to me every day. I just cry but I believe I will have my revenge one day... that's for sure.





Sexual assault
Female, 14-24 years

It was on the 14th February 2011 and I was 17 years old. It was at a Valentine's Day bash where I started drinking. There were these senior guys from my school who we were drinking with.

I am not sure about the events of that day, but I think someone spiked my drink with something. I remember waking up naked the next day.

Later I discovered I was pregnant and I do not know who the father of my child is.

Sexual assault
Female, Age Unknown

My new boyfriend took me for a weekend outing. We went to the movies first, then he bought booze and ciders for me. We then proceeded to his house in town. As we got there, we met with two of his friends whom he introduced to me.

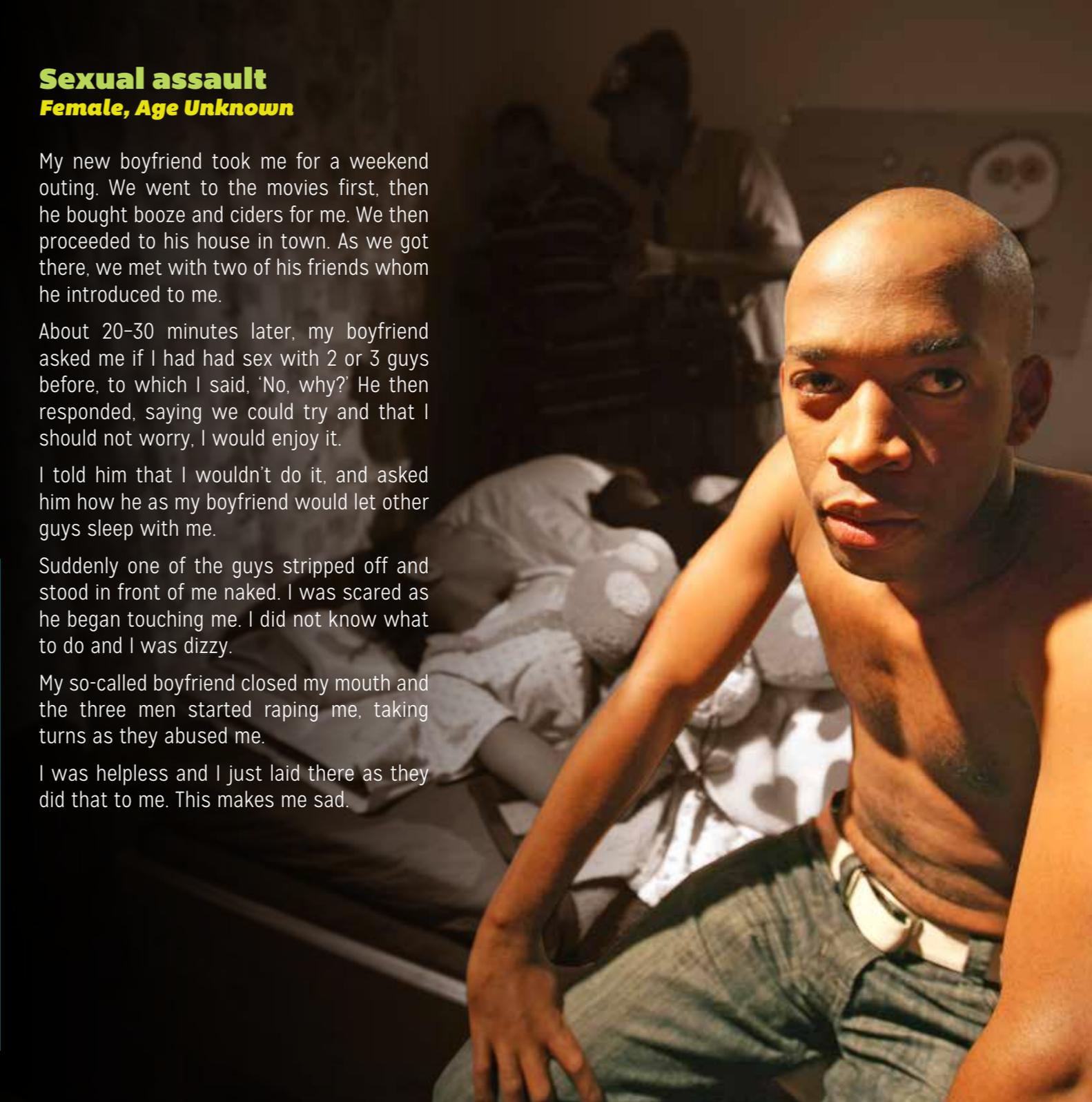
About 20-30 minutes later, my boyfriend asked me if I had had sex with 2 or 3 guys before, to which I said, 'No, why?' He then responded, saying we could try and that I should not worry, I would enjoy it.

I told him that I wouldn't do it, and asked him how he as my boyfriend would let other guys sleep with me.

Suddenly one of the guys stripped off and stood in front of me naked. I was scared as he began touching me. I did not know what to do and I was dizzy.

My so-called boyfriend closed my mouth and the three men started raping me, taking turns as they abused me.

I was helpless and I just laid there as they did that to me. This makes me sad.



Unsafe sex
Male, 25-30 years

I met with a chick there and bought her ciders. Later in the evening, when I thought of going home, she was tipsy so she didn't say no.

I went with her – this girl didn't know what happened. In the morning this girl found herself in my arms not knowing what happened. When she asked me where she was, and I told her, she then started crying.



Unsafe sex
Male, 25-35 years

We were out with friends and we were having fun until something happened and my life became a nightmare.

I had a girlfriend and we were known in the community that we were in love. We went out one Saturday. I am HIV positive but my girlfriend didn't know my status.

On that Saturday after having a nice time we

went to my house and made love, we were drunk so we didn't use protection.

Then she found out about my status and she opened a case against me. I was charged for manslaughter. The case is still on and I regret the day I got drunk.

Maybe if I hadn't been drunk I would not be in this situation.



Drunk driving

Male 13

I'm the only child. I lived with both parents until they got involved in a car accident. My dad died on the spot while my mother died a few days later at the hospital.

After the funeral, I found out that they were drunk. I initially did not believe it, but I have since made peace with it because they are now gone and there is nothing that can be done to bring them back.

I am now living with my grandmother and she is also an alcoholic. I also can't do anything about it but just have to accept the situation since I don't have a choice.

I want to tell parents who drink that, for the sake of their children, they must drink responsibly because at the end it is the children who suffer.

Acknowledgements

Vuyisile Nika
Galeshewe Project Co-ordinator

Carrie Pratt
Project Trainer

Zanele Xabanisa
Galeshewe Project Fieldworker

Savera Kalideen and Renay Weiner
Soul City Project Management

© Soul City 2014

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright holder.

The Soul City Institute team has played a critical role in the production of these materials through their administrative support, research and editorial input. Their dedication and expertise are valued and appreciated.

CDC/PEPFAR DISCLAIMER

"This publication was partially supported by Cooperative Agreement Number 5U2GGH000294-03 from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of CDC."

ISBN number: 978-1-77594-031-9

Date: June 2014

To order Soul City materials please call: 0860 11 5000