



PAEDIATRIC SOCIETY OF GHANA

1st April 2024

PAEDIATRIC SOCIETY OF GHANA STATEMENT ON CHILD MARRIAGES AND OTHER RELATED FORMS OF CHILD ABUSE IN GHANA

The Paediatric Society of Ghana (PSG) has observed with great distress the discourse on various media platforms on a report of a Child Marriage in Accra. The Society wishes to state as follows:

1. Ghana is reported to have over **2million girls currently married or women who were first married off as children**. 1 out of every 5 young women were married off as innocent children and 9 in 10 married girls are not attending school.
2. As a country, we have made good progress towards eliminating this unpopular practice of Child Marriage. However, **accelerated actions are needed**.
3. Publications of open child marriages, verified or not, and regardless of the socio-cultural intentions, only slow us down from protecting our children from the **deleterious harm of this abhorrent practice**.
4. The perceived acceptance of child marriages and the open brazen approval or defence of the practice by influential leaders of the community have the potential to embolden certain deviant behaviours like paedophilia.
5. Child marriages are dangerous. Both real and so-called arranged informal unions where the child is supposedly a symbolic wife and not expected to perform any marital duties including conjugal duties are dangerous.
6. The **preventable damage to the child's development, reproductive and mental health and education** can be irreversible and generational.
7. Collectively, we must remove the shroud of deception which portrays these cultural practices as harmless and protect our children. We cannot openly endorse such unions and still expect the child to be able to report any abuse perpetrated to these same adults who watched on as the child was being "married off" to their abusers. This is confusing!
8. **The PSG strongly condemns any act or perception or facilitation of Child Marriage. On the right to refuse betrothal and marriage, The Children's Act, 1998 states: No person shall force a child(age less than 18 years) to be betrothed, to be the subject of a dowry transaction or to be married.**

Tel: 0533659363

www.pedsgh.com

Email:info@pedsgh.com

P.O.Box KB 498

Korle Bu Teaching Hospital-Accra



PRESIDENT
Dr Hilda Mantebea Boye

VICE PRESIDENT
Dr Emmanuel Oppong

GENERAL SECRETARY
Dr Gabrielle Obeng- Koranteng

ASSISTANT GEN. SECRETARY
Dr Haruna Mahama

FINANCIAL SECRETARY
Dr Afua Osew-Gyamfi

EXECUTIVE MEMBER
Dr Genevieve Insaiddoo

EXECUTIVE MEMBER
Dr Richard Letsa



PAEDIATRIC SOCIETY OF GHANA

It should never be suggested that a child wilfully agreed to a marriage or any similar union. Our children trust us to make decisions in their best interest. Let us not betray that trust.

9. The PSG calls on all agents and agencies with the mandate to protect children from such harmful socio-cultural practices to respond swiftly and save the children already traumatised by Child Marriage practices.
10. We appreciate the contributions that all the state institutions, non-governmental organisations and partners have made over the period to address the issue of Child Marriages in Ghana. You have our unflinching support to continue your efforts until Child Marriage and other forms of child abuse are totally eliminated.
11. The PSG understands that there are so many dimensions to the practice of Child Marriage and further discussions to lead to incisive actions are needed. All stakeholders and well-meaning Ghanaians can agree on this: WE ARE ON THE SIDE OF THE CHILD.
12. We will support the efforts of government and all partners to protect the best interest of every child everywhere in Ghana. This calls for strong national commitment at the highest level of the political, traditional, health, educational, judicial and media landscape, with unwavering support from our international partners like UNICEF and WHO

Dr Hilda Mantebea Boye
President

Dr Gabrielle Obeng-Koranteng
General Secretary



Tel: 0533659363

www.pedsgh.com

Email: info@pedsgh.com

P.O.Box KB 498
Korle Bu Teaching Hospital-Accra



PRESIDENT
Dr Hilda Mantebea Boye

VICE PRESIDENT
Dr Emmanuel Oppong

GENERAL SECRETARY
Dr Gabrielle Obeng- Koranteng

ASSISTANT GEN. SECRETARY
Dr Haruna Mahama

FINANCIAL SECRETARY
Dr Afua Osew-Gyamfi

EXECUTIVE MEMBER
Dr Genevieve Insaiddo

EXECUTIVE MEMBER
Dr Richard Letsa