

Children's Authority: 1,300 child abuse cases

The Children's Authority says in its first three months it has received more than 1,300 reports of child abuse, which, the body claims is more than any other agency has reported for all of last year.

In a release sent to the media yesterday, the Children's Authority said it was encouraged by the amount of support, and appealed to the public to report any cases of child abuse.

"We continue to remind everybody that child protection is everybody's business, including family, friends and neighbours" the release read.

In the release the Authority also expressed concern that physical abuse is the second highest type of abuse with about 300

cases reported in the past three months.

The Authority said while it is understood that parents may be undergoing a certain amount of stress, they should find means other than corporal punishment to correct their children.

"Although Section 4 of the Children Act 2012 permits only parents and guardians to apply 'reasonable' corporal punishment of children while forbidding its use by anyone else, the reports of physical abuse against children are often far outside anything permissible," the release read.

Head of the Parent Teacher's Association, Zena Ramathali, expressed happiness that the association is getting so much support since its opening in

May. However she expressed concern that there were so many cases, and said that the country must take a no-tolerance approach against child abuse, and violence against children.

"We need to sensitise the country about child abuse," said Ramathali.

Ramathali called for a facility to separate children from abusive homes, and appealed to parents to be vigilant while sending their children to school. The PTA head also expressed concern that staffing may be a problem as time goes along. "I hope the authority will be properly staffed so there would be no cold cases, and all children suffering from abuse can be treated with," she said.