

PRESS RELEASE**Statement on Sen. Sonny Angara's call to address bullying in schools**

PASIG CITY, June 21, 2018 – The Department of Education reiterates its commitment to promote a child-friendly, gender-sensitive, safe, and motivating environment for all learners as it enforces zero tolerance on cases of child abuse, violence, exploitation, discrimination, bullying, and other forms of abuse.

Its Child Protection Policy, issued through DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2012, mandates all public and private elementary and secondary schools to create their own Child Protection Committee (CPC) which ensures that cases and instances of abuse are closely monitored and expeditiously investigated.

The implementation of the policy through the CPC has led to a more effective and efficient process of tracking and reporting cases of child abuse, hence the surge in number of documented incidences since 2012. But the Department's unwavering efforts and interventions resulted to a significant decrease in the incidences of bullying – from 29,723 in School Year 2015-2016 to 19,672 in School Year 2016-2017.

These efforts include the strict implementation of the DepEd Anti-Bullying Policy issued through DepEd Order No. 55, s. 2013, and reiterated through DepEd Memorandum No. 5, s. 2017 in response to Republic Act 10627 or the Anti-Bullying Act of 2013. The Department has also been training its designated Child Protection Specialists who will provide technical guidance to schools on complex and serious cases of child abuse.

In addressing bullying in schools, DepEd has time and again called for teachers and officials alike to instill among learners the value of respect for each other's rights regardless of their opinion, status, gender, ethnicity, religion, as well as moral and physical integrity.

Finally, DepEd continuously intensifies its campaign to mobilize and educate the learners, parents, teachers, community members, local government units, and other stakeholders on child protection.

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