

Bulletproof park proposed in gang-hit Mitchells Plain

Gun Free SA, an NGO dedicated to reducing gun violence in South Africa, has put forward a proposal to develop the world's first bulletproof park in Mitchells Plain, a community heavily impacted by gang violence.



Source: Supplied.

This proposal aims to provide a safe and secure play area for children amidst the ongoing threat of gunfire.

"Gang violence is rife on the Cape Flats, and children are exposed to its brutality from a very young age," said Lynn Phillips, Mitchells Plain resident and secretary of the Cape Flats Safety Forum.

"Innocent children are often victims of crossfire on playgrounds. Every time a child is shot in the crossfire there are prayers, protests, and promises. What we need is action."

The Bulletproof Park project comes as a response to the alarming statistics of firearm-related deaths in South Africa. In 2022-23 alone, more than 11,300 people were killed with a firearm in a 12-month period, with almost 10% of those deaths being gang-related, and many victims being young children shot by stray bullets.

Crafted by specialists, the envisioned park will be entirely enveloped in bulletproof glass, delivering the delights of a typical playground with slides and monkey bars while ensuring the safety of children from stray bullets.

Advanced security measures

Moreover, the park integrates cutting-edge security features such as secure entrances and panic buttons, providing parents and guardians with added assurance that comprehensive measures have been implemented to safeguard the play space from the nation's firearm crisis.

Gun Free SA has even researched the development of bulletproof vests tailored for young children, further demonstrating its commitment to protecting young lives.

“After we’ve tried all the ways to stop the bullets, when do we stop the guns?” Monique Hansen, Gun Free SA programme manager asked.

“The bulletproof park will stop bullets killing children in a Mitchells Plain playground; for real solutions that protect all children in South Africa, we have to silence the guns.”

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