How to break silence on rape cases, by expert

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A child protection specialist, Mr. Olakunle Sanni, has enjoined the three tiers of government to improve policy on child rape and provide special education centres for victims.  
  
Sanni, who works with the Child Protection Network, said in Lagos, at the weekend, that the provision of such centres would empower victims to break the culture of silence.  
  
He said children, parents, governments, non-governmental organisations and individuals owed it a duty to protect girls.  
  
“Empowering and educating children and other victims of sexual abuse will help in breaking the silence culture in rape cases in Nigeria.  
  
“We should establish more programmes for rape victims whereby they can confidently report rape cases without any fear and stigmatisation.  
  
“We’ve discovered that most rape victims are always ready to talk and report such cases, but our communities sometimes do not accept them.  
  
“We have treated a lot of cases, and we noticed that most children who are raped do not understand victimisation at their levels.  
  
“Most of these children are ready to shame and identify the predators. So, supporting and listening to children will break a lot of silence culture,” Sanni said.  
  
He advised parents and security agencies not keep any rape information, but to share it in order to help victims.  
  
He said: “Child protection specialists or activists always work with any information given them by parents or children.  
  
“People should know that anybody can be a victim of rape. This is why we should protect every child from predators.  
  
“Everybody should take up the fight of rape cases, even within our religions environments.”  
  
Pastor Febisan Dipo-Alaka of Star Assembly, Lekki, Lagos called for strict laws on rape.  
  
She said predators must not go unpunished because rape cases were becoming alarming.  
  
“Most of the silent rape cases are caused by burning threat and fear from the predators.  
  
“The main reason parents and guardians should be very close to their children, so that children can open up when they are victimised.  
  
“Recently, a university lecturer was sent to jail due to sex for marks. I know that will be a great lesson for other predators.  
  
“In my church, we always lecture children on rape and that they must say no and push back any predator.  
  
“I encourage parents and religions leaders to always report any case of rape to the security agencies, even within the church.  
  
“There must not be silence culture within the church on rape cases,” Dipo-Alaka said.