



079 A Press conference was held by Women and Men against Child Abuse at the Protea hotel in Johannesburg about the case against alleged paedophile Sidney Frankel who is a well known member of Johannesburg business and Socialite community. At the conference from left are Luke Lambrecht, a Child Development and Protection Consultant, Leonard Carr a child psychologist, Ian Lewitt an attorney and Miranda Friedman.. 130815 Picture: Boxer Ngwenya

Johannesburg - On Thursday, attorney, Ian Levitt revealed more details to journalists about the Sidney Frankel case and the action his accusers plan to take.

Frankel has been accused by seven people for sexually assaulting them decades ago, as young children.

At a press conference held by Women and Men Against Child Abuse (WMACA), Levitt said that the seven accusers have each filed civil lawsuits against the billionaire businessman and socialite, claiming damages of R5 Million each.

“But it’s not the money they want ... what they want is this man to go to jail,” Levitt said.

Frankel’s accusers attempted to solve the situation amicably before taking it to court. In a recording played to journalists, from August 2013, one of Frankel’s accusers confronted him over the phone but he denied the allegations. ^

In a second recording, the same accuser called Frankel's wife, who said "what I did about it was my business" alluding to the fact that she knew about the situation despite her husband's denial.

"There is no vacuum between the perpetrator and the family," Levitt said.

He added that on Thursday papers were served to Frankel's lawyers giving them two weeks to address the meaning of the answer in the second recording.

"We want to know what Frankel's wife knew, when

did she know and what did she do about it."

Levitt also said that Frankel signed an affidavit where he denied the allegations and said that the seven accusers were wrong. "He claimed that it's a ... conspiracy to try and get money from Frankel in his old age."

The case is being taken to the Constitutional Court in an attempt to try have new laws developed in cases of sexual abuse. Today sexual abuse cases can only be filed in the first 20 years post the abuse.

"If a six month old baby is sexually molested by her father ... and she only finds out 20 and a half years later, she can't do anything about it.

"This can't be right in a country that has one of the most developed constitutions," Levitt added.

During the press conference, clinical psychologist Leonard Carr also addressed journalists about why those sexually abused as children only speak out much later in life.

"Sexuality goes to the core of your identity, humanity and your sense of self. Anything that affects your core and your sense of self is going to affect your relationship with yourself, your relationship with others and with the world" he said.

"Therefore as soon as someone is violated (sexually) it is going to affect them for life because it creates a shift in their identity ... that shift is inherently shame."

Carr defined shame as the feeling when one feels damaged and contaminated. "It leaves a person feeling defective and insubstantial ... these kinds of feelings affect the way one deals with life and for a child who can't understand or contextualise it in any way, that totally shifts their sense of

"If one looks from a child's perspective of disclosing it at that time, there is such a huge authority gap (between an adult and a child).

“So you’re asking children to stand up to authority figures who they’ve been brought up to believe are almost in a sense godlike and particularly if these authority figures are on each others side – even if it’s all in the child’s mind and the parents will react differently,” he said.

He added that perpetrators are also experts at using the halo effect to make themselves look noble and righteous. “Going back to the child’s perspective, the child thinks how are they going to challenge someone in adult society who has been hero worshipped and is manipulating the halo effect ... this all adds to why the child chooses not to expose the sexual abuse.”

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