



Cabinet has instructed the Ministry of Justice to ensure that priority is given to the passage of legislation such as the DNA Bill and regulations to accompany the [Sexual Offences Act](#) .

This follows extensive discussions on the recent spate of sexual offences against women and children.

Speaking at the Jamaica House press briefing on October 3, 2012, Minister with responsibility for Information, Senator the Hon. Sandra Falconer, said the additional legislative support will assist with the successful apprehension and punishment of offenders.

The Information Minister disclosed that Cabinet also discussed the abolition of preliminary enquiries to ensure that cases are dealt with more speedily in the courts, "and of course for the reduction of the trauma on victims."

She informed that a public education programme is also to be developed in an effort to bring awareness about issues relating to sexual abuse and sexual violence.

Senator Falconer said that discussions were held with the Media Association of Jamaica and the Press Association of Jamaica on the need for more sensitive reporting of issues relating to [sexual offences](#) .

As it relates to children, she informed that an inter-ministerial and interagency committee, headed by the Minister of Youth and Culture, Hon. [Lisa Hanna](#) , has been meeting to develop a plan of action to deal with the welfare of children, who come in contact with the law.

"Ministers [Peter Bunting](#) and Mark Golding are also members of that committee. Minister Hanna has been instructed to return to Cabinet with recommendations and proposals for an action plan after stakeholder consultation," Ms. Falconer said.

"The Parenting Act, which was tabled both in the House of Representatives and in the Senate, is to be fast tracked and as well as the setting up of the Parenting Commission," she informed.