



October 12, 2018

A message to the MTM community regarding sexual assault at the More Than Me Academy

We are deeply, profoundly sorry.

To all the girls who were raped by Macintosh Johnson in 2014 and before: we failed you. We gave Johnson power that he exploited to abuse children. Those power dynamics broke staff ability to report the abuse to our leadership immediately. Our leadership should have recognized the signs earlier and we have and will continue to employ training and awareness programs so we do not miss this again. We are moved by the courage and bravery of the girls who came forward and it is a tragedy that they ever had to. To the survivors that have HIV, we remain committed to supporting you. We are heartbroken by what happened and also have fundamentally changed how we operate as an organization since this incident.

We acknowledge the enormous complexity of being responsible for the care of children and that previously we were naive to believe that providing education alone is enough to protect these girls from the abuses they may face – strong institutions, safeguarding policies and vigilance are needed to do that. More Than Me will now provide private, school-wide HIV testing at the Academy to all students. An independent audit completed this past summer noted our progress in protecting girls and called for the implementation of additional changes including survivor-centered protocols, additional resources to ensure efficient reporting, broad application of safety standards to all of our public schools and organizational culture change and we continue to be firmly committed to further bolstering our safeguarding policies. As we work to correct past failures, we welcome the Ministry of Education to the Academy at any time for a complete inspection.

We regret that coverage in ProPublica and TIME presented a one-sided view of our overall work and achievements, often quoting out of context or minimizing our impact, institutional development, response at the time and changes over the past four years.