

Life-long protection of children's identities argued in SCA

Four parties – including the Centre for Child Law and Childline – argued in the Supreme Court of Appeal that section 143(3) of the Criminal Procedure Act is unconstitutional as it fails to protect the identities of minor victims, witnesses and offenders for life. According to a [Volksblad](#) report, Steven Budlender argued on behalf of the appellants that the default position should be life-long anonymity and that media houses could bring court applications if they want to identify these minors when they become adults. Media24, Tiso Blackstar and Independent Newspapers are opposing the appeal. Wim Trengove, for the media houses, argued **the relief sought by children's rights group would lead to absurdities**. Such an interpretation of the Criminal Procedure Act would, for example, prevent a church from publishing the name of an accident victim in its pamphlets. Trengove said even the historic picture of a Hector Petersen would require a court application by the media in order to be published. Judgment was reserved.