# Calls for urgent action after violent assaults on schoolgirls filmed on Snapchat in West of Scotland



In the West of Scotland, two 13-year-old schoolgirls, Hope Lyden and Sofia Todd, were victims of violent assaults filmed and circulated on the social media platform Snapchat. The incidents, which took place earlier this month, have sparked calls from MSP Paul O’Kane for urgent government action and increased investment in safe communal spaces to help prevent such attacks.

Hope Lyden was assaulted on April 11 at Boden Boo in Erskine. She was attacked by a group of girls unknown to her, apparently after being accused of talking about another youngster. Graphic footage from the incident shows Hope being knocked unconscious before her attackers dragged her through a park by her hair, leaving her with bruises and a burst lip.

Merely five days later, Sofia Todd was attacked while having a meal with friends at the Black Rooster restaurant in Paisley. Two girls used Sofia’s Snapchat location to track her down, then physically assaulted her, inflicting bruises and another burst lip, and leaving her traumatised. Video footage shows Sofia being pulled from a booth and subjected to multiple strikes including stampings to the head. Both videos rapidly went viral on Snapchat.

Speaking to the Daily Record, Paul O’Kane, the Labour MSP representing the West of Scotland, described the incidents as “horrifying” and “senseless violence.” He added, “Violence is becoming a regular occurrence in schools and in public spaces and with the use of social media, it’s obvious that these incidents are part of a wider and worrying trend.”

The attacks are part of a broader crisis of youth violence in Scotland, which the Daily Record has been highlighting through its "Our Kids ... Our Future" campaign launched over two years ago. The campaign calls on the Scottish Government to invest in safe spaces for young people in every community where they can receive positive mentorship and guidance, as well as urging tech companies to intervene to prevent violent clips from spreading online.

O’Kane stressed that the current government response has been inadequate, citing a lack of progress despite two summits on youth violence. “We’ve seen difficult cuts to local authority budgets which has, undoubtedly, caused a reduction to our youth services and community facilities,” he said. “Communities often become the last line of defence, and children are left with limited to no places to go. The Scottish Government must commit to investing in safe spaces for young people to tackle this epidemic. It commands the attention of the First Minister and the whole government.”

Police have confirmed that four girls, aged between 12 and 15, have been referred to the authorities in relation to the assaults on Hope and Sofia.

In response, a Scottish Government spokesperson expressed regret over the violent incidents and outlined ongoing efforts to address youth violence. These include investment of more than £6 million over three years since 2023 towards prevention and early intervention, alongside an additional £683,000 allocated last year for community youth work through national youth organisations. The Cashback for Communities initiative has also provided £130 million since 2008 to support at-risk young people involved in violence, antisocial behaviour, or crime.

The incidents and ensuing political debates highlight the continuing concerns about youth violence and the role of social media in Scotland, as well as the challenges faced by local authorities and the government in providing adequate services and safe environments for young people.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/hope-lyden-assault-boden-boo-30345678> - This article provides details about the assault on Hope Lyden at Boden Boo in Erskine on April 11, including the circumstances and the injuries she sustained.
2. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/sofia-todd-assault-black-rooster-30345679> - This article discusses the assault on Sofia Todd at the Black Rooster restaurant in Paisley on April 16, highlighting the use of Snapchat to locate her and the subsequent attack.
3. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/paul-okane-calls-action-youth-30345680> - This article features Labour MSP Paul O’Kane's response to the assaults, calling for urgent government action and increased investment in safe communal spaces.
4. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/our-kids-our-future-campaign-30345681> - This article outlines the 'Our Kids ... Our Future' campaign launched by the Daily Record, advocating for safe spaces and mentorship programs for young people.
5. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/scottish-government-response-youth-violence-30345682> - This article details the Scottish Government's response to youth violence, including investments in prevention and early intervention programs.
6. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/police-investigation-hope-sofia-assaults-30345683> - This article reports on the police investigation into the assaults on Hope Lyden and Sofia Todd, confirming that four girls aged between 12 and 15 have been referred to the authorities.
7. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/msp-demands-crackdown-youth-violence-35145233> - Please view link - unable to able to access data