

DID YOU KNOW?

The commemoration of Youth Month this year marks the 37th anniversary of the 16 June Soweto uprising. Substance abuse is receiving our highest response through the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) on Substance Abuse, which has proposed legislative reforms such as the banning of alcohol advertisements, increasing the age of alcohol consumption and zero-tolerance for drunk-driving. Government and its partners are implementing the Anti-Substance National Plan of Action and National Drug Master Plan, which are part of our collective effort towards a South Africa that is free of drug abuse.



MY DISTRICT TODAY

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OUTCOME I: IMPROVED QUALITY OF BASIC EDUCATION

GCIS donates books to kickstart school library

By Robbie Senoelo
Mamelodi Thusong Service Centre

Nkotolane Primary School is a rural school in Mamelthake, 52 km from Hammanskraal in North Gauteng. The school caters for children from a disadvantaged community and does not have a proper library.

In an effort to promote the culture of reading, GCIS Gauteng collected books from institutions and individuals. The books were delivered to the school, which now boasts a well-stocked library. "I have never seen so many books before, because I have never been in a library," said Isaac Seshoene, a member of the school-governing body. "Our learners will now have easy access to books that will help them to expand their knowledge."

Principal P Mahalefa was overwhelmed by the donations of books to her school. "I am so happy; I never expected something like this. The culture of learning and teaching will be enhanced by this gesture; and our children as well as the community will benefit from this."

The coordinator of the project, Robbie Senoelo from GCIS, thanked the community for their generosity. "I feel grateful for all people who donated books, especially Rotary Club in Bedfordview. We hope to take this further and work together with other stakeholders to assist disadvantaged schools. As the saying goes: Donate a book and educate the nation."



The learners were excited about all the new books in the library.



Thabiso Molekwa and Matlhatsi Ramotshelo (Nkotolane learners) going through the books that were donated with the help of GCIS.



Peter Gumede, Ms Mabel Tladi, Ms Pinky Mahalefa and Robbie Senoelo at the opening of the library.

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OUTCOME 3: ALL PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA ARE AND FEEL SAFE

Another successful Child Protection Week campaign ends

*By Robbie Senoelo
Mamelodi Thusong Service Centre*

Christmas came early for about 500 children on Saturday 1 June, when Gauteng Premier Nomvula Mokonyane delivered party packs as part of the Child Protection Week closing ceremony, at the Zithobeni Stadium, north of Bronkhorstspuit in Gauteng.

Accompanied by the MEC of Social Development, Nandi Mayathula-Khoza and local MP, JB Sibanyoni, the premier reminded the audience that the safekeeping of children is everyone's responsibility. "Any child is my child and every day is child-protection day. To the men out there – you are not man enough if you sleep with a child." Turning to the children present, she

said: "It is your business to protect yourselves as well. Report all forms of wrongdoing to the authorities."

Adding to Premier Mokonyane's message, Mayathula-Khoza said, "We are here because we love our children; we want to care and protect them. We want them to feel safe at home, at school and in the community. Please help us to ensure that all children are and feel safe."

After receiving her party pack from the premier, wheelchair-bound Mpumi Kabini expressed her delight. "Ke thabile jwang! I did not know that I would receive a present and a hug from

the premier; she is great and God's love is the greatest!"

Sharon Mogale thanked the government for caring. "This is a great initiative; a wonderful gesture. I was so touched by the girl in a wheelchair when she said she wished she was normal like other children and the premier hugged her."

Delivering his vote of thanks, Sibanyoni said: "Go to school; respect your parents and your teachers; say no to drugs and no to nyaope; and remember – crime does not pay!"



Premier Nomvula Mokonyane talks to Mpumi Kabini at the ceremony.



Premier Mokonyane and MEC Nandi Mayathula-Khoza share a moment during the Child Protection Week closing ceremony held in Zithobeni, Bronkhorstspuit.



A young boy receiving a ball from the Premier.





Sipho Kebeni delivered a motivational speech during the Youth Day commemorations in Alexandra.



YOUTH DAY COMMEMORATION

A drug free South Africa is possible

By Robbie Senoelo
Mamelodi Thusong Service Centre

The 37th anniversary of the June 1976 Soweto uprising was commemorated with a difference by young and old at the St. Michael Community Centre in Alexandra. While the youth of 1976 fought for freedom and the creation of a democratic state, National Youth Month 2013's youth activism was directed towards successfully tackling the challenges of teenage pregnancy, child abuse, poverty, unemployment, HIV and AIDS, drug and alcohol abuse, personal development and economic freedom.

The Youth Day commemoration in Alex started with a silent protest by children, highlighting one of the most horrendous challenges facing the current generation of young people: child abuse. Pupils lined the entrance to the centre, solemn and silent, yet their faces said it all. The country has experienced an increase in the number of reported rape cases, with the youth bearing the brunt of this scourge.

“Yes you can!” was the message from Sipho Kebeni, an Alex resident and medical student at the University of the Witwatersrand. “All children must go to school and arm themselves with education, because there is no substitute for education. With perseverance, dedication, commitment, focus and hard work, anything is possible; any dream achievable; and any goal within reach. Yes you can!”

The theme for this year's Youth Month was *Working together for youth development and a drug-free South Africa*. In line with this theme, Dumisane Mogomane from the South African National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence highlighted the negative effects of drugs and substance abuse – especially among the youth. He told them that drug addiction was the main cause of many social ills afflicting young people. “Do not abuse alcohol. It often leads to various social problems such as

health-related problems; babies born with foetal alcohol syndrome; draining of the family unit's financial and emotional resources; teenage pregnancy; HIV and AIDS, sexually transmitted infections; and academic difficulties. South Africa is facing a myriad of challenges, but a drug-free South Africa is possible.



Learners participated in a silent protest to highlight the issues of rape and child abuse facing today's youth.



Representatives of the South African National Defence Force played a vital role in the dialogue.



The Public Employment Services Labour Dialogue, organised by the West Coast District GCIS, was well-attended by stakeholders from across the region.



OUTCOME 5: A SKILLED AND CAPABLE WORKFORCE TO SUPPORT AN INCLUSIVE GROWTH PATH

Saldanha bay public employment service dialogue

By Peter Titus

According to the International Labour Organisation, successful social dialogue, structures and processes have the potential to resolve important economic and social issues, encourage good governance, advance social and industrial peace and stability and boost economic progress. Effective social dialogue depends on:

- respect for the fundamental rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining
- strong and independent workers' and employers' organisations with the technical capacity and knowledge required to participate in social dialogue
- political will and commitment to engage in social dialogue on the part of all parties
- appropriate institutional support.

The GCIS regional communication coordinator, in partnership with the Department of Labour's provincial communication official and the West Coast District local labour office hosted a Public Employment Service Labour Dialogue. In attendance was representatives from business (representing employers); the non-governmental organisation and the small, medium and micro-enterprises sectors; and government departments such as the Department of Local Government CDW Unit, the Department of Social Development, the South African Social Security Agency, the South African Police Service, the

South African National Defence Force (SANDF), the Department of Home Affairs, the National Youth Development Agency and the West Coast Further Education and Training College.

The following key issues were highlighted:

- The SANDF has the military skills system and does train young people in various hard and soft skills; but in some cases, after training, these young people become part of the unemployed. The Department of Labour indicated that that these youths can be placed on its Employment Services of South Africa (ESSA) system.
- There is no link between the Department of Basic Education and the Department of Labour, as the latter focuses on unemployed, out-of-school youths. Nonetheless, a platform can be created to inform matriculants of the Department of Labour's ESSA system.
- A link will be established between the Saldanha Bay industrial development zone representatives and the Department of Labour to ensure that the ESSA will be used to recruit youth for employment.
- As part of the dialogue, there was a major outcry for the Department of Labour to ensure that the ESSA is taken to the most rural areas in the West Coast. GCIS, community development workers and the Department

of Labour agreed that an outreach plan for the area would be developed.

This dialogue also ensured that key institutions in the Saldanha Bay area start with networking and the development of better working relationships between the Department of Labour and all relevant institutions in the West Coast District.



The GCIS regional communication coordinator with Opening remarks at the Saldanha bay Labour Dialogue.