




MY DISTRICT TODAY



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

Sonneblomland Crèche receives a surprise visit during Child Protection Week

By J J Grootboom: GCIS, Western Cape

Officials from the GCIS and the South African Police Service's (SAPS) Conville Police Community Service Centre surprised Sonneblomland crèche with a visit as part of Child Protection Week.

The toddlers were very excited to receive a surprise visit from the police. As part of the entertainment the visitors from the SAPS and the GCIS' communication officer told them stories. The children also learnt new songs and danced.

Easy-to-read information leaflets about the 365 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children campaign were also distributed.

Children in South Africa live in a society with a Constitution that has the highest regard for their rights and for the equality and dignity of everyone. Protecting children from violence, exploitation and abuse is not only a basic value, but also an obligation clearly set out in Article 28 of the South African Constitution.

The aim of child protection is to ensure the safety, well-being, care and protection of children through an integrated multi-disciplinary approach. Despite the best efforts of the South African Government and civil society to protect children from child abuse, neglect and exploitation, many children still remain vulnerable.



Jethro Grootboom

"Children must listen to their parents and never ever speak to strangers, take sweets from strangers or get into a vehicle with strangers. They should tell the teacher, parents or uncle policeman if strangers want to offer them sweets."

Warrant Officer Damands

"Uncle policeman is a friend of children. Children must not be scared to stop uncle policeman to tell him when a stranger want to do them wrong."



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**OUTCOME 3: ALL PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA ARE AND FEEL SAFE****Church leaders humbled by municipal intervention**

By Mlungisi Dlamini: GCIS, KwaZulu-Natal

At a prayer meeting held at Impendle Thusong Centre under the auspices of the South African Social Security Agency (Sassa) on Friday, 30 May 2014, church fraternities commended Impendle Municipality for working with them in a bid to fight social ills facing the community of Impendle,

According to Ms Sibongile Dlamini, manager of Impendle's Thusong Centre, the event drew more than 1 200 church members from different congregations around Impendle, each represented by their church leaders who presented interfaith prayers about various social ills.

Most church leaders said that they were humbled by the municipality's decision to involve them because they are also concerned about the problem of social ills in the area. Rev. LS Mfeka, who prayed for constancy of new leaders, said, "We are very pleased with government's intervention in this matter and also to be offered a platform to pray together and ask God to give us solutions to our

problems." He said Impendle Municipality had shown good leadership, which is what God created leaders for, "To lead people."

Siphwe Dlomo, a youth member from the Zion congregation in the area said, "I have learnt a lot from this programme. As a young person I have been motivated to follow good paths and stay away from evil things. I think our parents too have been capacitated on how to raise us so that we become a better generation. In future I would like to see this programme being spread across to all communities around Impendle as most people have missed out."

Early in the morning the Mayor, Cllr SG Ndlela, met with church leaders to explain the purpose of the programme and seek their assistance in curbing social ills in the area. The local Sassa office used the opportunity to distribute 1 200 food parcels to deserving families who had been profiled by staff, with assistance from churches.



Rev. LS Mfeka says God created leaders. On 30 May 2014 different church fraternities congregated at Impendle Thusong Service Centre to pray about social ills.



Church leaders and municipal leaders sang together. The local Nazareth Church congregation also said no to all forms of abuse of children and the elderly.



Xolani Ndlovu: "This should be an ongoing programme because it assists young people with moral regeneration and reminds them of consequences for wrong doings. What we learn here assists us to be better people. I wish other people who are not here could also get this opportunity."



Thandeka Dlamini: "I have learnt about the importance of reconciliation. Elders have taught us very important things about social behaviour. I wish for Sassa to extend their reach to other rural communities in the area because there are lot of needy people out there."



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

Launch of Child Protection Week, Minister Bathabile Dlamini

By Sikelela Zokufa: GCIS, Western Cape

Children from various schools in the Western Cape were filled with joy when they attended the launch of Child Protection Week at Delft Technical High School on Sunday, 1 June 2014.

The Minister of Social Development and People with Disabilities, Ms Bathabile Dlamini, addressed the more than 2 000 children from different types of schools, for example schools for the deaf or for children with disabilities, and 500 people from various community-based organisations, who gathered for the launch.

Children had an opportunity to engage and interact with the Minister and raised their hands so that they could tell her what their rights are as South African children.

Last year Delft was selected to host the launch because there have been a number of incidents of violence against children in the area.

Minister Dlamini said that the community dialogues the Department of Social Development had conducted with the residents of Delft had revealed

that the area is affected by incidents of violence, crime, dysfunctional families and gender-based violence.

The Minister dedicated her speech to the target audience and listened to the children when they told her what their rights and responsibilities are. Nozipho Kali, a child with disability said, "Children with disabilities have a right to be treated equally with other normal children." Many children also raised what they believe are their rights, namely the right to education, right to be protected, right to be empowered, right to say "NO" and many other rights.

Through drama and musical performances a group of combined schools demonstrated, how painful it is to be abused by your parents, relatives and strangers from the community and how bad it is to be neglected when you report abuse in your home. Through a drama item, they also encouraged children to report abuse to the police if they feel ignored at home and, most importantly, that they should learn to say "NO" when they are abused at home.



Minister Bathabile Dlamini

The Minister told the SABC in an interview: "In order to ensure that the protection of children who have no one to look after them, the department has also begun a register of child-headed households. This will ensure child-headed households in the country have access to all the rights and privileges enjoyed by children whose parents are still alive to care for them, including food, access to education and healthcare, and all other basic needs."



Siphe Saba: "The programme was good because we have met the Minister and received the caring school bags." He added "I learnt that government cares about children because we have rights now not to be abused even at our homes. It helped me to know my rights."





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

Child Protection Dialogue

By Ntombi Mhlambi: GCIS, Free State

Breda Farm School, Fouriesburg, is near the border with Lesotho, which makes it a target for human trafficking crimes. Children from the school don't have access to information on such crimes. They believe human trafficking is a normal way of life, some even see it as a quick way out of the poverty they live in, not comprehending the dangers associated with this act.

The children use government transport to get to school. However, when this transport is not available, they get lifts from passing motorists. By doing this they put themselves at risk of being kidnapped. To address these problems, the GCIS, together with the departments of health and social development, held an information-sharing event at the school to provide the children with information on dangers associated with human trafficking and how they can avoid being victims. The presentations also focused on how to identify potential criminals and ways of reporting such acts.



Paballo Tshabalala,
15 years old

"Human trafficking does not only happen to girls, but to boys also, as they are now being called Ben10s."



William Ngwako,
16 years old

"I have learned how to protect myself from dangerous situations, also what to do if I find myself in such a situation."



Tisetso Moorosi

"With this information that I got today I am going to advise my peers about the dangers of human trafficking and how it can affect their health in future."



(Left): A representative of the Department of Health explains health issues relating to human trafficking. (Right): A representative of the Department of Social Development explains to learners what their responsibility as children is.



Sir Mashele

Sir Mashele said, "Our children spend most of their time watching television and they wrongly associate fame with celebrities that take drugs. They regard these celebrities as their role models and they end up taking drugs thinking it will make them famous."



Mr Meshack Mashele from the Department of Health displayed information and educated learners about substance abuse.

Learners from Zithulele

Nolwazi said, "I have always learned about drugs on papers, but today I had an opportunity to see it directly and learn much about the side-effects of substance abuse."

All participants appreciated the efforts of government to educate and create awareness on different issues.



From left: Cynthia, Thobile, Zama and Nolwazi.

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

Young people from Zithulele Primary School told about Child Protection Week

By Joy Themba: GCIS, Mpumalanga

Learners at Zithulele Combined and Matsamo Primary School in Schoemansdal, near Makhado in Limpopo, participated in an awareness campaign presented by the GCIS, Childline South Africa and the departments of health, and social development at the start of June as part of Child Protection Week (CPW).

The aim of the CPW awareness campaign was to educate learners about substance abuse, the side-effects of drugs and on how to report cases of rape. Children's rights and child exploitation were also emphasised.

Children were encouraged to look after each other and know that they are all the same. The learners were encouraged to love and respect one another to build a better society. The department hopes that learners will improve their way of living and focus more on education through the CPW awareness campaign.

