

Northern Suburbs Street Children’s Meeting

17th March 2016

9:30 - 11:30

Durbanville Council Chambers

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Present: Vanessa Brink (Badisa Fisantekraal), Nick van Rooyen (Teahmo), Elmarie Janse van Vuuren (Teahmo), Benny Martin (DSD), Trevor Johnson (LNOC), Emma de Villiers (Lindelani), Colleen Brookes-Gain (WCSCF), Lionel Klaasen (St. Vincent DP Catholic Church) and Janice Sparg (WCSCF).

Apologies: Juanita Beukes (Badisa Trio), Amber Rose Confield (Badisa Scottsdene), Caretha Randal (Badisa Trio), Stacey Doorly Jones (2nd Chance).

1. **Welcome and introductions**. Janice welcomed everyone; introductions went around the room.
2. **Feedback from other WCSCF meetings**

Meeting with Robert MacDonald:

* + Cape Town DSD Local office was being overhauled. The blockages experienced with SOP in Cape Town was due the Manager not passing the SOP down to the Designated Social Workers. The Manager has been suspended. Rina van Deventer (Regional Director of Cape Winelands), has been brought in for 3 months manage and restructure the CT Local Office.
  + SAPS must take the children to Lindelani if they can’t get hold of a Designated Social Worker. They should fill out as much info as they can on a 36 at Lindelani, and leave a message for the Social Worker that they have taken the child to the place of safety. Children can be transported by CIDS in an unmarked if a marked car cannot be located. Not in the back of a police van and always with an adult sitting beside them.
  + Robert had a meeting with CT Children’s Court Magistrate, Mr van Der Merwe, about working with DSD to get the child to court.
  + Robert when asked to meet with SAPS Commissioner to discuss their role in the removal of children from the street, said that he had met with the Commissioner, but that it had not yielded results of information filteringdown. He also said that he wants to get his department in order first before he puts pressure on other Depts to perform.
    - Capt Niemand (SAPS Kraaifontein) said that the Social Worker in need of assistance should consult with their local SAPS Station Commander who would arrange for an officer to accompany the social workers for transporting children to court and back.
    - SAPS have weekly local sector meetings and it would be to our advantage to attend those meetings and slowly educate SAPS concerning the street children and the SOP. (Janice has done this in CT.)
* DSD is developing a new E Learning course for social workers. **Nick** askedif the E-Learning course could be made available to and for the NGO DCPO’s?*\*Janice will put it to Robert.*
  + Janice attended the National Child Care and Protection Forum to a consultative workshop to develop the new Policy (which informs the Children's Act) in Johannesburg at the beginning of March. Found that the Street Children’s Sector in Gauteng is really struggling:

- no secure placement options (despite them begging for them)

- no transitioning out of care programmes

- sector funding diminishing

- poor relationship with provincial government.

Although we will continue to lobby for more changes in CT, we can also be grateful for the resources and relationships that we do currently have.

* + Janice read the response from Robert MacDonald concerning the R438 mil to be cut from the budget:

*“The R400 odd million reduction mentioned is for the whole of the Western Cape Provincial Government, not just DSD. That amount increases to over R600 million the year after and even more after that etc. DSD is being cut about R11 million this year, and then R17 million the next year and then R37 million the year after. The bigger departments of Health and Education are facing proportionately bigger cuts. The main cause of the cut is not really the university fees issue (although that didn’t help). The biggest problem is that the SA government owes R2 trillion rand to the rest of the world, so its interest payments are about R200 billion per year. Most of this borrowing was to cover the bloated public sector wage bill.”*

Other sources have mentioned that:

* + - NACCW Isibindi Project has been frozen with no further rollout or expansion to be done. (This is despite 77 newly trained CYCW’s in the Eden Karoo.) Apparently the programme is being reassessed due to these budget cuts.
    - Funding of Community Based DSD activities has been cut. Therefore DSD Regional Offices are no longer funded to render Community Based Activities / Family Strengthening programmes, as they used to, but will now focus solely on Statutatory Work. - *Benny said they still try to, despite drop in the budget.*
    - Current TPA funded organisations will not be affected.
    - There will be no calls for new services from DSD in the 2016/2017 financial year and increases will be around 2%.

It is noted that this is a big problem considering the importance that the Children’s Act places on Prevention and Early Intervention Programmes in the rollout of social services.

***Discussion following feedback:***

* + Nick asked whether Bellville CID Social Development security, who transport children to court and back, have undergone sensitivity training?
  + **Benny** said DSD Belville are still implementing parent-skills/ truancy programs and even though funds are being cut. They link with other NGO`s who are subsidised by provincial government (TPA’s) to run preventative and also substance abuse programs.

We need businesses to partner these programs – we need to sit and collaborate with them to ensure these programs continue to run. Janice recalled that there is a DSD Programme run by Debbie van Staden who’s task it is to build connections between business and social programmes. *Could Benny get this Number for us?*

**Benny** also says we needed more level 3 bed options as they had enough level 4 beds available. They wish to integrate, but still remain separate.

* + **Trevor** voiced that fieldworkers never receive feedback from a social worker after a child is transferred to Lindelani. If the child is discharged back to the family or absconds the child is back on the streets again. Lack of communication between fieldworkers and social workers is definitely a problem. **J**anice mentioned that this has long been an expressed problem, but that social workers refuse to share info as they deem it ‘confidential’ She encouraged Trevor to build relationships with social workers to improve communication regarding movements of children.
  + **Nick** offered to share a software program from UCAN however stated that there might still be problems at different levels of access.
  + **Trevor** said he had a street child who wanted to be helped, but then the SAPS didn’t have form 36; also that SAPS Tygerberg and Parow are resistant to change and collaboration. **Lionel** said SAPS recognises the old forms (4) and not the new (36). Janice said the SAPS version of the Form 38 – Form 581(b) is not recognised by the courts. Vanessa said some local stations just refuse to use the form 36. *Vanessa agreed to g to Durbanville SAPS to tell them about the Form 36 and give them copies.*

1. **Current Issues On The Street**

**Janice** suggested the NS compile a list of children on the street, the better to keep tabs on them and see if the numbers increase /decrease. **Nick** said they are sharing info with Badisa Trio but that he would take it up further with Juanita Beukes.

**Lionel** asked if anyone knew what had happened to the street children in Durbanville as they seem to have disappeared. Is someone taking care of them? **Nick** said that Bersig NG Kerk are also assisting street children and that might be where they are.

**Vanessa** voiced that she only goes out to the streets **if called out**, that their seem to be no fieldworkers in Fisantekraal, and that a SAPS Officer, **Stuurman** makes a habit of transporting the children backto their homes. Janice said she understands Stuurmans actions, but if the same children keep coming back to the street again and again, then he should rather take them to Lindelani instead, where they can get some real assistance. *Vanessa offered to go see Stuurman and suggest this other route to him. She’ll give us feedback at the next meeting.* Janice gave her some form 36`s.

**Trevor** said that Social Workers are scared to go into Valhalla Park because of the ongoing gang turf wars. Also that parents want to see the social workers, but the Social Workers Mobile Unit come to the Community Centre once a week, which is in one of the Gangs turf areas, meaning that if come community members enter that area, they will get attacked, so they are to scared to go. He reports that there are about 60 children from Belhar/ Voorbrug/ Delft/ Valhalla in the Parow area and although he has sent info to Badisa Tygerberg, nothing has been done. Which is frustrating. *\*Janice suggested he meet up with Wilma Piek who is experiencing similar problems or better yet to contact Robert MacDonald directly. She also mentioned that CT Multi Service Centre has School Based Early Intervention Centres in Kalksteenfontein, Netreg and Clarke Estate and The Homestead has a Drop In Centre in Valhalla Park for the local children. It might be helpful to network with them when working with children from those areas.*

**Emma** voiced her concerns that role-players are misunderstanding Robert MacDonald’s message: SAPS are arriving at Lindelani with a child and a form 36, without a social worker. Lindelani only gets background info on a child about three days later and then find that the child is not a street child. She says that children should be placed through Central Admissions and not sent straight to Lindelani. She says there seems to be a distinct lack of communication between CT Local Office and Badisa Elsies Rivers Social Workers, that they seem to have no intervention programs resulting in the child usually ending up right back with the family.

Emma wondered if there have been any changes to the SOP. *Janice invited Emma to the Hardened street children meeting, where deeper discussion around the SOP would be had with all relevant roleplayers.*

1. **Next meeting**: 26 April 2016 @ 9:30-11:30 @ Durbanville Council Chambers