

Northern Suburbs Street Children’s Meeting

26 March 2015

9:00 - 12:00

Durbanville Council Chambers

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Present: Benjamin Martin (DSD), Juanita Beukes (Badisa Trio), Dick Smith (DSD), Jantjie Booysen (Ubuntu), Claude Phyfer (Badisa), Nick van Rooyen (Teahmo), Jean Hector (Ubuntu), Jaylene Jemane (CoCT), T. Kopele (DSD Kraaifontein), Frances Louw (Khula), Lesley Ashton (D CPF), Lucinda Valentine (Who is my neighbour?), and Janice Sparg (WCSCF).

Apologies: Hewitt De Jager (Hewlin Compassion), Cassie van Zyl (BBID), Leon Brynard (VCID), Wendy Bosse (LNOC, Olympians), Elna Francke (Badisa Kraaifontein), Johan Doubell (DSD), Wilma Piek (VRCID)

AGENDA

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Current Issues
3. Public Awareness Campaigns
4. Meetings for the year
5. **Welcome and introductions**

Janice welcomed all present and thanked them for coming. Introductions went around the room.

Minutes of last meeting proposed by Janice and seconded by Lucinda Valentine.

1. **Current Issues**

Nick van Rooyen (Teahmo) opened up the discussion reporting on the issue of the SANRAL relocations, that the people had been returned to their original land. This has improved the situation with the children on the street in that area, as well as improved policing and SRA foot patrols.

Claude Phyfer (Badisa) gave us more insight into how his day to day is on the streets with the children. He said that they are not seeing children on the streets during the day, also due to increased ‘visible policing’. **The meeting wanted to Congratulate SAPS on achieving this change and encourage them to continue.** The approximately 17 children that he is seeing on the street are seen at night in the Spur, KFC, McD area, where they have been found throwing stones and water at passer-byers. 4 children have been reintegrated back into school. It is thought that many of the children hide during the day, under the bridge, which falls just outside the BBID area of jurisdiction (they are clever!) and it is incredibly difficult to find them if you don’t know where to look.

There is a trend of people living in the fields, close to the resources, washing in manholes, etc. - The ‘Bridge’ Community. They look after each other and are a close community, despite that many of them are dislocated from their families. They have few belongings, but are fully functional. Theirs is a very different matter to the ‘White House’ Community, where there are more drugs. These 2 communities clash, because they have different values. It is thought that the people living in the Bridge Community are not any worse off than those living in any other townships. The push factors operating are rife and probably on a Macro level.

It was emphasized by those present that a triangle of roleplayers needs to work together and make a concerted effort to address the remaining problem with the children in this community, who are running around at night.

Janice mentioned the current process being undertaken in the CT CBD, requested by CCID and run at present by Robert McDonald, HOD of DSD. Even though this process does seem to be very controversial, there have been 8 ‘hardened’ children removed from the streets and placed in Lindelani (secure care facility). The first child removed, a 10 year old, was found with 8 bags of Tik and 5 bags of Dagga, so was clearly being used as a drug runner. Subsequent visits to the Centre showed the children had settled well and were “playing (cricket) like children should”. A dedicated social worker has been appointed at the CT Local Office who reports directly to Mr McDonald. She says she imagines that this must be ‘pilot’/experimental process being done with the intention to learn the challenges and obstacles, as any future process would need to be rolled out in all areas, but the good thing is, is that it is the first time that DSD has been actively pivotal in addressing this issue with effective results.

Juanita mentioned that Mr McDonald ‘taking up’ all the available open placement spots at these centres would mean less space for children they would normally have placed there. Janice said that, in that case, hopefully the process would highlight the need for more such facilities or another effective solution to the problem. Janice suggested that Juanita make contact with Mr McDonald herself in order to report Badisa Trio’s own experience of a lack of suitable facilities for similar ‘hardened’ children on the street in the Northern Suburbs.

Dick Smith said that an effective process would be a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach. This would require the identification of all the challenges, including funding and resources.

Juanita pointed out that we do actually have a good Model, incorporating all facets of the issue, which she talked us though in a powerpoint presentation (attached along with these minutes):

* **Prevention** - community based programmes designed to create /preserve functional communities, including Structure, Routine, Security.

(programmes include ECD, Family Development, Schools, Clinics, SAPS, Psychiatric Services, Clubs, etc.)

* **Early Intervention, with intense family support** (using Social Aux Workers)

(Programmes include Aftercare Programmes for 6-13yr olds from 12:30-16:30, Drop In Centre/Day Care Programmes, Professional Foster Care Parents). This facet successfully reintegrated 79 children in 2013/14.

* **Crisis**. With children entering gangs between age 6-8years, a proactive, quick response is vital, but not happening. A “Rapid Response Team” is required. Placement options are required.

2 options include: (i) reintegration with family/community if possible, (ii) alternative care placements (required for many of the hardened children who will not settle into families/foster care).

The necessity of the involvement and intervention by SAPS in this process was discussed. Lesley Ashton, the CPF Member present, made herself available to assist in forming connections with this group of roleplayers through their current networks. She mentioned the usual dilemmas for roleplayers of too many meetings, but invited the forum to attend CPF meetings as a way to develop and strengthen relationships with this sector. She suggested we take our decisions/ priorities to CPF and then look at the CPF year plans to see how our main issues overlap and to foster common areas of interest and work. Janice said that this is what she had done and found to be effective in the City CBD, and that it would be a good idea in this area too.

Janice briefly went through the WCSCF powerpoint presentation on “The Situation” offering it for use to alert roleplayers and community members to the issues and the way forward for getting involved with improving, not worsening the situation. (attached along with these minutes).

Dick said “we all turn a blind eye due to lack of hope that services will help.”

Hopefully, that can change soon though us all working together!

1. **Flow Chart**

We began the Flow Chart by addressing ‘hardened’ street children as the first section and identified the steps needing to be taken, the roleplayers involved in each step along the way. We did not complete this section by the end of the meeting. Also touched on the section: Children in conflict with the law.

Various ‘types’ of scenarios were identified, the processes of which need to be dissected:

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| Type | Characteristics | Action Steps | Roleplayers |
| **Day strollers** | children new on the street,  ‘trying it out’  A ‘child in need of care and protection’ | Reintegration with family  School Liaison | … |
| **Children in conflict with the law** | Have committed a crime | 1. Public report crime and open case 2. SAPS process crime report 3. DSD Probation Officer does assessment and manages case. 4. BOSASA - rehabiliation | Public - Report  Police - charge  Probation Officer -case  Awaiting Trial Centre |
| **Hardened street children** | Street wise,  Been on street longer term  Have already ‘fallen through’ services and know how to avoid them  A ‘child in need of care and protection’ | See below | … |

**ACTION STEPS for ‘Hardened Street’ child in need of care and protection (CINOC&P)**

1. ***Public & Media*** (social media, networks, local newspapers)

* Give Responsibly Campaign
* Publicise the correct reporting procedure (what to do, where, and how)
* Give recognition to good reporting.

1. ***Fieldworkers*** (Badisa & City) - identification and reporting of children

- Start to build relationships within the community

Office hours - Badisa Trio - proactively handle children’s cases during the day (if poss)

After hours - DSD

- Child is usually well known as having been on the street for a while.

- Do not take child home !!! This has been done too many times with no good effect. Family reunification is no longer appropriate at this point. They need to be placed in a secure care facility.

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| Lack of placement options in Secure Care Facilities |

1. Contact ***SAPS*** - use a Form 36 to remove the child and place in Temporary Secure Safe Care

(SAPS Training might be required - depending on local office - on SAPS National Instruction 3 of 2010 which relates to their role according to the Children’s Act.)

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| This is where a Designated Response team could be useful. |

1. Or Contact local **Designated Child Protection Office (eg Badisa**, DSD, Child Welfare) to remove the child and place in Temporary Secure Safe Care or to report placement of child.

* Assessment of child and family circumstances;
* Ongoing family rehabilitation, with hopes of eventual reunification if possible.

1. … (To be rediscussed and completed at next meeting.)
2. **Children’s Database**

EPIC - the City of CT Fieldworkers Database of info gathered from the street - is about to be launched and hopefully this will be shared with the sector and will shrink the gaps between the operating NGO’s in each area.

1. **Give Responsibly Awareness Campaigns**

The next campaign will take place in 24th April 2015 by the City of Cape Town in collaboration with Jantjie Booysen (Ubuntu) in Kuilsriver.

1. **Any other business**

* The idea of a rapid response team was addressed, how it could be possible and practical in how it is utilised and managed. A dedicated vehicle, with a designated Social (auxiliary?) Worker and a Police Officer was mentioned.
* Juanita said:

Two strengths of this Forum:

* We have already developed a protocol
* Diversity of roleplayers present & the understanding that is growing between rolepayers.

Even though it is only small, sometimes 10 people round a table can be better than 30.

1. **Meetings for the rest of the year - see dates and venue below**

Meetings from 9-12.

Thursday, 28th May - Durbanville Council Chambers

25th June - RSC Durbanville Committee Room A&B in admin building

30th July - Durbanville Council Chambers

27th August - RSC Durbanville Committee Room A&B in admin building

1st October - Durbanville Council Chambers

29th October - Durbanville Council Chambers

26th November - Durbanville Council Chambers

Please diarise and set aside. We need your partnership in this process.

1. **Next Meeting: 28th May 2015** 9am-12noon

Durbanville Council Chambers (but in Main Admin Building) - ask Security to direct you to exact venue

Enquiries: Janice Sparg (WCSCF Coordinator)

Cell: 072 4500 456

Email: wcstreetchild@gmail.com