

Northern Suburbs Street Children’s Meeting

27 August 2015

9:30 - 11:30

Durbanville Council Chambers

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Present: T. Kopele (DSD Kraaifontein), Lesley Ashton (D CPF), Lucinda Valentine (WCSCF), Janice Sparg (WCSCF), Wendy Bosse (Olympians), Delicia Williams (Olympians), Reinette Retief (StreetSmart), Ruth (Private) and Pamela Venter (Kraaifontein Patrols).

Apologies: Benjamin Martin (DSD), Juanita Beukes (Badisa Trio), Nick van Rooyen (Teahmo), Hewitt De Jager (HewLin Compassion), Cassie van Zyl (BBID), Leon Brynard (VCID), Wilma Piek (VRCID)

1. **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.

Janice then gave feedback from the WCSCF AGM that was held the Tuesday before: New Executive Committee, Current Membership, Annual report, especially the new page on the Northern Suburbs.

Visitors and first time organisations shared about themselves:

Pamela from **Kraaifontein Patrols** (NPO) informed the group what they do – Skills development, Sport Activities and Substance Abuse Awareness.

Reinette from **StreetSmart** explained their role: They are a donor in the Street Children’s Sector who fund programmes which contain Education; Skills training and Family reunification. They raise money through collaboration with local restaurants. They are busy recruiting restaurants in the Northern Suburbs to be a part of their project.

**Ruth**, who was with MES, has recently resigned so that she can pursue her passion to work with vulnerable children. She is a Social Auxilliary Worker with a degree in Community Development. She knows the kids around Cape Gate area who are from Kraaifontein.

1. **Current Issues**

* **Mr Kopele** voiced his challenges with street children in Cape Gate area, who are mainly from Wallacedene.

**Wendy Bosse** expressed her frustration that there is not enough support from Designated Child Protection Organisations for urgent matters. She described a story of the 13yr old boy on drugs/ expelled/ran away from home, whose Grandparents can’t manage him anymore. Apparently DSD Social Workers did do an assessment on him, but he remains still at large, hanging around drug dens with much older youths. The case just seems to get handed over from one DSD Social Worker to the next with ‘assessments’ being done but no action being taken to take the child into care and protection. (Sharon LeMeyer handed over to Latasha Abrahams). Wendy has ascertained that Wellington Youth Care Centre might be able to take him, but it seems like a long road with little assistance by those with authority.

**Mr Kopele** explained the official procedure of assigning cases, but said also that the system is full to overflowing - mentioned that Lindelani is full. He said the Social Workers are using ‘unofficial centres’, but these do need to become registered to grow the base of available placement options. A discussion ensued around the amount of red tape and paperwork required for an organisations to be registered. That often this process is too time consuming and arduous for small organisations to manage. It was suggested that

**Janice** explained SOP and who Robert McDonald and Leana Goosen are, made the room aware of the upcoming Hardened Street Children’s meeting and suggested Wendy and Mr Kopele attend if they could, but that naturally Wendy should not to wait till then to sort out the case of the 13yr old boy. She gave them Robert MacDOnald’s office number and to call with any issues related to the SOP.

**Lesley Ashton** suggested we take the issues to the top ie. National, to bring effect to the provincial budget.

* **Pamela** shared her experience with regard to vulnerable children she assists, unregistered Places of Safety (in Kraaifontein) that she connects with, issues with SAPS not reporting children at all (never mind on Form 36’s) and the issue of adults exploiting children on the street.

**3 homes:**

* **Brightstar (unregistered)**
* **11th Ave Belmont (unregistered)**
* **House of Faith, 12th Ave Uikendal (unregistered)**

**Mr Kopele** agreed regarding the paper process in general when dropping children off at Places of Safety, and how it is not being done.

**Lesley** suggested reporting non-compliance through the CPF for accountability issues with SAPS. Organisations should report that police officer to the Shift Commander on a 101 complaint.

It was suggested that the Place of Safety be informed of this reporting process so that they can implement it in the next case if it is a general modus operandi at present. The SAPS National Instructions were referred to regarding the responsibility of SAPS in this type of situation. Janice to email this National Instruction to Pam and Wendy.

Kraaifontein SAPS = Capt Niemand, Brig Gerde van Niekerk, Lt Col Gore (Social Crimes), Gruzelda Dowie (Victim Support).

**Janice** suggested, getting CYCC registrations sorted by through Leana Goosen with the assistance of Mr Kopele, etc. Also that Wendy and Pamela link up with Joy Lange from The Women’s Shelter Movement.

* Pamela also gave the case of a 22yr old prostitute with a baby. Pam had the children living with her for six months. Then Bernadine, a Desig. Social Worker took the kids and placed them elsewhere in a place unknown in Bloekembos with people they didn’t know. She did not agree with this action or placement. Mr Kopele said he would follow this up for her.

She told us about 17 Drug houses in Kraaifontein being busted etc. Pamela has been ‘working with ‘ Ata Grienie, well known drug lord, who owns a lot of the property in the area. She is trying to get them out of the houses in order to use them for people who need them in the community. This could be placed on the Facebook page as newsworthy.

She also told us the case of a 15yr old boy living on the street longer than a year; that the Safety parent didn’t want the child. Pamela asked Mr Kopele why the children are placed back to their dysfunctional homes.

Wendy phoned the SOP Hotline number. Clinton answered and connected her to Shannon Galant, the Social Worker in Eerste River who was on after hours duty. Shannon said she had no money left on her cell phone and asked Pamela if she could keep the children with her until the morning. The next morning Shannon arranged for the children to go to Communicare, who immediately started ‘skelling’ the children out when they started working with them. Pamela said these were not the kind of children who needed ‘skelling out’. They were vulnerable children who needed care, reassurance and love.

It was said that there is CRISIS OF VULNERABLE CHIDLREN IN THE WC. Janice was asked to ask of Leana and Robert MacDonald: “What is the strategy?”

It was also said to say to RM: “We need a Standardized Intake Point that is not full.”

Wendy shared some positive feedback about the community collaboration happening in Morningstar. Olympians are doing Wrestling on Tuesdays and Thursdays, there is a Drug Support Programme taking place and a Leadership Programme will be run with vulnerable children in the Sept/Oct holidays.

1. **Media**

The idea of putting together an infographic and giving it to the various (regional) Journalists, so that when they write an article, they can put the infographic next to the article.

Lesley Ashton suggested: Any media coverage needs to be archived.

1. **Any other business**

Continue to add Northern Suburbs organisations and resources to the Flow Chart we’re developing.

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

Meetings from 9-12.

Thursday, 1st October - Durbanville Council Chambers, 9:30am-11:30am

29th October - Durbanville Council Chambers

26th November - Durbanville Council Chambers

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

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