

Northern Suburbs Street Children’s Meeting

30 July 2015

9:30 - 11:30

Durbanville Council Chambers

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Present: Benjamin Martin (DSD), Juanita Beukes (Badisa Trio), Nick van Rooyen (Teahmo), Cassie van Zyl (BBID), Leon Brynard (VCID), Wendy Bosse (Olympians), Wilma Piek (VRCID), Peter Lourens (Law Enforcement), Crystal Fielding (Durbanville Children’s Home), Gavin Brent (Family Centre Durbanville), Lionel Klassen (Catholic Church), Bernice Smerdon (Private), Catherin de Valence (Private), Getruida Maartens (Hagar Home), Benny Martin (DSD), Michelle Burger (Olympians), Delicia Williams (Olympians), Caretha Randall (Badisa), Johan Els (Dutch Reform Bergsig), Vanessa Brink (Badisa), Abongile (UNISA Social Work student), Amber Confield (Badisa), Anne Christians (Badisa), Ruth Tshabangu (MES), Liezl Loubser (Social Worker DR Bergsig), Esme Erasmus (Tygerburger), Stacey Doorly-Jones (2nd Chance), Lucinda Valentine (WCSCF), and Janice Sparg (WCSCF).

Apologies: Hewitt De Jager (HewLin Compassion), Theresa Uys (Ward 21 Councillor), Gerrie Smit (New Life), Danie Murray (Handevat) and Jaylene Jemane (CoCT).

1. **Welcome, Apologies and introductions**

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

1. **Communication**

Lucinda checked that all present are receiving WCSCF emails. Lucinda offered assistance to anyone having trouble finding or opening them.

1. **Current issues**

Janice gave feedback on her meeting with Robert MacDonald, DSD Head of Department and the WCSCF visit to Lindelani, Stellenbosch.

* Lindelani has been appointed as the Standardised Intake Point for all street children. Lindelani’s Social Worker, Emma Brown-DeVilliers, confirmed this and will receive all children taken off the street. (Don’t try to trick her with children NOT off the street – she’s wise to that!) Lindelani is currently full, but they are making a plan to accommodate this new procedure, and all children should still be referred there for initial assessment.
* Robert MacDonald and Leana Goosen (Director: Facilities) are aware of the capacity problems, and the high rate of referals, transport issues, and will be looking into solutions and possible increases in the next 2 years.
* 27 children from the CT CBD have already been placed using this procedure. There was no distinction between the ‘type’ of ‘street child (ie children in conflict with the law, or daystroller, or hardened child, etc. ) All were ‘long term’ children on the street. No one expects the process to be perfect, but the kids off the street is a good start. Teething problems are being addressed as they occur. The former “WCSCF Hardened Kids Meeting” will as a group be monitoring the progress of these children from the CBD, in order to identify gaps (which the children may fall through) and blockages in the system and to give feedback to the system.
* The children are to be assessed at Lindelani and then possibly placed at another Centre thereafter.

Social Worker says “some of the children off the street have settled really well and don’t want to leave. 5 have been enrolled in the Substance Programme. Some are not stabilizing. Some have been referred to psychiatric nurse. Some are too young (12) to go deeper into the system – it’s not a good solution. But the main challenge is that with most of them it is not possible to reunite them with their families. Finding alternative placements is difficult.” One child (15) that the Court placed back home, went back to street and back to drug running. Robert MacDonald was aware of this case and addressing it, as well as through DSD’s relationship with the Courts.

* A new Centralised Admissions process is being adopted to place children. This also seems to have teething problems which will require patience, adaption, learning, humility (etc, etc) from all involved.
* A ‘zero tolerance’ approach towards absconding is being taken from DSD, who is asking for all abscondments to be reported and handled, as a ‘care’ issue, not a ‘punitive’ one.
* Lindelani Substance Centre:
* Taken over same services offered by WC Youth Drug Rehab who recently closed.
* Completely separate from Lindelani’s other programmes.
* 16 week Matrix Programme
* Separate girls and boys units (each take 10 children)
* Admit up to 15 years (older children go to Denovo)
* Mr MacDonald says a future approach will be to align services closer to Schools.
* CT Local DSD Office – Designated Social Worker working in Street Children’s Programme: Zayile Sauls. Have they allocated one specific Social Worker to street children in the northern suburbs region?
* Janice informed Robert MacDonald about the 21 children on the streets of the Northern Suburbs. All roleplayers were encouraged to use the procedure with children they find on the streets. Don’t worry about space – that’s the Dept’s issue to deal with. We must just follow the procedure.
* The big problem in Fisantekraal, of so so many children roaming the streets, partly due to the appalling situation at Trevor Manuel school in this area, is a huge issue. Gertruida (Hagar Home) mentioned the many children continually begging for food at her gate. Claretha (Badisa) confirmed this situation again. Janice suggested they make Robert MacDonald aware of the specifically bad situation in this area. Together, the roleplayers with the department and with The Education Dept will have to make a plan to address this matter.

**R300 Bridge Operation: 28th May**

Leon Brynard gave feedback on the R300 bridge operation that took place directly after our last meeting. There were no children seen on that particular day.

Juanita gave feedback on another ‘outreach’ that took place in collaboration with the VCID , BBID’s and HewLin Compassion in Brackenfell. There were 3 children with their parents. The children were successfully placed by Badisa. Hewitt delivered the Form 36 to the parents and went over the court proceedings with them. Juanita said the networking and collaboration here was excellent. She also mentioned that it is difficult for HewLin Compassion to get too involved with the street children ‘raids’ as they have built strong relationships with many of the children and parents and it is important that this trust is not broken. She said that this is where SAPS needs to get more involved, especially since there are weapons on the streets, with many of the street children, and it is not safe for the field and social workers.

Wilma tried the new hotline number for a case she had been dealing with and no one came out to intervene. Wilma is struggling to get help from Badisa Parow. She was also upset as one of the ladies she had been working with on the streets had died of TB that morning. Benny with some help from Juanita will work together, to address the issues Wilma is having with Badisa Parow.

Peter Lourens gave feedback on a ‘raid’ they attempted, but no children were found when they were called to go out. This is often the case.

Lionel asked about the procedure for street children in front of the Spur in Durbanville. This was explained to him: to use the hotline number, or contact Badisa or SAPS.

1. **Flow Chart**

Janice put up the new flow chart she had been working on and invited all to make additions onto it in line with what their organisations do and where they all fit into the flow chart, also adding known organisations that were not present.

Juanita mentioned that everyone does not yet know where they fit into the whole scheme of things.

A prevention column needs to be added to the flow chart and who needs to go into that column will be discussed at the next meeting.

1. **Give Responsibly**

The term ‘give responsibly’ was not discussed at length due to time but we will discuss what people understand about giving responsibly at a future meeting.

1. **Upcoming events**

The Amazing Grace Event 10th October 2015 World Homeless Day. See attached poster for more information and to become involved. Anyone can register a team (through Hewlin Compassion) to take part on the day. Organisations that have need of practical work done on their premises can contact Hewlin Compassion to be one of the ‘stations’ that the race passes through. Please contact Hewlin Compassion. **Don’t miss out on this fun and purposeful event which combines Community Involvement, Information Sharing about local Organisations, Giving responsibly and Service.**

1. **Any other business**

Ruth mentioned a street child situation at the soup kitchen at the Durbanville taxi rank. The mother mentioned to Ruth that she would like to go back home (Eastern Cape). Juanita, Wilma and Ruth are going to work together to address this situation.

The WCSCF is available to come speak to community groups (churches, CPF’s, neighbourhood watches, schools, etc.) to present appropriate responses to children on the street, responsible giving and the new SOP process. Please contact us.

1. **Next Meetings: 25th August** 2015 WCSCF AGM - 11am @ Salesian, Somerset Road, Cape Town

**Members encouraged to come to vote for Executive Members and changes to the Constitution.**

**27th August 2015** 9:30am-11:30am in Durbanville Council Chambers (Note time)

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