

CELEBRATING a Second Chance

By Bianca Oppelt
KDG Communications Manager

It is Tuesday morning and I am waiting to meet Yolanda*. She is a former tik and button addict released from rehab last Friday. Marie-Louise Rautenbach, Primary Caregiver Programme Coordinator at Khula Development Group, is in awe. Yolanda was more than willing to go to rehab and cooperated every step of the way.

Going through my notes about this family, I reach for my pen and see a petite lady guarded by a stern-looking woman. Upon introduction, it becomes clear, Yolanda is the petite one, shy and reserved. Her sister Zelda* who sits next to her holds her hand. Zelda starts the conversation and looks at her sister with concern in her eyes. She tells me about her own daughters' struggle with Tik and makes it clear she is sending her to rehab.

Yolanda is still very quiet, I turn to her and ask her to tell me about herself. She speaks soft and unclear. As I move closer all I hear is "I had four children and my husband left me after I started doing drugs". Her baby daughter died in her sleep and her son stabbed during a

robbery. Her two teenagers, a boy, and a girl have led a life surrounded by drugs, alcohol, and crime. Yolanda exposed her children to this lifestyle as she welcomed drug users into her home. They brought friends and vandalized her house for copper, metal and anything to pawn.

Low self-esteem, negative influences, peer pressure unemployment, and desperation are constant struggles. These struggles caused her not to act as a mother should, towards her children. Her daughter told her to go to Khula Development Group's Primary Caregiver Programme. She showed no resistance and became a member of this group. This was where steps were taken to get her into rehab.

After completing her five-week rehab programme, she was faced with many challenges. Temptations lurking in the old neighbourhood, her home and in her relationship. While she received treatment for her drug addiction, other areas in her life needs attention. This was a huge concern for me and Marie-Louise. We set up an appointment at a shelter for women where Yolanda could get help and counselling. We explained her situation and a room was made available for her.

We could not wait to see Yolanda and Zelda at the Primary Caregiver Christmas Party to share the great news. Upon my arrival, I searched for Yolanda in the crowd. A sense of panic came over me when I could not find her. Did she fall back into her old habits I worried? I walked over to Marie-Louise expressing my concern. I caught a glimpse of the lady next to her and could hardly believe my eyes. She is wearing a collar shirt and a skinny jeans. Her hair is freshly blow-dried, complimented by a stylish pair of pearl stud earrings. Yolanda, I said "I was so worried when I didn't see you, and here you are, you look so beautiful" she couldn't stop smiling. The same women who left for rehab weighing only 28kg, now weighs 42kg. With a healthy appetite, she enjoyed her third bowl of trifle when we discussed the women's shelter.

We gave her a few days to think about it and went to her house a day before she had to leave for the three-month programme. We arrived at the vandalized house Zelda restored. The place was immaculate, smelled fresh and turned into a home again. Yolanda was on her way to get shampoo and conditioner to style her hair. She admitted she needed help to rebuild her life and she is more than willing to go. She would like to return after three months and be a better mother to her children and be sober like her sister. Zelda will continue to take care of things at home and keep a firm hand on the two teenagers. Going home after rehab is not easy. Going to another facility after rehab is tough too. Instead of allowing her pride to get the best of her, she is willing to change. We pray Yolanda works through the trauma she experienced throughout her life. We celebrate Yolanda for taking a second chance to improve her life and the life of her family.

Thank you for your efforts in 2019!

Our Ambition for 2020 is making a difference, through love and education.

Seasons greetings and best wishes for the new year!



TEN YEARS OF PRAYER

In 2009 Khula started with a support group for women from the community around Butterfly House in Paarl every Tuesday morning. In 2017 we felt the ladies were empowered to carry on with the group on their own, as they didn't fulfil the criteria of our Primary Caregivers programme any longer. Their children were not in Primary schools any more. These women took on the challenge and carried on with the meetings, calling themselves Praying Women. These women pray for their community, for the stories they see on the news and for their daily bread. They share trials and tribulations while they praise and worship with grateful hearts. To spread smiles and love in the community, they knit blankets, headwear and teddy bears for school learners. We celebrate and honour these women who has been devoting their time for the past ten years in a faithful manner to serve their community.



OUR PROGRAMMES REINTEGRATION OF CHILDREN

Active in **23** schools in **5** areas in and around Paarl and Stellenbosch

1

What did we achieve in 2019?

172 referred cases closed fully reintegrated

11 535 home and school visits

807 active cases

298 new referrals

27 dropped out

- A fourteen-year-old learner from Klapmuts Primary was reported to KDG for absenteeism. The team discovered he left school to find employment to provide for his family. This is one of the most common reasons why learners drop out of school. Reintegration has been set in motion. Second Harvest also donated a food parcel to bring some relieve to the family.
- A male learner at Groenheuvel Primary School has been fully reintegrated after missing fifty-five consecutive days of school.

IN-SCHOOL SUPPORT

Active in **11** schools with a total of **241** children

2

We welcomed **4** new facilitators in our In-school support programme in 2019

- Khula learners were included in Annual Prize giving Ceremonies at various schools. They received Awards and Certificates for Dedication and School Attendance. This initiative keeps them motivated and improves their self-worth and confidence.

(In this picture Elizabeth Williams and Zelda Roode presenting an award).



- Thanks to a wonderful community and generous donations, we were able to celebrate our Khula learners with Christmas Parties. They enjoyed delicious food, listened to Christmas music and made decorations to take home. A wreath, to remind them of how much they are loved by God.



- Three learners were accepted for enrolment at Paarl School of Skills in 2020. They are excited to attend a school where they can use and improve their skills as they find an academic curriculum very challenging.

PRIMARY CAREGIVERS

3



- The Primary Caregiver Christmas Party was not only very merry, but also an opportunity to display the Arts and Crafts made by these women throughout the year.
- At the Christmas Party for the Primary Caregivers, they were given a giftbag with various items. One of those items included one of seventy Bibles sponsored by a Prayer Group. The remainder will be distributed during home visits to male Primary Caregivers. (In this picture Abigail Adams handing over a gift to a Primary Caregiver).



“My life as an addicted drug addict went well in the beginning but became difficult at a later stage. I lost my family due to my decisions and missed out on my children growing up. One day I saw Khula Development Group’s fieldworkers after fetching my son at school. I spoke to them about my addiction and without judgement they invited me to their weekly meeting at my son’s school. The women were supportive, and arrangements were made to get me to rehab. After five weeks I am a work in progress, my family is supportive, and I am sober” – KDG Primary Caregiver

SAGo2school

6 420 - Reached through our SAGo2school Programme

4



The SAGo2school team was honoured to be part of the Prize Giving Ceremonies of all five of our mentor schools. Every go2captain proudly received a SAGo2school Certificate of Participation. The go2captains worked hard to promote attendance and helped the teachers with the administration of their attendance registers. Two floating trophies were given to each school to award to the classes with the best attendance. We’re looking forward to continuing our collaboration with these schools next year in promoting school attendance. *(In this Picture Lozanne Venter and Alta Bester Handing over Certificates)*. We therefore endeavour to work alongside teachers at the schools we work in and make every effort to place value on them and emphasise the important role they fulfil in the future of our country.



Miles 4 Minors

Jaco Latagan and Hugo Potgieter are working hard to reach their target of R300 000 in aid of Khula Development Group. This past quarter Team BODYTECH has been training extensively for the ABSA Cape Epic in March 2020. They participated in Mountain Bike events in the Western and Eastern Cape. They also managed a Khula Development Group stall at BODYTECH in Paarl during the Octoberfest. They will feature in *Into Cycling's* December addition.

We are R 259 000 away from reaching our target. To help us achieve it, please donate on:



Khula Development Group | Nedbank | Cheque Acc No: 1190309882
Branch Code: 198765 | Ref: Your Name



STAFF TESTIMONIES

Alta Bester In-school support Facilitator

"The recipient of one of KDG's awards has attended our programme for quite a long time. Her circumstances at home are very challenging and not always easy. This is exactly the reason why she was proud and honoured to receive the award. Her father came straight from work in his workwear because he did not want to miss the occasion. Afraid to embarrass his daughter he almost left but was encouraged by a fellow parent to stay and enjoy the evening with her."



Marisa Le Roux In-school support Facilitator

"A family conference for a Khula learner led to the break down of a father, expressing his desire to repent and quit alcohol abuse. He said he wants to follow Jesus again and leave the aggressive behaviour and stubbornness behind. Theys Stuurman our Pastoral Caregiver is working hand in hand with the father. We trust that his family will reap the positive outcome of this."



Volunteers: We celebrated our amazing volunteers with a 'Thank you Breakfast'. While Paarl branch went to Kikka Boulevard, Stellenbosch Branch went to Blue Crane Coffee Shop.



Trophy: Khula staff excited to hand over "Die Bokkie" Trophy at a school Prize giving. The recipient is a learner who's absence declined the most. Back: Alta Bester, Magdeline Beukes, Antoinette Collins and Ilona Manuel.



Second Harvest: Khula staff receiving a donation from Second Harvest. Left: Maria von Backstrom, Vanessa (Second Harvest) and Sian Oostenbrink.



It was an absolute honour to attend the Prize Giving of Nederburg Primary. Five Khula learners received academic awards. The Organisation was also honoured by the school with a certificate for supporting the school and the community. We are humbled by their gratitude. Left: Erns Labuschagne, Daleen Labuschagne and Melville Lawrence Principal of Nederburg Primary.



Western Cape Reading Strategy: Lozanne Venter, Maria von Backstrom, Daleen Labuschagne, Hanlie van der Merwe and Bianca Oppelt attended the Western Cape Reading Strategy Multi-stakeholder consultative workshop at Somerset College.



CONTACT DETIALS

Paarl:
+27 21 871 1511

Stellenbosch:
+27 83 228 6032

www.khuladg.co.za

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