



GIRLS & BOYS TOWN
60 YEARS OF HOPE

Youth TODAY

SINCE 1958

60 years of celebration – as we help youth to shine.

JUNE 2018

A newsletter for friends of Girls and Boys Town



Four-footed wisdom touches – and teaches! – our youth



Our youth and staff received an educational storybook called *Bongi's Quest*, a story that helps explain the complications our wild animals face.

Environmental awareness raised as highly-trained anti-poaching dogs put in a star appearance at our 60th Anniversary celebration, building powerful connections with our girls and boys

The understanding between a well-trained dog and a vulnerable child is imprinted on the dog by the 'trueness' of the child's innocence," says Carl Thornton, founder of a non-profit organisation that is active in anti-poaching projects. "The dogs can easily see the need to help these children."

These wonderful animals forged instant friendships with our youth when they took part in activities during our 60th Anniversary celebration day at Magaliesburg on Saturday 21st April.

They performed endless patrols and obeyed all the children's commands throughout the day. The love, passion and ability our youth showed in return was beautiful to watch.

"This was an amazing, heart-warming event," says Thornton. "The smiles from the children showed us that the possibility of a brighter future was well understood."

To ensure the children's

safety, only dogs that had been trained specifically to work with children were used. And our youth were not pressured, only doing activities they had self-volunteered for.

On the day, the children did patrols and basic obedience with selected dogs - amazing to watch them take the leads and perform very specific commands and hand signals. Even more surprising was the response from the dogs taking a real interest in executing the children's commands.

Thornton's team has completed many successful educational programs with children and this event at Girls and Boys Town was no exception. They believe that one of the biggest issues in finding solutions to the conservation problems we face is in the educating of children, so they can continue in the fight to preserve and protect the very little we have left.



Our Vision

Youth, families and communities; South Africa's strength and future.

Our Mission

Creating opportunities for youth to grow and develop into responsible citizens, able to contribute to family and community life in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, equality and solidarity with others.

Benefits of a bequest to Girls & Boys Town

A bequest in a will to Girls and Boys Town, a registered 'Public Benefit Organisation' in terms of Section 18A of the Income Tax Act (Act 58 of 1962) is deducted from the value of your estate, which may be subject to estate duty. Your bequest to Girls & Boys Town will consequently be entirely free from estate duty and will reduce the portion of your estate which is subject to Estate Duty.



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How you help us to be there when their need to be loved is so important...

Many of us will have heard of Maslow's 'hierarchy of needs' theory. Essentially, it sets out to explain the patterns that human motivations generally move through as each of us strives to develop in life.

Basic 'deficiency or instinctual needs' are at the base of the hierarchy - those of "physiological", "safety", "belonging and love" and "esteem". Then there are the 'higher growth level' needs of 'knowledge and understanding', "aesthetics", and "self-actualization". The final goal that humans strive for is that of "self-transcendence".

In essence, if an adult human's physiological needs (air, food, water, sleep, shelter) are met, then the next level - the need for safety (personal and financial security, health and well-being, adverse impacts of accidents/illness) dominates our behaviour. And so on, as we develop through the hierarchy.

But interestingly, the patterns hold different priorities for children. Where the need to feel safe is more likely to dominate in adults, the need to love, be loved, and belong can override even the need for 'safety' in children. Daily at Girls and Boys Town we see behaviours demonstrating a child's desire to fulfil this need - they will, for instance, desperately search to maintain and cling to even the most abusive parents.

All children now in our care have previously grappled with their own realities and challenges. They may have been unsure of where their next meal might come from, or had their safety needs violated through some form of abuse - sometimes daily. Equally, they could have lacked the protection of an ordered, structured, stable home, or experienced regular and consistent abandonment and rejection. Often, the result is a lack of respect for others - or even for themselves.

These 'deficiency needs' can have serious consequences if they remain unmet. In children, this can manifest in intense feelings of personal and social anxiety and tension, and a struggle to form and maintain emotionally significant relationships with others. They experience loneliness, suffering feelings of inferiority and low self-esteem.

Essentially, they become unlikely, or unable, to focus on any motivation to move beyond their basic needs. Any desire for 'betterment', any ability to accept responsibility for their own lives - and then other's lives - remains suspended.

With your continued help, we can meet these challenges. The inspiring and hopeful stories throughout this edition speak to how you, as a committed and loyal donor, have partnered with us in jointly helping youth to S.H.I.N.E.® by supporting opportunities and processes to create therapeutic and healing pathways for children.

We have journeyed with these children to finally address and overcome their 'deficiency' challenges and then empower them to find the strength, motivation and desire to strive for 'growth'. We thank our staff for their loyalty and dedication in helping these young people find meaning, and the youth for their courage in working so hard to overcome so many of their painful challenges.

For this partnership with you, we all remain deeply grateful as we all make a difference in the lives of our important and vital young people. Thank you sincerely.

PS You might also be drawn to our new Girls and Boys Town logo - a fresh and exciting 60th movement forward. Fresh hope, fresh confidence, fresh commitment - and, for our youth, a refreshed assurance of their deserved place in the world. Thank you again.

Lee Loynes

LEE LOYNES
Chief Executive Officer

'Independent Living' skills development launched in January

Launched in January this year, our 'Independent Living' skills initiative is a fundamental enhancement in the way we develop our youth. Equipping them to shine independently once they leave Girls and Boys Town has been identified as a real need. The changes have been made, and girls and boys at all our campuses are fully involved...

If someone has never been taught to fry an egg, to separate their whites from their yolks when doing laundry, or how to do grocery shopping, then how can we expect them to suddenly know these things when the time comes?

Through our research, we have become more and more aware of how much we do for our youth, so much so that when many of our leavers give us feedback we learn that they struggle to integrate into life outside of Girls and Boys Town:

"While at Girls and Boys Town we have everything done for us and given to us. It is like a silver spoon in our mouths. Then, once we leave, we suddenly have to do everything ourselves and it is very hard to cope."

Our learnings have now brought about changes at Girls and Boys Town. As of January 2018, youth are now responsible for their own routine, and perform their own and community daily tasks and chores including cooking, cleaning, washing clothes and ironing.

It is the beginning of a new focus that we intend to develop over time. Thus far, our youth have embraced the new ideas like stars.



Grappling with the basic chores of life - a big step forward in coping independently

I can do this! Yes, we can! c'mon, let's go!



Know more about our bequest programme.

In response to enquiries from friends and donors, we have a bequest booklet available on our website, intended to be an easy-to-read guide for anyone who is interested in leaving a bequest to Girls and Boys Town.

By leaving a bequest to Girls & Boys Town, or ceding an endowment or insurance policy to us, you will ensure that we will always be here to keep on helping vulnerable young girls and boys for years to come ... empowering them to S.H.I.N.E.®.

For more information on our Bequest programme and/ or to receive a copy of the brochure, please contact Gertrude Wilson on (011) 482 2655 or email her on mailing@gbtown.org.za.

WHERE THERE'S A WILL - THERE'S A WAY



"A hundred years from now the world may be much different because I was important in the life of a child"

- Unknown



Empowering vulnerable youth to S.H.I.N.E.®

Keeping up with
Kagiso

**Our Kagiso Campus has had a busy and successful start to the year!
Here is a glimpse at what our girls there have been up to...**

Appointing New Girls and Boys Town Peer Group System Youth Councillors

It is time for new youth leadership at Kagiso. Three of our girls campaigned for leadership positions, a great milestone for any of our youth. It takes confidence, determination and enthusiasm, which each of our girls showed in their presentations. Next up — voting!



Putting Our Skills to the Test

The JHB Children's home hosted a quiz and spelling bee day recently which our Family Home took part in. The Youth Councillor: Education Portfolio's hard work preparing the youth for this event paid off as the girls participated well, had lots of fun and were given the opportunity to share their knowledge and skills with other children in care.

Double the Good with a Bit of Recycling

At an event organised by our Peer Councillor: Health & Safety Portfolio, picking up bottles turned into more than just a recycling outreach when our youth chose to donate the proceeds to charity. We could not be more proud of our girls and their generosity at the Youth Development Centre Health and Safety Portfolio.



Miss Face of Kagiso

We have a young model in the making! One of our girls showed such modelling talent that she was identified at school and subsequently entered to take part in the Miss Face of Kagiso, held at the beginning of this month. After a successful competition, she was chosen to represent Kagiso in the Mogale City competition. Congratulations to our rising model!

Spreading Love on Valentine's Day

The girls on campus had a very Happy Valentine's Day when they took some time to speak of their love for themselves and others — what a special treat it was hearing them share!



Getting Fit Leads to Shining Girls All-round!

Our Youth Councillor: Recreation and Sport Portfolio organised a partnership with ChiKitsa Football Club to teach our youth soccer and aerobics in a bid to keep fit. One of the youth is now even the aerobics instructor, which just goes to show how quickly they can shine given the opportunity! Each week, the ChiKitsa team works hard teaching and coaching the girls on the technique of the game, helping them become better soccer players. This is another great initiative by staff to keep our youth entertained and active. Well done to the leadership body for taking ownership of the youth's social, physical, emotional and spiritual wellness.

Developing Skills for Independent Living

Our girls have taken it upon themselves to make sure the administration building is kept clean and presentable. One girl is kept clean and presentable. One girl is even assisting in reception — answering the phone, filing and welcoming visitors to the campus. They have also taken to preparing their own meals on weekends, and have drawn up a roster to give everyone a chance to be in the kitchen.



Building Relationships: One Open Day at a Time!

Principals and senior staff from the schools our youth attend were invited to an Open Day and Information Session, organised and facilitated by The Learning Support Centre. The event was a great success and each Service Department was given the opportunity to present their role and function on campus. It is events like these that build and improve the relationships with our schools.

Family Fun at the Randfontein Show

Joy, laughter, fun and most importantly of all, family bonding time for our Family Home girls as they attended the Randfontein Show. Our youths are always especially grateful for these outings that they get to share together as a family.



How We Celebrated Human Rights Day

Girls at the Youth Development Centre attended a Human Rights research session at Florida Park, organised by our Youth Councillor: Education Portfolio. The girls met and engaged with leaders regarding the park, then presented back on different topics. The youth enjoyed their session and ended off the day with a braai. One of our new girls was chosen as the leader of the group and she did such an outstanding job — well done to you, you are a true star!

Strategically Marking the Way Forward

This year started off with a bit of strategic planning. The youth, led by our Youth Councillors, along with the assistance of staff, identified activities and events to celebrate and partake in this year. The youth also reviewed the House Rules and set plans in motion to assist those who are struggling in certain areas. We are very proud of the youth at Kagiso campus and the maturity they show!



“At first, the boys just wanted to hit the ball without care. As long as they hit it, hard and far. There was little emphasis on perfecting skills. We have come a long way since then.” – Cricket Coach

This is cricket.

How the age-old game of cricket is teaching our youngsters self-confidence and self-belief.

Enthusiasm – lots of it! – has been the key ingredient since we decided this season to play cricket at our Macassar campus. All the boys said “We are in!” – and scarcely a boy has missed a practice since. Every Wednesday afternoon there is a clamour to kit up and get out into the field.

But looking back to the start of it all in October last year, we have realised that while the enthusiasm is undiminished, its focus has changed.

There is no doubt that at first cricket was therapy for the boys. A way of boisterously unloading their frustrations. All they wanted to do was hit the ball without care, thought, responsibility, or consequence. As long as they hit the ball, hard and far.

Sport has a subtle way of teaching valuable life skills, and this is exactly what cricket has done for our boys at Macassar campus. The early days of big-hitting bravado persisted for a while, but

“We have managed to get our hands on some quality second hand equipment too. We have divided it into practice and match equipment. The best is reserved for matches only.”

we were able to get the boys to see for themselves that improving their technical cricketing skills would be to their advantage.

Since then, the emphasis of our weekly practices has shifted further still. Now, it is more about exercising self-confidence and self-belief, learning communication skills, how to accept

responsibility and how to execute instructions - as well as the importance of working as a team. And the fact that all this can be learnt while getting outside and having some fun and exercise is wonderful in itself.

All it has taken is a little assistance and guidance and our boys have learnt that there is so much more to the game. It is a game that requires time, concentration and dedication. Once this is realised, cricket teaches very valuable life lessons.

Now, as our boys step up to bat, their fear of missing the ball or the need to take their frustrations out on it have vanished. We are left with respect for the game, their team members, coach and opponents. A credit to our boys – and thanks to this fine ancient game.



BY ANY NAME, OUR GIRLS AND BOYS ARE REAL! All the youth you'll see in our newsletters are real Girls and Boys Town family! But as a measure of protecting their privacy, names are changed as a policy. We trust you'll understand. Thank you.