



Ons Plek Projects

for Girls at Risk of becoming Street Children

Dear Friends

The visiting group should keep in mind that Ons Plek and Siviwe are small houses, which usually each house has 16 girls. On a weekend between 6 to 18 girls may be in the house, since many girls go home for the weekend.

Secondly, the best thing is to do something with rather than for the girls. The girls at Ons Plek also usually love group gospel singing, so for church groups singing together would be something they would all enjoy. Otherwise we usually encourage youth groups to organise a joint sports morning or something like that.

We obviously love getting presents of essentials such as stationery for school (these are the kind of gifts which would usually be given to the staff member, who would make sure the donation is used appropriately). Please do not give anything (money, food, whatever) to any one girl or some of the girls, never mind how compelling her story sounds. Anything that is given to girls should be given fairly and equally to all the girls, with permission from the child care worker on duty.

Lastly, once off visits are really tricky in terms of chatting to the girls. Sometimes people with the best intentions leave both the girls and themselves confused and upset. The basic rule to prevent this from happening is as follows:

Do NOT talk about the past, pain, private issues and problems.
DO chat about the present, positives and future dreams.

For example, asking a girl why she is at Ons Plek or Siviwe, where her family is, where her mother is, where she is from, whether she lived on the streets, what strolling/street life is like, how long she has been here, how she feels about being here, anything about sex, rape, abuse, drugs etc. are all totally **UNSUITABLE** topics.

Examples of **SUITABLE** topics would be sharing about your and her favourite TV programmes and personalities, your and her best liked sports and sporting heroes, favourite foods, fashion and hairdos, what she would like to do when she grows up, what she most likes doing and learning about, etc.

It is also important not to make promises to the girls with regard to future contact. **Please do not exchange Facebook addresses and/or cell phone numbers.** If any visitor feels that they would be interested to volunteer at Ons Plek or Siviwe on a more consistent basis, they can contact Gina/Kara for application materials.

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Registered under Section 18A
of the Income Tax Act

SIVIWE 2nd PHASE SHELTER

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Tel: 021 448-6527/9

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UKONDLA

Programs in Philippi

* Community prevention

* Homework support

* Counselling

Tel: 021 448-6529

PROGRAMS

* 24-hour intake

* 24-hour residential care

* Family reunification

* Family preservation

* Counselling

* Formal education

* Informal education

* Homework

* Vocational guidance

* Lifeskills

* HIV/AIDS

* Home and baby care

* Cultural roots

* Community outreach

training

* Staff training

PHOTOGRAPHS:

There are legal considerations in taking photographs of children at Ons Plek, since the children are protected by the Child Care Act. You may only take photographs of the girls (cell phones included) with the permission of the Director (Pam Jackson). All photographs intended for the girls must be given to the Unit Manager or Director. Some girls give photos of themselves to friends, leaving them with no record of their own lives. The person in charge makes sure that the photos are kept in the girls' life story albums rather than dispersed amongst their peers.

We hope this is not too much to absorb, but it is worth making sure one's visit is the blessing one wishes it to be.

Thank you for your willingness to show care and love to us at Ons Plek.

Volunteer Co-Ordinator
Ons Plek Projects