

Ons Plek Projects

for girls at risk of becoming street children

2021 Newsletter

Sisters reunited at Ons Plek

Two sisters reunited!

The younger one has been living with a foster parent because she is too young to be in a Home. The older one has been phoning her to make sure the foster parents are providing her proper care.

But when the foster placement broke down we took the younger one in. She has arrived!



... Ons Plek Projects ...

We invite you to visit all our Projects, meet the staff members and the children

Director: PAM JACKSON

Our assessment centre intake shelter **ONS PLEK** and our **OFFICES** are situated at 7 Malleson Road Mowbray Cape Town 7700
P O Box 12924 Mowbray Cape Town 7705
Tel: 021 685-4052/49
Fax: 021 685-3128

Email: onsplek@onsplek.org.za
Website: www.onsplek.org.za

Our second-stage shelter **SIVIWE** is situated at 7 York Street Woodstock 7925
Tel: 021 448-6529/27

Our Community Development Programs:

UKONDLA 1 is situated at City Council Community Hall, Browns Farm, Philippi, Cape Town 7750.

UKONDLA 2 and 3 are situated on the premises of Sizakuyenza Safe House, cnr Eisleben and Phumelele Roads, Philippi, Cape Town 7750.



Pam Jackson
DIRECTOR

Message from Pam ...

Our new and very experienced social worker shares her journey with the girls below in which she refers to life story books, which are a key counselling tool. Drawing, and pasting pictures of important memories and lived traumas, as well as writing, help our girls who have agreed to share some items from their highly personal life stories.

Sandra says, "Looking back over the past year, I could not help but to be reminded of the old Chinese curse which says: "May you live in interesting time."

We are living in uncertain and challenging times at the moment, whether we want to be reminded of it or not.

My career as a social worker in Cape Town started many years ago. I have been challenged with so many situations of poverty, inequality and trauma – specially trauma to children, through neglect and abuse. I have always believed that I am an agent of change for the improvement of lives of the most vulnerable in society. My constant exposure to the vulnerable in society, has taught me to develop emotional resilience and skills to so many stressful life experiences, but it has ill prepared me for the effects of the Covid 19 pandemic on children's lives, who I am dealing with on a daily basis.

In the middle of 2020, during the strictest lockdown measures, I changed careers and started working as the new Unit Manager/Social worker at Ons Plek Projects in the Siviwe Shelter for girls in Woodstock.

The schools were locked down, no family, friends or volunteer visits were allowed at the shelter. Girls were not allowed to go to the shops, parks or any place outside the home. These girls, who have all been removed from their families by the Children's court due to abandonment, neglect or abuse, had to face yet another challenge. Their feelings of anxiety and isolation, and feelings that they were forgotten by the outside world, were palpable.

Travelling daily with my essential work permit on almost empty streets to work, to deal with the girls' trauma in their physical space, had not only been a health challenge, but also an emotional one. Trying to comfort a girl in distress from behind a mask, where we could not see each other's facial expressions, and were not allowed to hug due to social distancing, perpetuate the feelings of anger, sadness and isolation in the girls. It also put a huge emotional strain on me as a social worker.

I needed to learn different skills to create an emotional safe space for children, where one could not make empty promises, and had to learn to deal with issues on a day to day basis, with whatever resources were available, keeping in mind that we were dealing with constant unexpected changes.

After many months of adjusting to the daily uncertainties, I started to notice a change in many of the girls. They became more resourceful, and being restricted to the house, started to create their own entertainment: organising their own week-end concerts, song evenings, fashion parade and even organising their own Sunday home church. They started to appreciate their relationships with one another in the absence of their family and friends, as well as the fact that they are safe and cared for in the Shelter, although their longing to see their families, remain. Their Life Skill Books suddenly became very important to them. They started to write, draw and paste pictures in their books reminding them of family, friends and past life events.

We still have a long way to go with the devastating consequences of the pandemic, but we need to be reminded that although we are all in the same storm, we are not all in the same boat. Some have yachts, some have canoes, and some are drowning. We can only be kind and help whoever we can. (Adapted from a quote by Damian Barr).

I am thankful for the challenge offered to me by Ons Plek Projects. Every day is a time for growth. I have learnt so much from the girls in our care. May we continue to always have their best interest at heart."

Sandra Collins

HAVE YOU MOVED?

Please advise us of your change of address if you have moved home or office ... it's so disappointing when the 'thank you' letters that the girls have written, or our newsletters, are returned to us!

Holiday program task



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

TAX DEDUCTIBLE BENEFITS:

We are registered as a Public Benefit Organisation and thus all donations to us are tax deductible under Section 18A of the Income Tax Act.

PAY LESS ESTATE DUTY:

Being a Section 18A Tax Benefit company means that your family will save on estate duties i.e. exempt from payment of estate duties.

LIFE STORY

How did Covid-19 affect my life ...

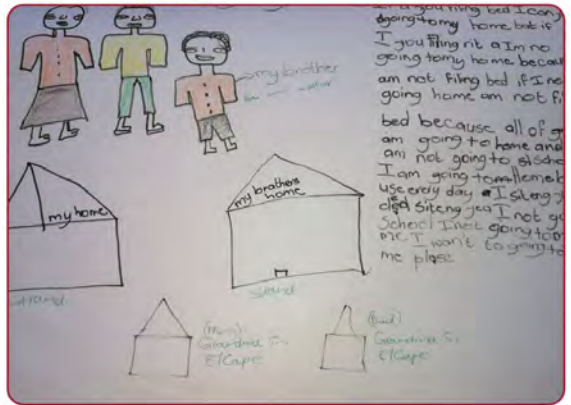
Staying in a children's home is difficult and Covid-19 made it worse. At the beginning of lockdown I tried to stay strong but as time went on I just couldn't.

I got frustrated at the fact that we in the house with the same people over and over. I was angry at myself and the whole world I started shouting my friends in the house out because I missed my family. And that we can only phone once a week.

Not being able to go to school was the hardest thing for me to accept as I really in love with school and my goal is to finish matric. So for me and the other girls it was hard to be in the same space every minute, second and we couldn't go anywhere or see our friends and family and the worst part is that some of us has babies that needs us. So that time the president open some levels I was glad because I could see my family once again but not so long he closed it again and the reason for that is the people don't listen.

If only they could consider us and wear masks and stop partying. I pray every night to the Lord to save South Africa, and its people but it can only be saved if people listen.

So yes lockdown made me angry, frustrated person but I'm working on that...



ANGRY

ANGRY
 2 paragraph story, why?
 2014 Jul 24

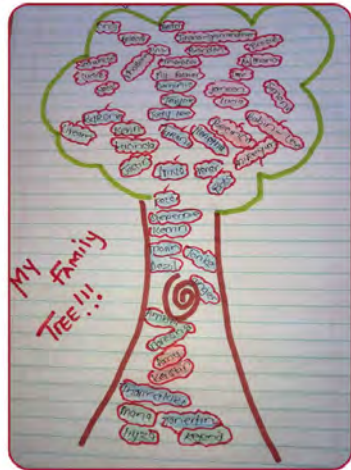
because I am not at school
 who's lucky - I feel like these nobody to
 Talk case of me

consequences

difficult

Life

Things to find



Feelings



My Family Tree

Our Wish List ...



All donations are dropped off at our house in Mowbray and the address is 7 Malleson Road, Mowbray.

We have **35 girls** in our care and you can donate the following items listed below:

BASIC GROCERIES PER WEEK — 20kg Sugar, 20kg Maize, 20kg Rice, 5kg Flour, 2 Yeast, Bread, 4kg Samp, 2kg Dry Beans, Meat, 10kg Chicken, R150 Sausages, 2kg Viennas, French Polony, 6 x Pasta, 8 x tin Beans, 8 x Pilchards, 8 x Peanut Butter, 4 x 900g Jam, Spices, 24 x Beefstock, 2 x 500g Salt, 4 litres Oil, 4kg x Margarine, Amazi, 60 x Eggs, 8 x 1litre Milk, Tea, Coffee, 2 x 750ml Mayonnaise, 2 x Chutney, 2x Tomato Sauce, Cordials, 6kg Washing Powder, 4 x Sunlight Soap (Green Bar), 4 x Sunlight liquid, 4 x Handy Andy, 4 x Bleach, 2 x Black Bags, 2 x Steelwool.

VEGETABLES AND FRUIT — Potatoes, Onions, Carrots, Cabbage, Beetroot, Pumpkin/Butternut, Tomatoes, Green Peppers, Apples, Pears, Bananas, Oranges/Naartjies.

TOILETRIES — Toilet Paper.

CLOTHING — White School Shirts, Grey Pants, School Socks, Black Pantihose, School Shoes, School Bus Fares, Rain Jackets.

Pyjamas (Summer and Winter). Size: Small, Medium and Large

Sandals: sizes 2, 3, 4 and 5.

FURNITURE — Corner couch, new mattresses, tiles or wooden flooring for our lounge.

*Please do not hesitate to contact Ons Plek if you require any further information.
Tel. 021 685 4052 / 49*



Keeping track of your donation

If you are depositing money straight into Ons Plek Projects' bank account, please enter your surname AND initials, or your company's name, or Anonymous (if you prefer) in the **REFERENCE BLOCKS** on the **DEPOSIT SLIP**. This information then appears on the bank statement and identifies who we need to receipt and thank for the donation.

OUR BANKING DETAILS:

Bank: FIRST NATIONAL BANK

Account No: 620-529-16908

Branch: WOODSTOCK

Branch Code: 255005

In name of: ONS PLEK PROJECTS

Swift Code: FIRNZAJJ

Monies being deposited from overseas (telegraphic transfer) must please reflect the swift code.

PLEASE NOTE: We have an easy payfast option button on our website.

Start of the new school year 2021



ONS PLEK PROJECTS' ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

*Henk Blom (Zepplin Productions 082 667 1688), Sabine Bergler (Website),
Salty Print (021 448-5620 for printing), Warick Muter (IT 079 446 8907)
and Dale Narsi (Layout 072 288 6248).*