



ONS PLEK PROJECTS - NEWSLETTER MAY 2020

A big thank you to the donors, trusts, and businesses who have continued and even extended support to help Ons Plek, and all our children, through this devastating COVID-19 pandemic. It has been possible for us to continue to protect and care for the vulnerable, neglected, abused children of Cape Town. We remain incredibly touched by the many who have stepped up to help in many small ways. People have helped feed, provided mask, school stationary and financial support.

What is on the children's minds during lockdown.

There are heart breaking issues coming up in counselling, which are being dealt with by the social worker and childcare workers. Some are worried that their families are starving, while they, so far, have been eating. They feel helpless and guilty. Phone calls continue to be made weekly to the parents of the children. The children have been educated about Covid 19. When they realise that their families do not understand the implications of the disease and that they continue to walk around freely. The children are begging them to stay indoors. Others are missing the visits

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from family. Then there are the schools who have not sent any work to the children. These children are worried about their schooling. They already lost school years due to the neglect and abuse that they have suffered. When they came to Ons Plek they thought their luck had changed, only to find their education interrupted again!

Moreover, they are getting older.

Those girls who have compromised immune systems are terrified, the one child washing well above the elbow again and again

Adaptations to our Life in a Children's Home in Covid19

We began 2 weeks before the official lockdown to implement sanitary and safety measures. No children were allowed home. We debated how to cope if one child got sick and where we could possibly find an isolation room in our crowded facilities! The most important decision we took was reduce exposure of staff using taxis. We extended childcare worker hours to 24 hours for 7 days running! Normally our staff work a 12 hours shift, which would have meant travelling by taxi twice a day. Our staff have been amazing! They have not complained about the week long, not "going home at all" shifts. They have kept the girls positive and generally coping.

Feeding the 5000, the challenge not often mentioned.

Our drop in centres in Philippi usually serve food to the children. Our section of Philippi is normally very dangerous and crime ridden. The landlord has forbidden the feeding on the premises because of the danger in Philippi of gang attacks on food supply. Our staff have been bravely carrying bread to the children families on foot, hidden in backpacks. They have stayed to counsel children and families and educate the families when delivering the bread, at risk to themselves as essential workers

Where are we going?

Our core function remains. To help all of our children to heal, develop, get educated and return to mainstream functioning. We plan to keep healing the most traumatised children who can hardly live with themselves, never mind live with others. It is as simple as that, despite being as complicated as it is gets. Our school continues to run every day during Coved and our teachers to give homework.

We have taken the opportunity to spend quality time with our children, to strengthen the relationship between staff and children. We have learnt to be more creative to keep the children working, to use our initiative when everything depends on us, to plan more efficiently, to reduce travel, to hold managers meeting online, to change our buying systems, and to find ways to keep our children growing and healing.

We are planning is another Drop-in centre in Philippi for little children, The ones who are left to roam the streets when their big siblings return to school and their parents return to work. These children are likely to repeat the path of their siblings of being at risk of becoming street children. We want to imput on their lives to prevent that.

I hope this gives you some idea of how Ons Plek and our children are responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. We need your help as never before, to provide for these children who have had so little from life and who have so much potential. Please, if you can, kindly consider helping us by donating directly into our bank account.

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Account name: Ons Plek Projects

Bank: FNB

Branch code: 255005

Woodstock

Bank Account Number:620-529-16908

Swift number for international donations: FIRNZAJJ

There are other ways to donate on our website, please do visit and like our Facebook page to keep up to date with all the happenings.

With our best wishes, thanks and prayers for you all.