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**Childline South Africa Newsletter**



# Network News

## Editorial from Dumi's Desk

IT HAS BEEN a long, hard, challenging but exciting year. It has been a year of development and change during which the national office has doubled in size in terms of staff, and the offices we thought were too big when we moved in – are now too small.

We are blessed in that we have been able to attract the national office staff who are committed and dedicated to achieving our cause – the care and protection of children. During this year we have really rolled out our PEPFAR programme, initiated the MXit chat room counseling service, delivered training and capacity building opportunities to the provinces, our partners and ourselves.

One of the biggest challenges is that of sustaining quality service provision, particularly in the light of the recession, which has reduced the funds available for charities, but increased the need. This has necessitated changes in our fundraising and marketing strategies and we will report on this in the new year.

As we move on into the New Year we want to approach the challenges with renewed and greater vigour, intensify and equalise service delivery to our children and families across South Africa. This underlines the importance of working in partnership with our colleagues in the child protection field, including traditional and religious leaders who are often close to community groups.

We would like to extend to all our partners and readers our sincere wishes for a safe and joyous festive season, some rest, and a 2010 in which we join hands to effectively protect our children.



*Dumisile Nala*  
Childline SA CEO

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# Child Protection Systems in S.A.



Submitted by  
Joan van Niekerk

In July 2009, Childline South Africa was contracted by *Save the Children* to conduct focused group discussions in all 9 provinces in order to:

- develop an awareness of the outcomes of the *Global Study on Violence Against Children* and the study recommendations relating to child protection systems;
- identify the constituents of a well-functioning and effective child protection system;
- gather ideas that would contribute to the development of child protection systems in South Africa; and thereby
- promote and contribute to the implementation of the VAC study in South Africa and the realisation of the rights of South African children to care and protection.

The project also included a child participation and consultation process, in order to:

- create opportunities for children to learn about the Violence Against Children study;
- discuss their experiences with regard to safety and protection; and
- contribute their ideas about effective child protection systems.

## THE PROCESS

### 1. Focus group discussions in the nine provinces

- a. The report on the Global Study on Violence Against Children was summarised, with particular focus on the findings and the recommendations of the study.
- b. The Childline Provincial Offices were requested to organise focus group discussions in each province. An example of a letter of invitation was sent to local partners in the child protection system. It was requested that the focus groups should be multi-sector in composition, consist of persons who are involved in child protection activities, and the group should be large enough to reflect a variety of opinions, but small enough to enable in-depth discussion.
- c. The programme for the workshops included information sharing and discussing on the *Global Study on Violence Against Children*, smaller group discussions on *Child Protection Systems* as ideal constructs and the Child Protection System in South Africa and report back sessions to the plenary. Participants were also asked to consider the question: “*What would you select to prioritise in each of the four pillars of South Africa’s Child Protection system, the four pillars being Prevention, Early Intervention, Statutory Intervention and Rehabilitation and Reintegration?*”

## THE CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS THAT EMERGED FROM THE STUDY

### General conclusions from the focused group discussions, consultations with children and safe house mothers:

1. **Few participants were aware of the Global Study** on Violence Against Children, its recommendations, and the commitment of member countries in the United Nations to implementing these recommendations.
2. There is a **strong commitment from many** who work in the child protection system in South Africa to contributing to strengthening effective proactive and reactive child protection systems and activities.
3. There are **many positives** in the present system that can be built on and extended.
4. However the system at present is **uncoordinated**, with a lack of clear provincial and district leadership.
5. The **lack of functional and updated protocols and coordinating systems** contribute to a lack of coordination, collaboration, communication, accountability, possible duplication and unaddressed gaps in services for children whose rights have been compromised.

6. The **lack of record keeping and information management**, inclusive of the low level of reporting to the child protection register, contributes to the difficulties in assessing the need for resources for child protection services and planning the deployment of what (limited) resources do exist.
7. An **absence of clear monitoring and evaluation mechanisms** shared by all role-players in the child protection system contributes to a lack of clear knowledge as to what interventions really work and are efficient and effective in all 4 pillars of child protection services – prevention, early intervention, statutory intervention and rehabilitation and reintegration.
8. Children with **disability and in rural areas** remain marginalised with regard to service delivery.
9. **Political agendas** appear to interfere with the optimal use of what resources do exist and there is a lack of passionate political will and leadership relating to the protection of children's rights. Strong political leadership is needed to drive implementation of law and policy and systems.
10. **Corruption and intimidation** of role-players, communities, families and children interfere with the protection of children's rights in the majority of provinces.

### Recommendations

1. The **conclusions and recommendations of the Global Study are more widely distributed** in South Africa.
2. **Political leaders in government are lobbied actively** to remind them of South Africa's commitment to the protection of children's rights through the ratification of various legislation. Children must be put high on the agenda of politicians.
3. A **further scrutiny of law and policy** is required to ensure that South Africa's domestic legislation and policy complies with the comprehensive protection of children's rights and the protection of children from ALL forms of violence, including neglect.
4. There is an urgent need to **re-establish inter-sector child protection committees** in all the provinces and districts, and to ensure that these committees are inclusive of representatives of all sectors, including civil society organisations.
5. **Child protection committees at every level must meet regularly**, minute their meetings, distribute these minutes and document their activities to ensure accountability and facilitate broad participation.
6. The **Child Protection Protocols** must be resurrected, revisited, revised, and committed to. All sectors involved in child protection services must be invited to participate in this process and political leaders and Directors.
7. **Monitoring and evaluation strategies, accurate and comprehensive data collection and information management** must be implemented to ensure that South Africa's scarce resources are applied in the most effective, and cost-efficient programmes and processes.
8. Current **prevention strategies** must be evaluated for their effectiveness and efficiency. Mass Campaigns in particular require evaluation.
9. Anonymous **reporting** of child rights violations should be actively followed up, and a clear and effective whistle-blowing policy and opportunity should be provided.

This is a summary - visit the [Childline website](#) for the full report.



**Right:** Children from the Safe House Project (Childline Gauteng) illustrate their child protection ideas.

# PEPFAR Progress Report

(Presidential Emergency Plan for Aids Relief – OVC Project)

THE FIRST PHASE of our PEPFAR Orphans and Vulnerable Children Programme came to an end on the 30th of November 2009. A total number of 4730 orphans and vulnerable children were served. A summary of services follows:



Submitted by  
Zama Kubheka

## Specialised Psychosocial Support for Children

Social workers served **5216** orphans and vulnerable children by providing counseling and therapy appropriate to OVC's age on a weekly basis. This was made possible by:

- visiting schools and families within communities;
- being available at Childline offices for those orphans and vulnerable children referred by the crisis line; and
- walk-in clients to Childline offices.

Crisis Line Counselors were also available to all children and adults who call the Childline toll free crisis line as an access point to services close to the child. Children calling were offered direct telephone counseling and where necessary, were referred to the relevant service providers in the areas closest to the child's residence. (The counseling services provided by crisis line counselors was not counted under the PEPFAR programme, only the referred cases.)



## Psychosocial Support is given to Caregivers

1563 caregivers were trained in various forms of psycho-social support. Training was conducted by Social Workers and sometimes by external consultants in basic counseling skills, child abuse, and early child development. Training and capacity building of community members was also conducted to enable them to conduct awareness campaigns in primary schools.

## Shelter Interventions and Child Protection Interventions

Childline South Africa has been very active in providing this service. As a result, 1934 orphans and vulnerable children were provided with shelter and placed in safe homes, and 2866 were referred and were assisted to obtain birth certificates, IDs and inheritance-related issues.

## Life Skills Development

Social workers and trained counselors provided educational support, peer education and life skills training focusing on HIV prevention, children's rights, gender issues, violence, health and teen pregnancy.

In addition, workshops for student teachers and careworkers employed in other NGO's working with OVCs, have been facilitated.



# CHAMPIONS FOR CHILDREN

## LAUNCH OF CAMPAIGN TO DEAL WITH FIFA CHALLENGES

The FIFA world cup will bring many challenges to those who work in child protection. Although government, in association with FIFA, has comprehensive plans to deal with children in and around stadiums and fan parks, (where international visitors may see children!) and has supported extensive anti-trafficking public awareness, there is little activity around providing for the needs of children in rural, peri-urban and urban areas that will not be in the public eye.

Schools will be closed, feeding schemes (on which approximately 60% of our children are dependent on and are attached to school attendance), will not be operating and parents and caretakers will have to continue working. The very conditions that make children vulnerable to being trafficked and involved in other forms of exploitation are not being addressed.

Civil Society organisations concerned with the protection of children have collaborated, and with the support and coordination of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund team, have embarked on a **CHAMPIONS FOR CHILDREN** campaign.

### **This campaign is child rights based and premised on the fact that:**

- all children have a right to safety and protection;
- families and communities supported by government, are the main custodians of child safety and protection;
- all children must be accounted for at all times; and
- everyone can play a role in child protection.

### **The campaign approach:**

- The strategy starts with what is present in the community, the capacities of its residents and workers.
- The approach concentrates on the agenda building and problem solving capacities of local residents, local associations and local institutions.

### Objectives include:

- Raising community awareness of the risks facing children.
- The creation of a movement for the protection of children nationally and regionally.
- A call to action in order to advocate for children's rights with government, FIFA, SASA and business as key players in the campaign.
- Ensuring the protection and safety of children during the World Cup 2010 and beyond.
- Informing the public, government, business and sports bodies of the Risks for children and the need to reduce these.
- Advocate appropriate responses to ensure the care and protection of children.

### Key messages

- Champions protect children.
- You can be a champion for children.

### Participating Child Rights Organisations include:

- Child Welfare South Africa
- Childline South Africa
- Civicus
- Save the Children
- Johannesburg Child Welfare
- Child Rights Centre
- Gauteng Children's Rights Committee
- Molo Songololo
- Khulisa
- Media Monitoring Africa
- Nelson Mandela Children's Fund

The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund have coordinated campaign planning with the organisations involved, and also implemented a national launch of the campaign at Willow Park Conference Centre.

**Top Right:** Mrs Graca Machel, as the patron of the campaign, attended the launch and give an inspiring address motivating all citizens to take responsibility for the children in their families and communities.

**Right:** Tcina Hlophe, the world famous storyteller was the Programme Director for this event and had her audience spellbound as she wove child protection themes into her story telling magic.



Watch this space for further developments relating to this campaign.

# The Childline Data Collection Programme

SEVERAL YEARS AGO Telkom Foundation funded the development of a computerised data collection programme for the Childline South African network. This was done in order to facilitate the collection and collation of information relating to the calls received on the crisis line.

This programme had been very valuable in enabling Childline to account for the donor support for this core service, but also to know the nature of the calls we receive, the gender and age of the children and adults with concerns about children who call. In addition, the programme has a management function that enables the call centre managers to monitor the numbers and types of calls received by individual counselors.

Over the past 2 years this programme has been shared with a number of other helplines in countries around the world. The programme is now used in the Childlines in Kenya, Uganda, Mozambique, Lesotho, and Brazil.

In November 2009, Joan van Niekerk and Warren Londt, our IT expert, were requested to install and train on the programme at Childline Zimbabwe. The counselors and Childline staff were delighted to receive the programme and training and quickly assimilated the use of the programme.

As a result, we had time to visit one of Childline Zimbabwe's outreach centres, located in an area in Harare characterised by poverty and unemployment. At the outreach centre we met a children's child protection committee, which functions to spread the word to other children about the call centre and child protection.

Thank you Childline Zimbabwe for being great hosts - and congratulations on the work that you do.

The data collection programme has also been upgraded and this will enable the Childline South Africa national office to provide those interested with a variety of reports about children's use of the call centre.

**Thank you to Cybicom who donated the services of a data programmer for the year, as well as Warren Londt for all the work done on this project.**



*Left:*  
Training counselors on the data collection programme at Childline Zimbabwe.



## Bits & Pieces

**As Childline South Africa has received funding to update the Sexual Offender Training Manual (SOM), it became necessary to establish a baseline that would inform what, from the previous manual, was well received, still current and relevant, and needed changing.**

Questionnaires were developed, aimed at the trainer as well as the recipients of the manual, i.e. those attending Childline's sexual offender treatment programme. The trainers that completed the questionnaires, we made up of Childline staff or volunteers who will/currently do, assist with the offender treatment programme.

The comments and the findings viz the questionnaire, indicate that those who have received training have found it most useful and point out the fact that the offender treatment programme definitely can contribute to halting the cycle of abuse and create a better awareness of the sexual offender's psyche.

*"What was important for me, was knowing my feelings and attitude, understanding their behaviour and other important things which this manual provides."*

Similarly, relevant questionnaires were handed out to recipients of the offender treatment programme; i.e. offenders. They were requested to provide as much detail as possible in order to effectively update the programme and were assured of confidentiality. Their responses were very useful and pointed to a 75% positive response about the programme.

In response to the question: *"If you knew someone who could benefit from this treatment programme, would you recommend the programme to them?"*, one offender replied: *"Absolutely. An offender may initially think he knows everything, but the programme has taught me new ideas and concepts. The learning is ongoing."*

This project continues with the final manual being published in the later part of 2010.

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### **Good news! USAID and PACTSA have renewed partnership with Childline SA.**

A new agreement has been signed and Childline SA is now a prime partner reporting straight to PACTSA and USAID.

This agreement commenced on the 1st of December 2009 and will terminate on the 30th of September 2010. All seven provincial affiliates who participated in the first phase are continuing with the programme.

As a result, the National Office will expand to manage this new programme, creating new positions in January 2010: Finance Officer; Monitoring and Evaluation Officer; and Data Capturer.



#### **Left:**

A drawing from the children's consultations on child protection. It says:  
*"If your sun doesn't shine, just call 08000-55-555."*



## Childline SA website news....

The following articles/reports/documents have been added under the 'documents for download' and news sections:

- Childline SA AGM Report 2009
- PowerPoint presentations on:
  - *"Inter-sector child protection & the pre-school child"*.
  - *"Do children really matter? Trauma services for children in South Africa"*.
  - *"Children and Trauma – what works"*.
- Working Group on Positive Discipline – Newsletter, Aug 2009
- *Banning Corporal Punishment: the South African Experience* – booklet by RAPCAN

Childline SA is still appealing to the protection network to send information that would be useful to children and teens to be placed on our website. If you have anything, please could you forward to Isabelle at [quillmediaworks@telkomsa.net](mailto:quillmediaworks@telkomsa.net) for placement on the site. We are sure that our site's readers would appreciate added resources.

Visit our website at [www.childlinesa.org.za](http://www.childlinesa.org.za)



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