



FOOD PARCELS



EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT



DISABILITY GAMES



NO TO CHILD ABUSE



GOLDEN GAMES

Substance Users Reach Out for Help During Ke Moja Activation in Vosloorus



Picture: Phetoho Maja

Dr Nelisiwe Sibisi and Social Worker Gugulethu Sibiya from Thelle Mogoerane Regional Hospital conducting health assessments for substance users

By Phetoho Maja

At least seventeen (17) substance users were assessed by health professionals during the Ke Moja Fridays activation and service delivery blitz that took place in Vosloorus, Eastern Corridor, last Friday.

According to Social Worker Gladys Matlala, the aim of the activation was to create awareness of the impact of drugs and substance abuse and to highlight the services offered by the Gauteng Department of Social Development within the Substance Abuse unit.

The event brought together stakeholders such as the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA), Home Affairs, Health, South African Police Service, Department of Labour and Employment, Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), and non-profit organizations to present some of their services to the community.

Three hotspots were targeted: a park within Vosloorus Stadium where users normally sit and get a fix, Nguni Hostel, and Vosloorus Civic Centre. Social workers within the Substance Abuse Unit targeted these hotspots to register clients who may desire rehabilitation.

Matlala outlined the process for application to rehabilitation centres. She said, "There is primary intervention, where we focus on prevention and awareness programmes for substance abuse. We teach people about drugs and their effects."

"There is also secondary intervention, where someone who has a substance abuse problem has been identified. Then there is a process that takes place before admission to a rehabilitation centre."

"That process includes screening, where we assess suitability for the service to find out about the substances being used so we can determine if the person needs inpatient or outpatient services."

"Intake and assessment is when we collect the substance user's personal information, background information, and the presenting problem. We then form preparatory groups, compile a psychosocial report, send all the required documents for rehabilitation admission, and take users to rehabilitation on their admission date. We also monitor our clients by visiting twice a month and holding panel meetings."

"We further conduct family reunifications if there are conflicts and divisions within the family"

"We further conduct family reunifications if there are conflicts and divisions within the family caused by the abuse of drugs and prepare them for the release of the user. Lastly, there is tertiary intervention, a post-recovery care programme where we refer them to skills development programmes to reduce the risk of relapse," concluded Matlala.

Farewell message to DDG Hartmann from Support Branch

It's an honour to stand here today to celebrate DDG Amanda Hartmann — a leader whose dedication, expertise, and infectious passion have left an indelible mark on our team. While her departure is undeniably a loss for us, it is a golden gain for the Department of Transport — one that speaks to the incredible value she brings wherever she goes.

DDG, working alongside you has been nothing short of inspiring. Your strategic vision, collaborative spirit, and unwavering commitment to excellence haven't just driven results — they've uplifted everyone around you. You've set a standard we'll strive to uphold.

As you embark on this exciting new chapter, know that your legacy here remains. We're confident you'll bring the same brilliance to the Department of Transport, shaping the future of our infrastructure with the same boldness and heart you've shown us.

On behalf of the entire team, thank you for everything. We'll miss you, but we couldn't be prouder to see you soar. Here's to your next adventure — may it be as rewarding for you as your time here has been for us.



Picture: Christopher Masia

Support Services outgoing DDG Amanda Hartmann during her farewell function at the Reef Hotel in Johannesburg

After Years Of Hard Work Mtimkulu Retires

By DDG Onkemetse Kabasia

As you close this chapter of your life and step into retirement, I want to take a moment to celebrate you. Your career has been marked by dedication, resilience, and countless contributions that have made a lasting impact on all of us.

Despite the challenges and storms you’ve weathered, you’ve stood strong and remained an inspiration to everyone who had the privilege of working with you.

To us as an organization

As we bid farewell to one of our long-serving colleagues, it is important to reflect on the invaluable contributions made by those who dedicated years of their lives to this organization. Retirement is a significant milestone—a culmination of hard work, loyalty, and resilience—and it should be celebrated with the dignity and honour it deserves.

I would like to humbly caution all of us against allowing any retiree to leave feeling unappreciated or burdened by negative experiences. The final moments of an employee’s journey with the organization are as critical as their first. They deserve a fond farewell that not only recognizes their achievements but also leaves them with positive memories of their time in an organisation.

“I pray that this next chapter of your life is everything you’ve ever dreamed of and more”

Let us always remember that how we treat those on the verge of retirement speaks volumes about who we are as an organization / as a people. May we strive to ensure that every retiree feels valued, celebrated, and deeply respected as they begin this new chapter of their lives.

From me to you

As the time comes to say goodbye to you in your professional capacity, my heart is heavy with emotions — gratitude, admiration, and a deep sense of love and respect for the remarkable person you are.

Throughout our journey together, you have been more than just a colleague or subordinate. You have been a beacon of humility, grace, and wisdom. Despite your extensive experience and knowledge — far greater than mine — you embraced my leadership with unmatched respect and trust. This kind of humility is rare, and it has deeply touched me and inspired me in ways words can’t fully express.



Picture: Supplied

Retiring Central Corridor Director Nonhlanhla Mtimkulu during her farewell function

Working with you has been one of the greatest privileges of my career. I will forever cherish the moments we shared — your unwavering dedication, your calm strength in the face of challenges, and your ability to uplift those around you, including me. You’ve taught me more than you’ll ever know.

You have shown me respect and kindness which is truly extraordinary. It is something I wish the younger generation of colleagues could emulate — a reminder of the beauty of humility, professionalism, and grace. I cannot begin to describe how much this has meant to me.

As you step into retirement, I want you to know how deeply you are appreciated and how much you will be missed. Your contributions to our team and my growth will forever be a part of me. You have left a legacy that is immeasurable, and your presence here will never be forgotten.

I pray that this next chapter of your life is everything you’ve ever dreamed of and more — a time of joy, peace, and all the love you so richly deserve. You have given so much of yourself to this work, and now it is your time to rest, to thrive, and to enjoy life to the fullest.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for the love, respect, and support you have shown me. You are an extraordinary person, and my admiration for you will remain endless. This is not goodbye; it is simply farewell for now, and you will always hold a special place in my heart.

Social Development Continues To Support Recovering Substance Users



Picture: Lawrence Mashabela

Social Worker Malekgotla Monkge motivating young recovering substance users at JC Kotze Hall in Sebokeng

By Lawrence Mashabela

The Gauteng Department of Social Development, in partnership with other government departments and various non-profit organisations (NPOs), hosted an aftercare awareness event last Friday at JC Kotze Hall in Sebokeng, Southern Corridor.

The event aimed to provide ongoing support and encouragement to individuals who have completed treatment programs, helping them maintain their sobriety. Approximately 150 young recovering substance users from various organisations and treatment centres across Sedibeng attended in large numbers to receive crucial information about the dangers of substance abuse, healthy coping mechanisms, and available support services.

Social Worker Malekgotla Monkge from the Gauteng Department of Social Development in Sedibeng emphasized the importance of continuous support for young people as they work to reclaim their lives. She highlighted that the Department is committed to equipping them with effective coping strategies to manage triggers and resist temptations that could lead to relapse.

“This is a critical stage for individuals who have battled addiction, as it tests their ability to resist temptation,” Monkge explained. “By hosting engagements like this, we provide opportunities for them to build a supportive network of friends who understand their struggles. We also want to show them that we care and are here to support them on their journey to recovery.”

She further stressed that recovery from drug addiction does not end when treatment is completed, noting that the post-treatment phase is crucial. In its prevention efforts, the Department collaborates with various organisations that offer skills development to ensure a holistic approach to support.

“We have invited organisations that work with us to present the various skills training programs they offer. We hope this will empower you and help improve your lives,” she added.

Among the organisations present was Dirang Ka Kagiso Child and Youth Development Centre, which provides empowerment programs such as Life Skills Training, Hair and Beauty courses, and opportunities to learn Radio Broadcasting. Sukuma Lutsha-Rise Youth Centre and Kitso Information and Development Centre were also in attendance, offering computer training and other educational programs for young people. Additionally, Recovery Centre and Jamela Treatment Centre presented their services for those in recovery.

Puseletso Matshepe from Dirang Ka Kagiso Child and Youth Development Centre reaffirmed their commitment to supporting young people, especially those who have struggled with addiction.

“We are part of the fight against substance abuse in our communities by empowering young people. I encourage everyone to take advantage of the free skills training programs we offer to build a better future for themselves,” Matshepe said.

A representative from the Department of Labour & Employment urged young people not to lose hope and encouraged them to register their CVs in the Department’s database so they could be matched with job opportunities as they arise.

The event demonstrated the commitment of the Gauteng Department of Social Development and its partners in providing sustained support to recovering service users, ensuring they have the resources and encouragement needed to maintain their sobriety and build a better future.

Honouring Dedication: Social Worker Recognised for 30 Years of Service



Picture: Supplied

Eastern Corridor Social Work Supervisor Tebogo Molapo with Mmabatho Dolo Social Worker from Hope and Homes

By Madali Chibambu

Three decades ago, Tebogo Molapo (50) embarked on a journey that would shape countless lives. Fresh out of High School, she joined the Gauteng Department of Social Development, and now, she is set to receive a Long Service Award alongside other dedicated employees who have devoted years to serving communities.

Molapo currently works as a Social Work Supervisor at the Department's Eastern Corridor regional office, under the HIV and Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in the Partnership and Finance Directorate. Reflecting on her early years, she recalls how she balanced work and studies to fulfil her dream.

"Since I started working at a young age, I applied for a study loan and registered for distance learning in Social Work. I had the time and energy to focus on my studies, and I couldn't wait to officially become a Social Worker," she said with a smile.

Determined to succeed, Molapo diligently paid off her study fees while juggling her responsibilities at work. After completing her degree, she proudly qualified as a Social Worker, a role she has passionately embraced ever since.

Over the years, she has worked in various sectors, including education and correctional services, but what she cherishes most is the opportunity to transform lives. "Working with orphans and vulnerable individuals is fulfilling. Seeing a child born HIV-positive grow into a healthy adult is a major achievement for me," she shared.

Molapo attributes her success to the strong team she works with, a group of dedicated professionals committed to making a difference. However, she notes that the profession has evolved over time. "Social work today is not the same as it was during the apartheid era. Many young people enter the field after receiving bursaries, but without passion, mistakes happen, and the essence of the work is lost," she observed.

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As a mentor to young Social Workers, she encourages them to approach the profession with dedication and a willingness to participate in various initiatives to fully understand the impact of their role.

Molapo's 30-year journey is proof of commitment, resilience, and passion in social work. As she prepares to receive her well-deserved recognition, she remains an inspiration to both her colleagues and the communities she serves.

Foster Learner Excels Against the Odds



Foster child Paki Mathela with foster mother Dorcas Mooketsi and sister Thato Mooketsi

By Tendamudzimu Goza

At just 18 years old, Paki Mathela from Doornkop, Johannesburg, has proven that resilience and determination can overcome even the toughest challenges. A beneficiary of the Gauteng Department of Social Development's foster care programme, Mathela recently completed his matric with outstanding results, achieving five distinctions.

As part of the Class of 2024 at Luthando High School in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), Mathela was one of the top-performing learners in the science stream. His Social Worker, Philisiwe Baweni, spoke highly of him, saying: "It has been an amazing experience working with him. He is humble, smart, determined, and wise beyond his years. He projects grace and confidence; he is going far in life. He is coming for everything."

Mathela's journey has not been easy. In 2017, he lost his mother in a tragic accident. His legal guardian immediately stepped in to raise him and partnered with Social Workers to provide the support he needed. Recognising his academic potential, his guardian made a life-changing decision in 2020, enrolling him at Luthando High School after a teacher recommended the school. This move allowed Mathela to refocus on his studies, reclaiming his position among the top achievers.

Despite facing language barriers, having previously studied Setswana before transitioning to IsiZulu, Mathela adapted quickly and excelled. "When I got to KZN, it was not easy because I had to switch from Setswana to IsiZulu. I had to study harder to understand and write in the language," he explained. Initially aspiring to study medicine, Mathela later found inspiration in the work of civil engineers and chose to pursue a degree in Civil Engineering at the University of Cape Town.

He hopes his story will inspire other young people facing adversity.

"Going through difficult situations doesn't have to limit you from being your best self and unlocking your fullest potential. It's not always easy, but life doesn't revolve around one situation. You need to learn to move on, and one day you'll look back and be proud of what you achieved," he said.

"Going through difficult situations doesn't have to limit you from being your best"

He also expressed gratitude to the Department for its support. His foster mother echoed his sentiments, highlighting the impact of the foster care grant. "The grant helped me raise him, and when he was studying in KZN, I used it to pay for his rent and food. I am so proud of him for achieving such great marks against all odds," she said. She also thanked the Department's Social Workers for their ongoing support, describing the collaboration as a "fruitful partnership."

Mathela's story indicates the power of perseverance, the importance of a strong support system, and the role social development programmes play in shaping young futures.

First-Time Runner Embraces the Challenge at Wonderpark Akasia Road Race

By Ntombi Goba

On January 25, 2025, runners gathered at the Wonderpark Shopping Mall in Pretoria for the highly anticipated Wonderpark Akasia Road Race. Among the participants was Mr. Sello Maswanganye, who took on the challenge of his first-ever road race. We caught up with him to hear about his experience, motivations, and future aspirations in running.

Q: Mr. Maswanganye, this was your first time participating in a race. How was the experience?

A: The experience was marvelous! Seeing so many people running alongside me was truly inspiring. It kept me going and gave me the strength to push through. The atmosphere was amazing, and the energy from the other runners was contagious.

Q: What made you decide to join the race?

A: It's all part of my New Year's resolutions to maintain a healthy lifestyle. My daughter, who is here with me today, also encouraged me to take part. She's been very supportive, and I'm glad I took the leap.

Q: How many kilometers did you run?

A: Since this was my first time, I decided to start with 5 kilometers. It was a manageable challenge, and it gave me the confidence to push myself further in future races.

Q: The Department participates in many races throughout the year. Do you plan to join more races?

A: Absolutely! This was just the beginning for me. I am already planning to move up to 10 kilometers in my next race. I'm also considering joining the Department's Athletics Club, as I see it as a great way to stay active, meet like-minded people, and continue improving my fitness.



Picture: Ntombi Goba

Sello Maswanganye from the Northern Corridor who just finished his 5km Akasia Road Race

Mr. Maswanganye's story is a testament to the power of **determination, community support, and setting personal goals**. His enthusiasm for running and commitment to a healthier lifestyle serves as an inspiration to those who may be considering stepping out of their comfort zones.

We look forward to seeing him at future races — perhaps even at the finish line of a **half marathon one day!**

Young recovering substance users encouraged to maintain positive changes

 Pictures: Lawrence Mashabela



DDG Hartmann's farewell in pictures

 Pictures: Chris Masia



Central Corridor Director Mtimkulu's farewell

Pictures: Supplied



GDSD providing homeless and substance abuse services as part of Joburg CBD Campaign

Pictures: Phetoho Maja



GDSD officials participating at the Johnson Crane marathon

 Pictures: Eric Malema



For comments, contributions and suggestions please send an email to:

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