

# MY AFRIKA MAGAZINE

Issue 11 November - 2017



**GANGSTERISM IN SCHOOLS**

## *Take back the Cookie*

**THE POWER OF PLAY**

*Milestones for your 4-year-old*

*Rising writers investigate burning issues*



FUN FOR THE FAMILY



YOUNG URBAN MEN



MEET LILLIAN NKUNA



LEARN TO JOB SEARCH

**NEWS FROM AFRIKA TIKKUN'S FIVE CENTRES**





# Afrika Tikkun

Developing Young People  
from Cradle to Career

We believe that every young person  
deserves the opportunity to be the  
best they can be.

## IN THIS ISSUE:

# FROM CRADLE TO CAREER

## EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

The Power of Play	6
Key Milestones for your 4-year-old	7
Meet the Valentine's Challenge Winners	7
Meet Lillian Nkuna	8
Mobile library thrills Alex kids	8
Fun for Families: Pack a healthy lunch	9

## CHILD AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Real men make peace	10
The creative art room	10
Meet the President of the SRC Mfuleni	11
Small stars shine brighter in the darkness	11
Take the Cookie back	12
Keeping it old school: Abstinence	12
Teen pregnancy poll	13
Support gives power	13
Teen pregnancy is not the end	13
<i>Rising writers from our Centres investigate burning issues in our communities</i>	
Fighting gangsterism in schools	14
Illegal initiation schools	15
Gangsterism in Mfuleni	15

## YOUTH SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND PLACEMENT PROGRAMME

Finding work online: Can it be done	16
Forced to drop out, but the story doesnt end there	16
Jane finds her new beginning	17

## EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME

Persona dolls empower ECD	18
God gave us strength	18
Nothing about us without us	19



## NOTE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

### MANNY MHLANGA, AREKOPANENG CENTRE, ORANGE FARM



It is the honour of Arekopaneng Centre to host 2017's first My Afrika Tikkun magazine! I welcome you all in this New Year once more. 2016 was quite an interesting year for Afrika Tikkun, particularly for Arekopaneng Centre. A lot of lessons were learnt and we experienced quite a lot of exciting events too. I am proud to say we are getting better as individuals and also as a team in what we do.

This 2017's first issue of My Afrika Magazine takes us through the successes of all the programmes within Tikkun's five centres and the social issues faced in our communities. We also introduce to our readers, the ECD Valentines Day Challenge winners across our Centres.

I would like to thank everyone who is part of the Afrika Tikkun team at all levels, including our beneficiaries, their supportive families and our community stakeholders. You have made it possible for these amazing stories to be told. We hope to continue to make a difference in the lives of our beneficiaries so that we can live to see our vision of having "A Future Where Today's Young People are Tomorrow's Productive Citizens".

I wish you all the best for 2017. Happy read!

## NEWS FROM THE 5 AFRIKA TIKKUN CENTRES



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# THE POWER OF PLAY



## ABOUT EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Afrika Tikkun centres' have Early Childhood Development (ECD) programmes that provide safe facilities for children to learn and play during their early years and give children the opportunity to develop numeracy and literacy. The health and well-being of children is also improved through social, nutrition and health support services. To find out more about ECD, **contact Vanessa Mentor 072 921 9481 or [vanessa@afrikatikkun.org](mailto:vanessa@afrikatikkun.org)**

## REMEMBER WHAT IT WAS LIKE TO PLAY WITH YOUR PARENT?

BY VANESSA MENTOR

At some stage of our life we have all heard someone say "stop playing and get to work!" Play is often seen as the opposite of work – being lazy or not serious. But for a child, play is the most important way to learn.

From the time a baby arrives in this world, he or she is already beginning to learn. 80% of a young child's brain development takes place before the age of 5 years. It is a time when they gain skills they will need for the rest of their lives, including learning to communicate, read, count and have healthy relationships. All these skills are best developed through play.

Skills such as crawling, walking,

hopping, skipping and running are strengthened when a child pushes a car or toy trolley and jumps with a rope. When they kick a ball they are practicing coordination by balancing on one foot while kicking with the other. Through play a child learns to communicate and cooperate with others.

However not all parents do this – remember, play doesn't need to take too much time and can be incorporated into everyday activities. You don't have to buy toys but should use whatever you have around you. It shouldn't also be seen as women's work.

As you engage with your children, you will start to see their level of

understanding, confidence and learning increase. The advice I would give to parents is just be silly, become a child. Think of a memory you have of playing with your caregiver. Remember the impact that small activity had on you? Children long for their parents to play with them. They feel important, and they understand what love means from that experience. When a parent shows them it's important, the impact is so much greater. It makes an indelible mark on a child for the rest of their life.

## KEY MILESTONES FOR YOUR 4-YEAR-OLD

Hops and stands on one foot for almost 2 seconds



Would rather play with other children than alone, and plays cooperatively.



Draws a person with 2 to 4 body parts



Tells stories

## Meet the Valentine's Challenge Winners



The Mashishi family, Alex



The Ntando family, Orange Farm



The Ndlovu family, inner-city Joburg

IN FEBRUARY, WE CHALLENGED PARENTS TO CREATE PRECIOUS MEMORIES WITH THEIR CHILDREN.

Love makes children grow and flourish. In February, we encouraged parents and caregivers to spend time with their children completing different tasks each day and send us photographs as part of a competition. It is part of what child development expert, Vanessa Mentor is doing at Afrika Tikun to promote the importance of parental involvement with their children. Parents across all our centres took part in the competition. The winners are Ephraim Mashishi from Alex, Samantha Ndlovu from Hillbrow, Sindiswa Ntando from Orange Farm, Thuto Nkopane from Mfuleni and

Natalie Vergie from Johannesburg. They each received a R1000 voucher from Pick 'n Pay and a Sorbet gift bag. Ephraim and Nandi, parents of Kgotso Mashishi) expressed their gratitude in a statement, "It was a great initiative that encourages parents to spend time with their children, it made us understand our child better. Besides getting a voucher, the joy on our son's face when participating in the activities was wonderful to see. He enjoyed the challenge, and it also made us proud to be parents". Keep up the good work parents!

## MEET LILLIAN NKUNA

Afrika Tikkun is proud of its staff, especially people like Lillian Nkuna who had a difficult start in life but is now doing great things at Orange Farm's ECD Centre.



Lillian Nkuna started working for Arekopaneng in 1997 as a brickmaker. She was the youngest worker amongst the team at the time. It was not choice but circumstances that forced her to stop schooling and find work as a brickmaker. It was a hard job for a young girl but she had no choice because she and her family had no income.

She was raised by a single parent, who just disappeared one day, leaving Lillian all alone with no one to take care of her. Things got very bad for Lillian, she had to stop school. She had nothing, no family and no food.

In 1997 an opportunity to work as a brick maker at Arekopaneng came, which she took. The money was little but it made a huge difference. Her boss saw potential in

her, so the following year, Lillian was moved to work with the 3 month – 2 years old children in the crèche.

She was put through training for an ECD qualification, and worked as an all-rounder with all ages. Now she works with the 4-5 year olds. She is one of the best teachers at the ECD Centre. She is a dedicated teacher who is keen to learn and loves her job.

"I am proud to be associated with the name Afrika Tikkun because it has done wonders for my life, my kids have a warm home, food, clothes and access to the best education because of the opportunity it gave me. Thank you Afrika Tikkun" said Lillian Nkuna.



# PACK A HEALTHY LUNCH

A FUN ACTIVITY FOR PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN



Try this delicious and easy recipe with your child.



## INGREDIENTS:

2 slices brown bread or a wholewheat roll  
Low fat margarine high in Omega 3 (e.g. Flora)  
2 hard-boiled eggs, sliced  
1 portion cooked chicken livers or grated polony  
Grated cheese  
Grated carrot  
Fresh lettuce

## PREPARATION METHOD:

Boil eggs for 6-8 minutes.  
Grate and mix the polony, cheese and carrot (the grating helps to save/use less quantity).  
Spread the margarine on the bread. Place all the ingredients on the roll. Place in a lunchbox.  
**TIP:** Boil and mash a potato and a carrot. Add to the finely chopped chicken liver to make nutritious baby food for babies on solids.

Grate carrot.

Grate cheese.



Spread marg on one side of a wholewheat roll.

Add lettuce, slices of boiled egg, and chicken liver for protein.



Layer it on the roll for a yummy nutritious sandwich.



This lunch gives high fibre, protein and energy, and the veggies help with important vitamins.



Don't forget to clean up afterwards!

## MOBILE LIBRARY THRILLS ALEX KIDS

ON THURSDAY, 26 JANUARY, VARSITY COLLEGE DONATED A MOBILE LIBRARY WITH MORE THAN 200 BOOKS TO OUR ECD PROGRAMME.

The handover event was held at the Phuthaditjaba Centre. In her address to the guests, Anne (ECD Principal), expressed gratitude saying, "This is a wonderful library, it can move from class to class. It is beautiful with nice books and the children are so excited to read them. And the books are also age appropriate. We thank you so much for your continuous support, this makes our work easier and exciting".

The learners are so excited and love the books so much that it has become part of our motivational item, "If you come to school every day you will read a book from the mobile library". The mobile library is convenient and is within their reach and easy to get books they want to read.

Picture 1: Patricia Ledwaba, General Manager and Anne Kiriuki, ECD Principal pose with the mobile library.  
Picture 2: Children from our Alex Centre are very happy about the new donation!

## CHILD AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

**PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL CHILDREN ENGAGE IN AFTER-SCHOOL LEARNING SUPPORT AND HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING:**

- Computer skills, library and career guidance.
- Specific subject support and learning support for learners with learning difficulties.
- Sports, arts and culture.

Beneficiaries receive nutritional, social and health support. To join this programme contact David Silva on 081 537 9769 or [davids@afrikatikkun.org](mailto:davids@afrikatikkun.org).



## REAL MEN MAKE PEACE MEET THE YOUNG URBAN MEN

The Young Urban Men (YUM) in Uthando is a forum for men to grow together to become active citizens and address issues together that affect young men. YUM's vision is to transform young men to be peace makers within their communities. The lead facilitator is Dominic Moitsi. During their sessions he explains, they discuss sexuality, substance abuse, emotional control, violence, goal setting, violent areas around their communities, relationships, gender based violence and other important social topics.



Currently, 59 young men between the ages of 13 and 19 years are involved in the programme, which takes place every Wednesday under the Empowerment Pillar of the Child and Youth Development Programme. Dominic added that the group is embarking on organizing a social awareness event to raise awareness to prevent substance abuse, called the Anti-Drug Campaign. The week long event will involve panel discussions and workshops on homelessness and drug abuse, peer pressure and issues

for families of drug addicts. The group hopes to achieve greater influence amongst peers and friends who use drugs in schools. Gender-based violence is of particular concern for these young men. "Real men make peace. They are fathers, brothers and faithful partners" explains Dominic. Afrika Tikkun is starting YUM groups at all the Centres. There are also Young Urban Women, and Young Urban Citizens for out of school youth.

## THE CREATIVE ART ROOM

Art is used as an expression of human creativity and imagination. It is a crucial learning tool for children to explore their world, express their authenticity and at the same time develop their minds.

On the 7th February 2017, one of our valued sponsors, the Spark ATM company officially revealed a beautiful art room for our children at the Mfuleni Centre in Cape Town.

This room is nicely fitted with murals, pictures, stationery, powder paint, and tables and chairs for our CYD children to use when drawing and painting. Afrika Tikkun is truly grateful to the Spark ATM.



## MEET THE PRESIDENT OF THE SRC MFULENI MATTHEW WILLIAMS

LIKE MANY YOUNG PEOPLE IN HIS COMMUNITY, MATTHEW HAS FACED MANY CHALLENGES AND OBSTACLES IN LIFE. BUT THROUGH EFFORT AND COMMITMENT, HIS TALENT AND POTENTIAL HAVE SHONE THROUGH.



Without the support needed in life, a young person's perception of life and of himself can be hopeless and overwhelming. For Matthew, help came in time from Afrika Tikkun and he has turned his life around.

Matthew Williams is a 16 year old boy from Mfuleni in Cape Town. Growing up in Mfuleni exposed him to threatening circumstances such as gangs, violence and alcohol. They could have robbed him of realising his full potential and becoming successful in life. The life skills programme and child and youth development programmes, as well as the belief of the facilitators and staff at Mfuleni in

him has nurtured inner greatness.

Matthew is a well-rounded young man. His natural leadership skills are being used to influence other young people for the good, and most recently, his peers from the CYD programme elected him to be President of the Students Representative Council (SRC). The SRC represents the voice of young people to the Centre, and the voice of the Centre to young people in the community. Well done Matthew!



## *small stars shine brighter in the darkness*



Alice Maimela was born in Limpopo and moved to Diepsloot to live with her mother and two siblings. Alice heard about Afrika Tikkun from a friend and visited the Afrika Tikkun centre in Diepsloot to use the library, her use of the Centre intensified in 2016 when she was in Grade 12. In September 2016, while writing her Grade 12 prelims, Alice lost her mother to a fight against an illness. While a heartbroken Alice could not face continuing with her exams after losing her only parent, she found comfort in her friends and Afrika Tikkun's library facilitator Cate Masetla and continued to pass her matric with four distinctions. "Afrika Tikkun helped me cope with

losing my mother, I could not study at home because everything reminded me of my mother. She used to be very loud so studying in a quiet house reminded me of the gap she left," said Alice.

As a beneficiary of Afrika Tikkun Alice was able to attend Saturday classes at the centre as well as gain access to the library and study groups. With her great matric results, Alice wishes to study law in 2018. She is currently giving back to her school Leap Maths and Science School as a student teacher and she has also used this opportunity to encourage learners at the school to utilise the services Afrika Tikkun offers.

# TAKE THE COOKIE BACK

TEENAGE PREGNANCY IS A CHALLENGE IN OUR COMMUNITIES. YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN AT THE CENTRES ARE SAYING THE BEST SOLUTION IS ABSTINENCE. MY AFRIKA MAGAZINE DECIDED TO INVESTIGATE.



In Alexandra every year, in every school, there are teen pregnancies. In many incidents it is recorded that alcohol, drug use and peer pressure played a major contributing factor. To move successfully from cradle to career is not easy, there are many stumbling blocks that can interfere with reaching and discovering your future path. As part of celebrating National Teenage Pregnancy Week, and in trying to make sure that our learners avoid pregnancy, Afrika Tikkun invited the health promoters from a local clinic to give a talk to both girls and boys at the Centre.

During the discussion the two genders separated and guys came up with suggestions on how to help girls not be victims of teenage pregnancy, one of which was to abstain. They adopted the motto, "Take the Cookie back" for their campaign to abstain. "The only way to prevent teenage pregnancy is to always use the ABC method. A is for Abstinence, B is for Be faithful and C is for Condomise", says Jessica Manamela. "To prevent pregnancy either abstain or use contraceptives. You should also condomise to prevent diseases", concludes Nthabiseng Mabe.



WHETHER YOU CHOOSE TO ABSTAIN FROM SEX FOR RELIGIOUS REASONS, TO AVOID UNPLANNED PREGNANCY, HIV AND OTHER STIS, OR JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE WAITING FOR THE RIGHT PERSON, HERE'S ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ABSTINENCE.

Abstinence is when someone is not having sex. A person can be a virgin (someone who has never had sex before) and be abstinent, or can choose to become abstinent even if they have already had sex.

People choose to abstain from sex for different reasons. For some people, the reason might be to do with their religious beliefs or their spirituality, which requires them to wait until they are married to have sex with their husband or wife. Others might just be waiting to be in a stable and committed relationship with the right person. Some people choose to abstain because it is a sure fire way of preventing unplanned pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV. Abstaining from sex might also be the right choice if you want to focus on a specific goal, such as studying, or

furthering your career. Some young people also abstain because they don't quite feel that they are ready for sex.

If you are in a relationship with someone and are planning on abstaining from sex, let them know you want to abstain and why it is important to you. If a partner pressurises you to have sex with them by, for example, threatening to leave, they are not respecting you or the relationship. The bottom line is that it is your body, so you make the rules if you don't want to have sex, say no.

\*\*\* If you do not choose to abstain remember to always use a condom and stick to one sexual partner.\*\*\*  
SPEAK TO: The social worker at your centre if you need any advice or counselling.

# WHAT SHOULD WE DO TO REDUCE TEEN PREGNANCY?

My Afrika Tikkun Magazine took a poll across the centres. We asked "What should we do to reduce teen pregnancy?"

- Abstinence is the best way
- Abstinence is not realistic, condoms are the best way
- Casual sex is the problem, young people need to be faithful in relationships

The results show "abstinence is the best way" as taking the lead, and "casual sex is the problem, young people need to be faithful in relationships" coming in with a strong second. **What do you think?**



Andile

"Teenagers should learn more about teen pregnancy and they should use condoms when they want to have sex. They should learn that being pregnant at an early age affects the girl's future at school and increases unemployment."



Siphesile

"Binge drinking and partying plays a big role because teenagers need money to drink and party. That is when they seek relationships."



Sizwe

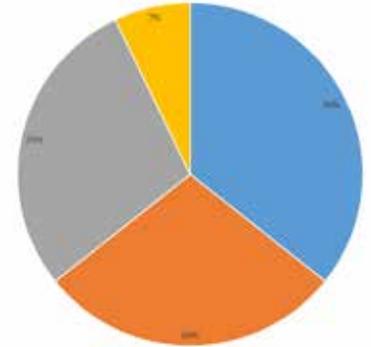
"Don't allow teens to buy alcohol or enter the taverns."



Noluvuyo

"Build youth clinics for youth only."

WHAT SHOULD WE DO TO REDUCE PREGNANCY?



Abstinence is the best way ■ Condoms are the best way ■  
We need to be faithful ■ Disagree ■

## SUPPORT GIVES POWER



Family Support Services in Alex recently started a girls group aimed at educating young girls on different issues and being a support system for girls. The group started off with fifteen girls and has grown since then. Different topics are covered in these sessions such as hygiene, dating, diet, career, self-esteem and self-image. These sessions have benefited many girls because they have a platform to discuss and share their opinions and also ask any question they have. They come out of the session feeling motivated and inspired. All the girls who attended in 2016 passed their grades. The sessions take place every Wednesday from 3.30-4.30 pm.

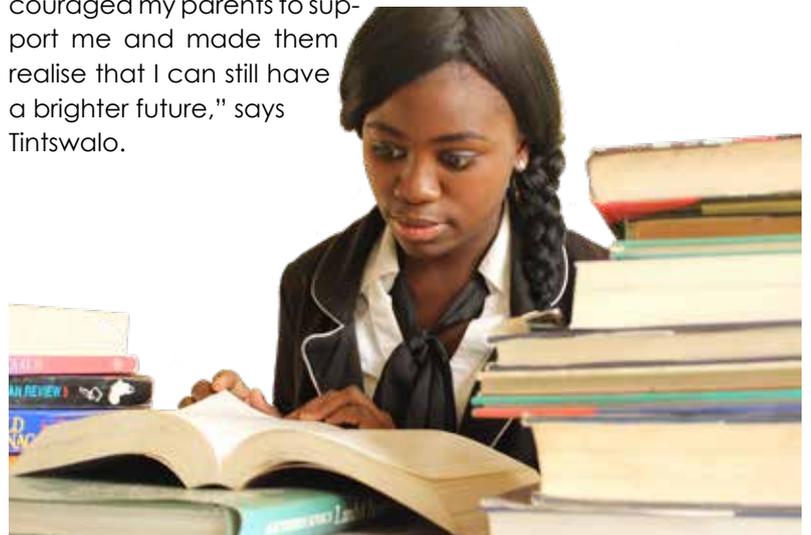
## TEEN PREGNANCY IS NOT THE END

When Tintswalo was in Grade 11 she fell pregnant. When her father found out, he kicked her out of the house and she was left homeless. Tintswalo had no choice but to go and stay with her boyfriend who was renting a one room shack at that time. She was brave enough to continue going to school. She started visiting Afrika Tikkun daily to study after school before going back home to her baby. She passed Grade 11 and the following year she came back to Afrika Tikkun.

It was not easy because some days she did not have anyone to look after her baby. She would come in the afternoon to do her research, and borrow books from the library to read when the baby slept at night.

In 2015, she passed her matric but was not sure of what to do next. Afrika Tikkun advised her to apply to the Maharishi University. She immediately

jumped at the opportunity and was admitted into their degree programme. "The support I am getting at Afrika Tikkun has encouraged my parents to support me and made them realise that I can still have a brighter future," says Tintswalo.



Burning issues is the section where we hear from our beneficiaries about the issues in their community affecting them the most at the moment.

## FIGHTING GANGSTERISM IN SCHOOLS

Kelly Sosibo and Student Representative Council Members at Uthando Centre



Almost four in ten learners in South African schools have identified gangsterism as the leading cause of violence in their schools. Gangsterism is associated with bullying and is the most common form of violence, followed by corporal punishment, vandalism and sexual violence. Gang violence in South African schools is not a new phenomenon.

The study of school violence in South Africa indicated that gang violence in schools is alarmingly at 22%. One in five learners have experienced some form of cyber and physical bullying. Furthermore, 24% of the learners aged 7 to 18 had endured violence, verbal abuse and corporal punishment at school. Learners were perpetrators of 90% of the violence that happens in schools, whether against other learners or teachers.

This has a negative impact on the learners' learning ability and school attendance. Learners feel threatened by gang members and therefore are hesitant to attend class. Gang members have been known to steal other learners' supplies, lunch boxes and books.

Dealing with gangsterism takes away from the time teachers need to instruct their students, thus creating an ineffective

teaching and learning environment. Gangs disrupt classes and undermine the educational goals the teachers are striving for. Schools have a variety of options when it comes to combating gangsterism. These options include restructuring policies and bullying, a significant presence from local law enforcement and anti-bullying education for students and staff.

The SRC at Uthando Centre conducted confidential interviews with their school mates to find out what compels learners to join gangs in schools. The findings showed that many learners gained confidence and status amongst their peers from gangsterism. Ten learners admitted to drug abuse due to gang related influences and pressures.

Learners at Uthando Centre strongly believe that gangsterism should not be tolerated in schools. They recommend that teachers, parents and learners should report gang violence whenever it happens in schools and in the community. These learners have pledged to organize the 'Stand Against Gangsterism in Schools' campaign in the third term to promote gangsterism awareness in schools.

## ILLEGAL INITIATION SCHOOLS

In Orange Farm, young boys go up to the mountain for a month or more to get "initiated" and circumcised. The community of Orange Farm has experienced the traumatic and heart-breaking situation of having their children forced to attend illegal initiation schools. Young boys are kidnapped and taken away from their families for months.

The people responsible are not trained to perform any medical procedures. In one of the parent skills workshops hosted by the Arekopaneng Family Support Services team, one parent spoke about how her son was a victim of an illegal initiation school and the problems it has caused in the family. Her son is more violent, and does not want to listen to anybody because he now thinks that he is a man.

Residents of Orange Farm blame these illegal schools for the formation of gangs in the community. The police have worked hard to put a stop to this and make people aware of the kidnapping, but there are still people performing these rituals.



Arekopaneng's social worker (left), Lulu Modiakgitla talking to the parent of a young man who was kidnapped into illegal initiation.

## GANGSTERISM IN MFULENI



Gangsterism and violence is also serious concern for the police and residents in Mfuleni Township. Gang activity increases between September to December. It is a big concern for the parents of this community. Young lives have been lost due to fights or disputes that ended terribly. To remedy this issue, the community has come together with the Mfuleni police, local churches and taxi drivers and started a Community Watch Forum that patrols mostly at night and during the day, with special attention during weekends. They also have started community sports teams and other extra mural activities such as dance, drama and pageants in the hopes that the youth will divert their attention to development and do away with violence. The Zolile Malindi Community Centre in Mfuleni plays an important role in eradicating violence and gansterism by providing a safe environment for the youth of Mfuleni to develop into productive citizens.



## YOUTH SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND PLACEMENT

Skills training is offered to matriculated youth, age 19-35. It is geared for maximising effectiveness in the world of work. Graduates of the programme are loaded onto an ABSA database and Afrika Tikkun's database. Tikkun then facilitates the placement of graduates into entry level jobs and learnerships. To enroll on this programme **contact Talib Salim 083 953 6334 or talibs@afrikatikkun.org**

## FINDING WORK ONLINE... CAN IT BE DONE?

Job search can be very frustrating and stressful. This is especially true for South African youth as the country is sitting at an unemployment rate of over 25%, with thousands of retrenchments each year. This makes job searching even more daunting and discouraging for them.

When looking for a job, it's important to have an online presence where you can showcase your skills and experience using online profiles. It is important to actively manage your profiles and keep them up-to-date so potential employers and contacts have access to your current information.

Job seekers should never pay money to a prospective employer or recruitment agent as online scammers may be exploiting their desperation through fake job ads. Make sure to do research on the company advertising a job post online to verify if it exists and if it actually advertised that position.

Happy Job searching, and Good Luck!

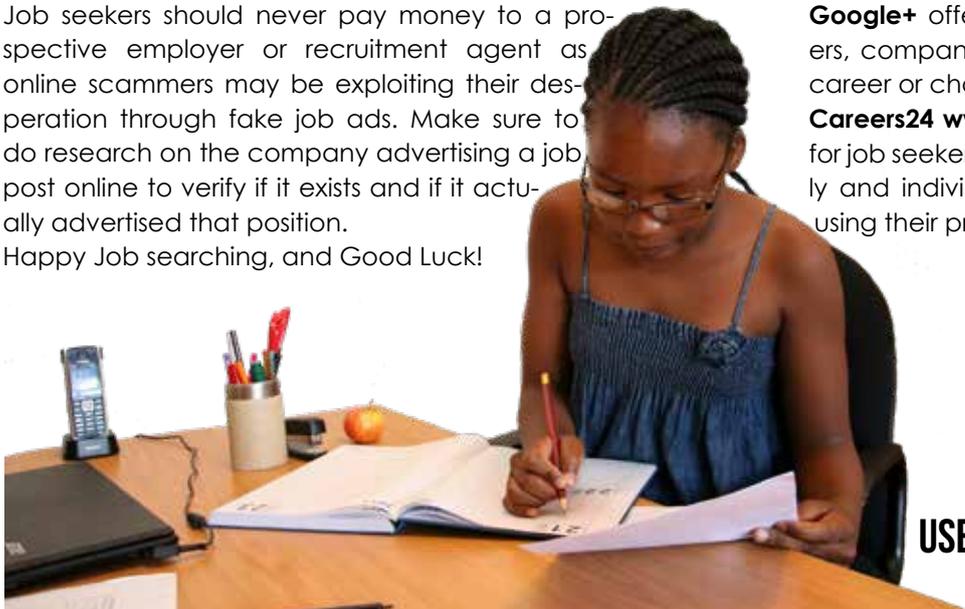
### SITES FOR ONLINE PROFILES:

**LinkedIn. [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)** is a professional networking site that connects you to potential employers and various job fields to choose from.

**Facebook [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)** Fill your profile with your professional history. Keep your profile clean and appropriate for the public platform that it is. Join networking groups or pages within your career field where adverts of vacancies are posted daily.

**Google+** offers a networking platform for recruiters, companies and individuals looking to start a career or change jobs.

**Careers24 [www.careers24.com](http://www.careers24.com)** is a great website for job seekers as thousands of jobs are posted daily and individuals can also advertise themselves using their profile and listed skills.



## USEFUL TIPS FOR YOUR JOB SEARCH

Job search can be very frustrating and stressful. This is especially real for South African youth as the country is sitting at an unemployment rate of over 25%, with thousands of retrenchments each year. This makes job searching even more daunting and discouraging for the youth. It is therefore crucial for anyone looking for a job to be prepared for one of the most important tasks of their lives. Here are a few tips:

### 1. An outstanding CV in hardcopy

A CV is the most important tool for job hunting. It has to be short, preferably 2 pages long, detailing personal information, work experience, contactable references and most importantly, skills and qualifications.

### 2. Digital CV

This is a resume that is filled out on job websites such as LinkedIn, Careers 24, government websites, etc. Try these sites for a start..

<https://www.governmentjobs.com/>

<https://www.linkedin.com/jobs/>

<https://www.careers24/vacancies>

### 3. Door-to-door job search

Though seen as an outdated method, it is still very effective, especially for entry-level jobs. This means walking into a

company or store with your CV in hand and asking for any open vacancies.

### 4. Internet search

Plenty of jobs are being posted on websites daily, so it is imperative to apply for as many jobs as possible everyday using the digital CV or uploading hardcopies.

### 5. Confidence

This is a crucial personal attribute that sets candidates apart. Confidence is how you present yourself to the world, in this case, potential employers. It is in the way you communicate, dress for interviews and how you perceive yourself.

# FORCED TO DROP OUT ... BUT THE STORY DOESN'T END THERE

DUDUZILE WAS STUDYING FOR A BACHELOR OF SCIENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WITSWATERSRAND, WHEN DUE TO FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES SHE HAD TO DROP OUT IN HER SECOND YEAR

"I heard about Afrika Tikkun from my little brother who attends the afternoon programme and I went to enquire about their services," said Duduzile. Attending the Ready to Work (YSDP) programme has helped her to upskill herself since some of the topics which were covered were new to her.

She learnt how to prepare for an interview and write a winning CV. She also learnt about Emotional Intelligence and how to control one's emotions in the workplace.

The programme has made a huge difference in all aspects of her life. "I have gained more confidence in how I present myself to people," said Duduzile.

Her computer skills have also improved drastically which she believes has made her academic performance improve as well.

All this has led to Duduzile finding work. She is now the Skills Development Administrator in Arekapaneng Centre. "YSDP has given me one of the most important lessons, which was using the education that I got from the programme and applying it practically at my current workplace," she added.

"I am planning on finishing my degree. I see myself starting a science mentorship programme which will expose children to the world of science and technology, and inspire them to start their own businesses within the science and technology field," she concluded.



## JANE FINDS HER NEW BEGINNING

Jane Seloana, completed her matric in 2015 but due to financial constraints, was unable to further her studies. Jane spent months looking for a job but all her efforts were unsuccessful. One day Jane heard about Afrika Tikkun and she submitted her CV. "I was then called to come and write an assessment for skills development, which I passed. I was told I can come and attend the YSD Programme," said Jane.

At first, Jane thought the programme was just for fun and did not take it seriously, but as time went by she realised the seriousness and the importance of the skills she was gaining and gave her all to the course. Through the course, Jane learnt how to conduct herself in an interview, how to communicate effectively with other people, how to start a business, how to spend money wisely and how to use a computer, "which are all the

skills that contributed to me being employable" she explains.

After the course, Jane volunteered at Afrika Tikkun and was later employed as a computer facilitator. Jane believes, "if you want something you must not sit back and relax but you must go after what you want and do the best to achieve the best that you possibly can even if you fail, you will know that you did the best that you could".

"Being at Afrika Tikkun taught me to work hard in everything I do in order for me to be successful. My success is peace of mind which is a direct result of knowing I did my best to become the best that I am capable of being. My wish for my peers is that they get access to the same opportunity I had and utilise it to their benefit," said Jane.

## PERSONA DOLLS EMPOWERS ECD

We are expecting an important positive visitor who will be coming to join the ECD at Afrika Tikkun, more specifically, the 4-5 year and Grade R classes in ECD. His name is Leslie Ndlovu and he is moving with his family to Johannesburg from Cape Town.

A part of our strategy is to promote inclusion of children with disabilities into all Afrika Tikkun programmes. For early childhood development, we came up with the idea of Positive Visitors. The aim of Positive Visitors is to get children under the age of 6 to think around issues of diversity and help them deal with people who might be different from themselves. It could be issues around disability, HIV or the way they look.

Persona Dolls are developed as a training tool for children in the ECD, and are being used around South Africa for dealing with particular issues like disability, mixed races, and issues around learning. Persona dolls can help children who are struggling to learn. They can be used to encourage children to learn around issues of acceptance, respect and equality.

Our first persona doll is a young boy called Leslie Ndlovu. Leslie is in a wheelchair and is based on one of our AT clients (a child with disability). We developed Leslie's story from interviews that we had with our clients.

Leslie has been in our two centres at Uthando and Mfuleni. "The children were excited to see the doll that looks exactly like a human being. They enjoyed the activities and playing with the doll", says Thuli (ECD Principal).

These persona dolls are used to encourage the children to look at diversity and to be more accepting of others that may be different from them.



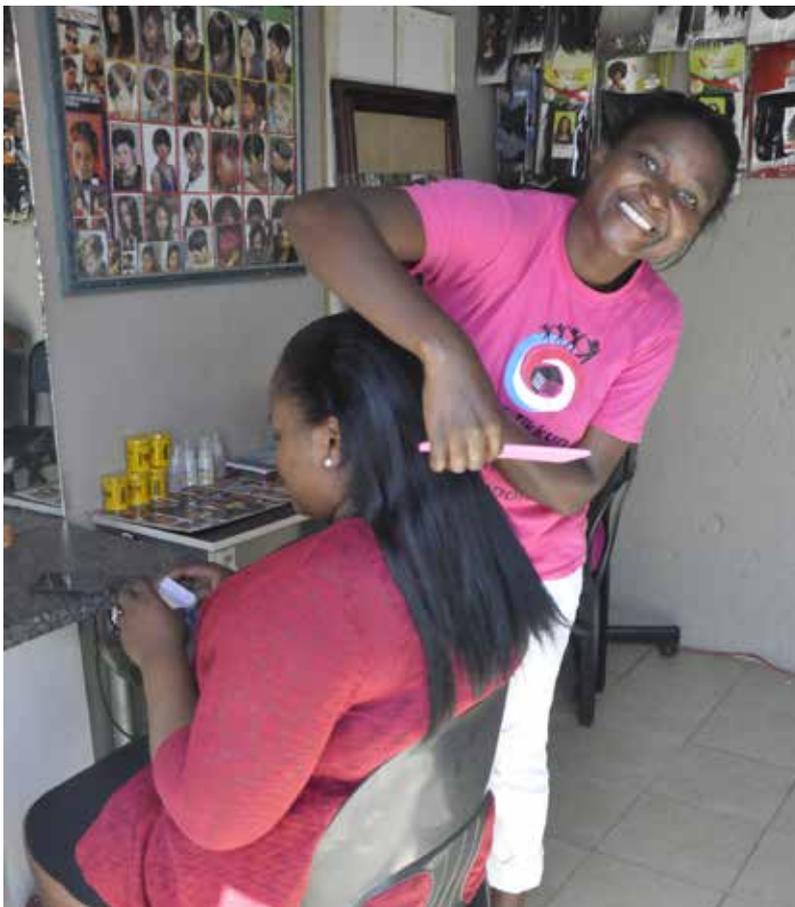
## GOD GAVE US STRENGTH

Six years ago Thandiwe Sibanda was blessed with a son Sphamandla which means "God give us strength". Sphamandla has a disability. At first, Thandiwe struggled because she knew very little about his disability and often blamed herself.

In 2015, Thandiwe learnt about the Dishumeleni Self-Support Group for parents of children with disability in Diepsloot. The group meets weekly and parents share stories about raising and caring for disabled children. They exchange ideas and thoughts on how to improve the quality of life for their children.

"Because of the group, I am now proud of my son because I understand his disability and I am able to share information with the community around us so that they do not treat him differently. Our quality of life has changed, because of the knowledge I was able to share, my son and I do not get stares anymore and we are both stronger knowing we are not alone" said Thandiwe

Thandiwe is the chairperson and spokesperson of Dishumeleni Self-Support Group and she attends the meeting every Tuesday without fail, even if it means closing her salon for 2 hours because she appreciates the value she gets from the meetings.



# NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US

## UBUNTU IS THE WAY FORWARD FOR THE DISABILITY SECTOR



The researchers: Elizabeth Ramakatsa, Maria Mashimbye, Dr Jean Elphick, Phumzile Vilakhazi, Mpotse Mofokeng, and Rachel Maisha

15% of the world's population has a disability it is estimated. In numbers, that is about 1 billion people with disabilities in the world. South Africa, which has good legislation is behind in implementation to ensure the rights of the thousands of differently abled children in our country. Yet persons with disability are very vulnerable to violation of their human rights to safety, protection, equality, justice, education and health. One of the most sustainable ways to ensure access to those rights is through empowering the most passionate advocates of the rights of persons with disability – the parent or caregiver. Harvard Professor Michael Stein, who has worked in 42 countries emphasises the importance played by the caregivers of persons with disability. "Overwhelmingly, the mothers, sisters and women are doing the work of advocacy" he explains.

During Apartheid, the South African disability sector, mobilised effectively, participated politically and had a powerful voice. Over the past two decades however, much of that has been lost, and people don't work together as much as they could. As a result, the disability sector is not empowered politically to champion their rights.

But a new generation of change agents are emerging; powerful community-based self-help groups made up of mothers, fathers, gogos, sisters ... mainly women. With the support structure of Afrika Tikkun, these community-based rehabilitation self-help groups based in township or inner city communities have shown that coming together, partnering with State and non-State actors and persistently motivating for change is an effective strategy in the pursuit of human rights for all.

They have transformed from disenfranchised, unemployed, unskilled parents on the edge of despair to formidable

individuals, who have earned the respect and the ear of South Africa's duty bearers.

In 2013, Dr Jean Elphick (General Manager of the Empowerment Programme) joined forces with seven co-researchers (all mothers and members of Sidinga Uthando Self-help Group) to conduct a doctoral study entitled 'Empowerment Outcomes: Evaluation

of a Community-based Rehabilitation Programme for Caregivers of Children with Disabilities in a South African Township'. The co-researchers were Rachel Maisha, Maria Mashimbye, Mpotse Mofokeng, Elizabeth Ramakatsa, Grace Tente, Phumzile Vilakhazi and Phindile Xaba. The study findings were launched at the Disability Rights Symposium in March, and an easy-to-read version of the findings was shared. They have proved what Prof. Stein believes, that "there is no power greater than love, and no ally better than an angry mother".



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Tolerance



**KEY OUTCOME**

To get children ready for school.



**Early Childhood Development**  
(0 – 6 years)

**KEY OUTCOME**

A higher matric pass rate, knowledge and information on career and further learning opportunities.



**Child and Youth Development**  
(7 – 18 years)

**KEY OUTCOME**

Young people being able to navigate the labour market, accessing sustainable employment or self-employment.



**Youth Skills Development**  
(19 – 35 years)

**KEY OUTCOME**

Directing first time job seekers into appropriate jobs.



**Support Services**

# Afrika Tikkun

Developing Young People from Cradle to Career