

# Hermanus Child & Family Services



Promoting the safety and well-being of Hermanus' children within families and the broader community.



Hermanus Child and Family Services is a designated child protection organisation.

This means that the Department of Social Development has invested the organisation with the authority to act on behalf of children as described by the Children's Act 38/2005.

## CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

### Child abuse education programmes

In these programmes for children, physical and emotional abuse are sensitively discussed and the children educated on how to identify and report abuse. The consequences of physical abuse are also highlighted.

### Community based information sessions

In these community based information sessions, the Children's Act 38/2005 is expounded and made understandable for community members, families and children.

### Holiday programmes

Through these programmes we try provide opportunities for children to develop a variety of life skills. These programmes have the added bonus of keeping the children off the

streets and in a safe and protective environment and providing them with at least one good meal during the day.



## CHILD PROTECTION INTERVENTION

### Investigations

These investigations can be pursuant to a report or referral to the social worker by any person who on reasonable grounds believes a child may be in need of care and protection as set out in the Children's Act.

This includes cases involving unaccompanied foreign minors, child labour and exploitation, child abuse, child neglect, orphans, vulnerable children and street children.

### Risk assessment of children

A risk assessment tool is used to assess and deal with issues of abuse.

Our social workers respond to referrals from the public and private health sector, the community and other relevant stakeholders.

Should it be necessary, our social workers follow through with processes in the children's court to protect children who are at risk.

### Safe houses and foster care

HCFS's first response is to try and find solutions to the problems in the child's circumstances. However, in cases of severe neglect or abuse, we cannot avoid removing a child from their home environment. We often place such children with

foster parents; we currently have about 250 children in such care.

In cases where this is not possible, group care is the next best solution. A cluster foster care scheme allows children to be taken into foster care in a group setting that avoids the feeling of an impersonal institution.

In each house cluster, a house-mother sees to the needs of six children. The goals of such a scheme are to protect and nurture children by providing a safe, healthy environment with positive support.

We work hard to give each child a sense of stability and permanence by trying to reunite the family, or by enabling the child to enjoy a lifelong, nurturing relationship as part of another family.

So far, HCFS has three such cluster foster homes in our scheme, caring for a total of 18 children ranging in ages from birth to 18.

A management team made up of representatives from HCFS and our caring partners oversees the financial and administrative responsibilities.

Our homes are called Izibusiso, Jubilee Haven and Lighthouse.

### **Therapeutic or developmental services**

We come alongside children and families through group sessions as well as individual sessions. We provided assistance in a variety of circumstances and to a variety of people, including but not limited to:

- Children who have experienced trauma in the form of physical, emotional or sexual abuse;
- The children in foster care to work through their trauma of being removed and why they were removed;
- Foster mothers and families on how to deal with every situation that is uncertain to them; and
- Parents whose child/ren have been removed to be able to be in a better

position to take care of their child again.

### **Supervision of alternative care placements**

The circumstances and well-being of children in alternative care need constant monitoring and assessment.

### **Parenting skills development**

This programme involves parents within our active case-load (where we have had to intervene) with the aim of promoting reunification of the family.

### **Children and families counselling and therapy**

Children and their families receive counselling, therapy and family conferences in line with the development and care plans of individual children in order to re-unify children to a long term family unit.

### **Reunification processes**

After much work with all involved, the culmination of development programme is when children are reunified with their biological parents or communities of origin.

### **Transitional programmes for children leaving alternative care**

For children exiting alternative care, the changes are dramatic and can be terrifying.

In these programmes, our social workers equip these children with life skills and give them the support needed to make adjustments necessary for a successful transition.



## EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Early Childhood Development is the process by which children in the early years grow and thrive physically, mentally, emotionally, morally and socially.

Early Childhood Development therefore does not simply refer to a facility, site or crèche. It is a range of services provided to young children to enhance their holistic development, to ensure they are cared for and protected.

We have 3 ECD centres that are registered and provide quality programs on early childhood development for roughly 150 children. These children range in age from 18 months to 6 years.

We aim at providing safe and quality programs in early childhood development as well as nutritious meals and a nurturing environment.

## MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

### Management committee

The organisation falls under the oversight of 8 elected volunteer members who bear the fiduciary responsibility for the organisation.

This committee also sees to the appointment of key staff members who will manage the various functions and day-to-day operations of the organisation.

### Our staff team

Our multi-disciplinary team includes the following:

- 1 General manager
- 1 Social worker supervisor
- 5 Social workers
- 1 Social auxiliary worker
- 1 Administrator
- 2 maintenance and cleaning personnel
- 3 Crèche principals
- 7 Crèche educators
- 3 Cooks
- 4 House mothers

### Financial management

The management and administrative staff members see to the financial operations of the organisation under the watchful eye of the management committee.

Hermanus Accounting have been appointed to compile monthly management reports and then to audit the organisation's finances on an annual basis. The latest annual financial statements are available on request.