

**LEARN-TO-LIVE**  
**EDUCATION AND TECHNICAL SKILLS TRAINING**  
**FOR STREET YOUTH**  
**1<sup>st</sup> APRIL 2008 TO 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2009**

Highlights for the year were the ever increasing number of learners in the Educational programme and that for most of the time we had to operate a waiting list for the Skills Workshop. Although the abuse of drugs continues to be a major crisis in the Western Cape, fewer learners we caught using it or were under the influence of any substance.

The appointment of the new coordinator went without a hitch and the new appointed social worker has created a more stable environment. The learners are enjoying fuller life skills, sports and Educational Enrichment Programme. The yearly Nativity Play in November was a huge success.

Strategic Planning was done throughout the year, which included planning and updating the Skills Workshops curriculum and working files for all staff members.

One of our learners, Francois Oliphant, was involved in a bus accident. He was very seriously hurt and spent some time in the Red Cross Hospital. He is back at Learn to Live and well on his way to recovery.

**Bereavements**

Mss. Alma Goodman and Elaine Brinkhuis' father passed away on Friday, 14 June 2008, at the age of 89, four days before their mother's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. Mr. Rodney Abrahamse' wife has passed away. Our thoughts and condolences are with them and their family.

One of our learners in the senior Xhosa class, Eddie van Wyk, passed away tragically after being hit by a car. A very touching memorial service was organised by teachers Nkosie, Jacoba and Constancia for Learn to Live staff and learners.

**Children from the Community**

The number of children that come to us from their own parents' homes is increasing. These vulnerable children have, typically, dropped out of school and are at home drifting into gangsterism and drug abuse.

**Staff**

Mr. Walter Carelse has been appointed as Welding instructor to replace Mr. Neil Fortuin. He has settled in well and is proving himself to be an asset. Ms. Margaret Simons started as our Social Worker. She has made a huge positive difference on the

staff. Her positive attitude and energy is making everybody's life easier. There is also a clear and visible positive change in the learners.

Mr. Oscar Bans left our employment at the end of 2008. He was temporally replaced by Ms Constanca Tomu, who worked very hard, and had very good discipline in her class. She is also helped a lot with the art.

### **Staff Development**

The staff had very successful mid-term staff development days. Eugene Oppelt (Salesian Institute Strategic Planning facilitator) assisted us in a morning workshop. The aim was to improve teamwork through identifying the things that bothers the staff, and things that enhance our performance. The feedback from the staff was far more positive, and their participation far more than anticipated. The theme for the other staff development day focused on the positive role the teacher can play in the development of the learner in his / her care. One of the volunteers, Tony Becks from Australia, facilitated the discussion and shared his international experience as teacher and instructor. Everybody felt it was very informative.

The Western Cape Street Children Forum and Damelin College, has given the staff the opportunity to attend day courses, namely in Time Management, Self Esteem, Building Teams and Computers courses. The staff members that did attend learned a lot and recommended it to the rest of the staff for next year.

### **Life Skills**

In addition to our normal Life Skills programme, we have had a very successful Aids Educational Awareness programme. Focus was on a healthy lifestyle and covered aspects such as nutrition and exercise. The learners had to design a collage illustrated what they have learnt. Each class prepared a presentation that showed their acquired knowledge and their personal responsibilities towards HIV and AIDS. We were entertained to role play, poetry, drama, a rap song and information sharing. Follow-up sessions are planned to take the learners to the next level of their education about HIV and AIDS.

SANCA had a drug education and life skills workshops for seven weeks. The children had to sign an undertaking that they will not use any kind of drugs during these seven weeks. It was encouraging when a couple of children did not want to sign the contract. This showed they knew it will be difficult to make that promise of abstaining.

The programme the social worker followed in the Educational Programme focused among others on anger management and conflict resolution. The challenges we face are absenteeism, lack of vision and weak work ethic. In behaviour of the learners we saw values of work ethic, peace, respect, responsibility, trust, tolerance and happiness. They may not be able to grasp the abstract concept of values, but their actions show that they are able to become involved in creating a more peaceful

world. Many of them come from a violent background where they are victims of social problems and where there is a lack of respect for each other. There is a definite change in their behaviour – they are more confident and open to talk to her. Group work and working with a partner are much less strained.

She is proud to look at the creative work they completed. They were able to express themselves and where they are now. This was used to draw up a set of rules for the classroom, playground and dining hall. They could verbalise what should not be happening. Because of their involvement it should be easier to hold them accountable. She hopes to move on to the point where the learners are able to make personal choices, become more assertive and free themselves from the negative influence of their peers.

Many learners look forward to their life skills sessions. They take the initiative, make suggestions and are eager to do things. They enjoy the new activities that she has introduced. At the end of every session she would ask them to evaluate what has happened. A few need more confidence to express themselves, but most of them are able to articulate their experience.

#### **Sport and Educational Enrichment Programme**

The Cape Theatre group gave a puppet show to the school learners, about peer pressure. The learners enjoyed this very much, and received and understood their message in a very good and playful environment. Reptiles of the Western Cape showed us all kinds of snakes; which ones are poisonous and how to react to different snakes. The learners participate fully and enjoyed this information session as well.

Three of our classes visited the story telling and book club. The volunteers took their classes to see the Aquarium in the Waterfront. The radio station KFM 94.5 had a special day with all the children. They donated soccer balls, games, soccer nets, practice shirts, whistles and water bottles for the children and gave the teachers chocolates and coffee mugs. All this was enjoyed and appreciated by all involved

Twelve learners attended an Animation Awareness Workshop the Community Hall in Khayelitsha. They were given an introduction into the world of animation, career paths in animation, opportunities to submit drawings for assessment and they viewed show reels and work. Learn to Live staff, learners and trainees attended the Navy festival in Simons Town.

Ncedo, in teacher Nkosie's class, has won a silver medal at the world kickboxing championships in October. Our relationship with the Centre for the Book paid off when two of our boys were asked to participate in their readathon that was organised to celebrate World Literacy Day. Chad Alexander has started a martial art club.

We had a few meetings with Judy Westwater, with the aim to establish a “Junk Orchestra”. Through the making and playing of these instruments, a huge amount of life skills can be cemented into the boys; while they are enjoying it. The ultimate aim is to let the boys play their self made instruments during, and beyond the 2010 Soccer World Cup.

### **Dramatic Arts Programme:**

Twenty-three of our learners are receiving counseling and therapy through dramatic arts. The value lies in the fact that the theatre is being used more formally in the healing and transformation process. The various elements of theatre like story-telling, writing and poetry provide powerful platforms for healing, education and transformative entertainment. These learners were identified by the teachers to be the ones who will benefit the most from this programme. The conflict between the groups (e.g. shelter vs. strollers / older vs. young) was addressed. These classes are being held every Monday for six months.

### **Soccer**

A highly successful Learn to Live Soccer Tournament was held in Green Point. Learn to Live School, three other schools, Learn to Live workshop team and the local police soccer team played on the day. The workshop team won the police team 3-1 in the opening game. Our under 14 team lost in the final on a penalty shootout. Although the staff worked very hard, the day was enjoyed by everybody. Eighteen of our under thirteen players went to Robben Island to play against the school on the island. It was a very cold and windy day, with a little rain as well. Unfortunately, two players got sick on the boat, but once there they enjoyed the trip. There were not enough players on their side, so we combined all the players, divide them in two and had a friendly match. The field was in a very poor state, and the soccer was thus not of a high standard, but the connection was made with the staff and children from the school. We will definitely build on this new friendship.

### **Strategic Planning**

Learn to Live staff participated in the Strategic Planning for the Salesian Institute at Schoenstatt. Internally we also evaluate our curriculum, personal files, rules and regulations (Code of Conduct), safety procedures and policies. Although this is an ongoing process, a huge amount of work and progress has been made.

### **Education Department**

The Western Cape Education Department visited Learn to Live School on the morning of the first school day for learners, 21 January 2009. This visit by Mr. Naidoo was without warning. The aim of these visits, to random selected schools, was to see if schools are functional, academic classes have started and everything was in place. Mr. Naidoo commended us on the operation of the school, as everything was in

place and the learners were in their classes, busy with academic work. This proofed the commitment to the programme from the staff and the learners.

### **Volunteers**

Without the invaluable assistance of the volunteers, our computer literacy programme and our art programme would cease to exist. The teachers also benefit from the extra help of the volunteers in giving individual attention to the children.

Mr. Will Groot did a three weeks Aids Awareness educational programme. The other volunteers also helped a lot with our soccer tournament. Ms Lynda Batog is taking the art classes on Tuesdays. She is also working on their fine motor skills. The learners cannot wait for their time in the art class.

The quality of volunteers we are getting is of a very high standard.

### **Salesian Brothers**

A sincere vote of thanks goes to Bro. Marko for helping so often in the leather craft shop and to Bro. Joseph for taking on the coordination of the computer literacy programme and helping in the Leatherwork workshop.

### **Nativity Play and Concert**

The play for 2008 was a huge success. The comment "This is the best play I have seen for the past ten years" from one of members of the audience, sums it up. The children, and the staff, enjoyed it. We also received a lot of appreciation for the clear message: "Put Jesus back into Christmas". The Skills Workshop instructors and trainees have express their gratitude for being fully included in the planning, preparation and part in the play.

### **Religious Education**

Although the Salesians are Roman Catholic Priests and Brothers, the content of religious instruction at Learn to Live is not specifically Roman Catholic but broad based Christian and humanitarian.

We examined the content of the religious instruction at Learn to Live and discovered that a considerable amount of instruction by word and by example was being given. This is so informal and interwoven with the class room, recreational and other activities of a typical day at the school that it would seem to be nonexistent.

This is one of the strengths of the programme: life skills, whether, emotional, social or spiritual, are a natural part of the day and not a formal item on the daily timetable.

**Statistics**

During this year the number of Afrikaans speaking children and youth outstripped the number of Xhosa speakers.

<b>LANGUAGE</b>	Xhosa et al	Afrikaans
Number	<u>126</u>	<u>206</u>
Education	66	107
Skills	60	99

The number of girls was almost insignificant. However, most of the girls that did attend needed special attention and interventions on a regular basis.

<b>GENDER</b>	Male	Female
Number	<u>320</u>	<u>12</u>
Education	181	--
Skills	139	12

This table gives a breakdown of the origin of our clientele.

	Homestead & Khayelitsha	Don Bosco Hostel	Other homes	Street	Community
<b>Total</b>	104	35	16	0	177

**Meals**

During the course of this year 9 347 meals were served.

The attendance figures for the year, term by term are given below.

		<b>TERM 2 2008</b>	<b>TERM 3 2008</b>	<b>TERM 4 2008</b>	<b>TERM 1 2009</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Education</b>	Learners	77	80	76	69	186
	Daily Average	47,0	45,7	47,8	39,6	45
<b>Skills Training</b>	Trainees	54	48	38	73	146
	Daily Average	29,9	23,4	28,2	39	30,1

**TECHNICAL SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAMME**

The technical skills programme made good progress both in the numbers that attended and in the quality of the products the trainees produced. The level of cooperation between the Youth Employment Skills Programme and Learn to Live has already reached gratifying proportions. In this regard I want to thank Sharon, at our Job Placement office, for working hard behind the scenes to find work for our trainees.

There has also been an increase in the number of vulnerable youth that come from the community. The drop out number, from the workshops, is sufficiently lower than in the past, and our workshops are still full, with an average attendance of 39. Presently we can accommodate 40 trainees in the four workshops. We have 38 names on our waiting list.

### **Leathercraft**

The numbers in the leather craft workshop has increased noticeable. During this time they have concentrate on making belts. The trainees are enjoying the beading as well. Some of them are very creative and are making new style sandals and soft leather bags.

Instructor Elizabeth had a stall at the Community Chest Carnival in Wynberg. She sold the products made by our trainees to the public. The exposure was very good, with a lot of business cards, with the information of all four workshops, were handed out. She also received many orders for bags and briefcases.

### **Welding**

The trainees are respecting Mr. Walter Carelse and he has created a very pleasant, but strict environment in his workshop.

Mr. Walter Carelse has made benches for the children outside, save guard the toilets from the birds nesting and messing there, and made the rubbish bin area neater. He used his trainees for this, and thus created a good real life projects to practice on. The trainees were taught the safety in the workshop, the setting of the amps, housekeeping and measuring. A pair of gates was also made. They are also busy with benches for the school classes.

The trainees visited PolyTech, a highly sophisticated thermoforming factory in Paarden Island. We are negotiating a long term contract for steel frames for their contract with Nampak. One very important aspect the trainees realized and saw in action, was the importance of perfectly corrected measurements.

### **Woodcraft**

The focus has been on carpentry skills that are required on the building site. Hanging doors and fitting skirting and cornices has taken up most of the time. This has made a huge difference for the trainees. It is easier for them to understand where everything fits in, and how they can use what they are learning. Some of the trainees are already fitting ceilings, skirtings, hanging doors, etc. on weekends, for their own pockets. The dynamics of the roofing structures was practically explained and practice on a scale model.

The trainees have started with a new phase now of building Wendy Houses. The houses will be used to reintegrate some trainees into society, by setting them up with their own Wendy House.

### **Panel Beating**

After basic training, the instructor helps the trainees to work on cars and bakkies from private people. This gives them the necessary exposure and practice.

One of the latest success stories is Anthony Hector, who is currently working at a panel beating garage.

### **ABET**

Due to the increase in numbers in the workshops we had to use three teachers for the ABET classes: Mrs. Nkosi Ntanjana for the Xhosa speakers and Mr. Oscar Bans and Mr. Adrian Maxwell for the Afrikaans speakers. Parents from Homestead joined our programme in the afternoon. The initial feedback was that it had a positive influence on the attitude of our learners in the classes. Unfortunately it created other challenges for the instructors, being that the parents are on different levels than our learners, and we could not continue with the parents.

ABET Classes:

<b>Instructor</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Oscar Bans	43	03	46
Adrian Maxwell	43	05	48
Nkosie Ntanjana	19	04	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>117</b>

ABET Classes per level:

<b>Instructor</b>	<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Level 3</b>
Oscar Bans	06	16	24
Adrian Maxwell	30	18	-
Nkosie Ntanjana	13	10	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>24</b>

**Christie Fritz**  
**Coordinator: Learn to Live**