



MIDYEAR NEWSLETTER

JULY 2023

At Home from Home, we try hard not to role model the hectically busy style of life that has become normal in modern times. The past six months however, have thrown significant challenges our way that has meant a frenetic pace has been unavoidable. Most critical has been the challenge to find the right person as Finance Manager (FM). When our previous FM resigned in October last year, we were unable to find a good fit until April. This meant a five-to-six month period where important financial processes, like developing budgets and closing the financial year needed completion without a FM in place. We are now blessed to have Christine Karusseit fulfilling this role. She is well qualified and has 10 years' experience working within the unique NGO sector.



This has been a crucial development in calming the stormy start to this year, but additional commitments have been the following:

- the Department of Social Development (DSD) announced their M&E audit date, of our organisation, in mid-February
- we committed to finalise a Long Term Strategic Plan for the organisation by end June
- we ensured our 135 school-going children were ready for the new school year
- we received the largest number of new admissions since 2018 (mostly children under 4 years old)
- our commitment to continue supporting the the growing numbers of our young people who have transitioned out of our care.

When in the midst of this responsibility and challenge, it is easy to bemoan the situation and become overwhelmed. Looking back at the outcomes (specified below), I have a strong sense of gratitude for the Home from Home team. In all these (some unexpected) challenges, staff members have stood up and taken responsibility and accountability for the work to continue. I think of our foster mothers who have recently said goodbye to their aging out sons/daughters, only to welcome in babies of two/three years of age with a whole new intensified caring schedule. This willingness to take on added responsibility in the face of new challenges has been exemplified throughout our Home from Home family. The staff team, our loyal trustees and even ex staff members (Jenny Cadman and Roshni Roopnarain), have come in to assist us and ensure this important work continues with the necessary consistent quality.



Money matters

With the extended time needed to find a good Financial Manager, we are very happy to report that the Home from Home financials are in a healthy situation. We are hopeful that when the July audit is completed, this will show we have met our budget for the past year ending in February 2023. The organisation budget for FY24 was approved at our March Board meeting and happily also included a 6% increase for all staff.

Department of Social Development (DSD)– Monitoring and Evaluation

DSD's evaluation of Home from Home's compliance was conducted over a two-day process in February. Three evaluators processed an inordinate amount of documentation and visited some of our homes. The broad areas that were evaluated were, Governance; Finance, Management; Service Delivery to Children and Sustainability. A comprehensive report was received in May. All areas were rated above 90% with special mention of our quality of service to our children. More good news followed shortly thereafter. DSD has committed to support the salary of a new senior social worker position. This position was identified in our long-term strategic plan as critical to capacity building within our team. This is of particular significance given the reports of DSD reducing funding to many NGOs this year.

Our goals and objectives for the future

Since 2019, with the new leadership transition and the protracted Covid-19 impact, there has not been an opportunity to plan far ahead. Last year however, we started to actively develop a long-term strategic plan, looking forward five years. We looked at the essentials of the organization: the vision, mission and values. This valuable process allowed our staff team, many who were not involved at the organization inception, to immerse themselves in the original understanding of the core principles of our work and agree the way forward. This resulted in retaining the established core principles, and making key changes to reflect the direction we want to be following.

The Vision

A world in which each child has a safe home and a loving family.

The Mission

Creating families for vulnerable children, through supported and supervised community-based foster care, to become healthy and well-adjusted adults who contribute positively to society.

Our Values

family



We nurture our interconnectedness as a diverse group with a common dream

integrity



We stick to our values even in the face of adversity

accountability



We take full responsibility for our actions and decisions

gratitude



We appreciate our blessings and the contributions of all our family members

innovation



We strive for continuous improvement in the quality of care and reach to vulnerable children

commitment



We honour our word and go the extra mile

Re-establishing and making a few alterations to these core principles of our work has established a good foundation that has enabled us to draft the more specific five-year Long Term Strategic Plan for the organisation, to be approved by the Board at the August meeting.

New children in our homes

We are constantly in awe of our foster mothers. With the recent number of new admissions into the homes and particularly with young babies, it has been amplified. When one thinks of fostering even one child it is a big undertaking, but when our Mums take in up to six and then create family for these and see them age out of their homes, only to then receive the next round of vulnerable children to start the process again – this is something extraordinary! We have admitted 21 new children since the beginning of the year.



Nina

Baby Nina* was admitted to Home from Home on 2 February 2023 and placed in Foster Mother Zoleka's Loving Family Home. Nina celebrated her first birthday with her Home from Home family on 9 June. Nina was removed from her biological mother at birth.



Olivia

Olivia* was admitted to Home from Home on 12 May 2023 just after her first birthday which was on 8 May 2023. She has been placed in Foster Mother Mavis Loving Family Home.

Growing support of our aging out young people

Unlike the more-or-less steady annual progress expected from school-going children, transitioning into independent adult life is complex. It is a time where experimentation is necessary and formulating adult opinions is a focus. A time when the uncertainty of one's choices is heightened.

Our Transition programme support to our young people is vitally important. We are learning important lessons in this relatively new programme. For example, it is important to allow our young people to make their own decisions and take these risks, even if it sometimes goes against our advise. Allowing them to then face their consequences while we are still able to support them, enables far better outcomes than insisting that they follow our guidance. Stumbling's or 'failures' within a supported context lead to good learning and preparation for more independent life.

In this way our Transitional Support Programme provides a sense of belonging and reassurance that support is available, which enables their resilient response to a challenging world.

This programme is currently supporting around 80 young people; 50 who live in our homes. Nine young adults who currently live in our two transition homes which are situated in Khayelitsha and Westlake and a further 21 who live in communities across the Western Cape.

We are mindful that the weight of negative news coming out of South Africa may lead new and loyal supporters to question the viability or sensibility of their support, but we are determined to continue to illustrate the miracle of this work and resilience of our children. Visit us to see for yourself that this crucial work must continue and why we are so deeply grateful to our broader Home from Home family for your loyalty and continued belief in us.



Hand sketch by Abongile

Transition Support Programme Stories

Abongile grew up in one of Home from Home's associate foster homes in Plettenberg Bay along the Garden Route. After matric, he completed a two-year learnership at Hillsong Church in Century City, on the outskirts of Cape Town. He started in the creative department and then gained experience at the Hillsong Foundation (an NGO). At present, he is halfway through a two-year diploma in personal training course which he is studying online. Abongile also sketches incredible realistic pencil drawing portraits in his spare time. He now lives in one of Home from Home's transition houses in Khayelitsha with three other youngsters. A very talented 21-year-old who has many talents and passions. He is looking at studying at University in 2024.

Yongama has been at Home from Home since 2005. She is currently doing her second year, studying at the Centre for Creative (Waldorf) Early Childhood Development (ECD). It is a four year programme. When you speak to her about her studies, you immediately feel her positivity around it.(80% aggregate).

She will be applying for her learners license in July.

She is a very good house leader as well.



Ongeziwe, who has also been at Home from Home since 2005 has completed her home based care course with NIDO.

She is awaiting to complete three more courses online through an Australian University. Thereafter she will be qualified in Home Base Caring.

SUPPORT OUR MANDELA DAY CAMPAIGN

This Mandela Day, Home from Home is on a drive to buy new bedding for each of our foster children. We would so appreciate your help in assisting us to raise the R50 000 needed for new bedding.

Every R67 in memory of Nelson Mandela makes a big difference for us!

#SpreadTheWarmth



MAKE A DONATION TO HOME FROM HOME

Banking Details

Acc name: Home from Home Trust

Acc number: 1011109700

Bank: Nedbank

Branch code: 10 11 09

Swift code: NEDSZAJJ

Ref: Name/Email address

Email proof of payment to info@homefromhome.org.za



Snap here to pay

 SnapScan

PayFast  <https://www.payfast.co.za/donate/go/homefromhometruster>

Sign up for a MySchool MyVillage MyPlanet card and make a difference today.
Simply make Home from Home your beneficiary on your MySchool MyVillage MyPlanet card!



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