

Christa-Rose Huthloff: Ten-year (2010 to 2020) report Home from Home

I started working as a volunteer for Home from Home in 2010 after I retired. Since this time conditions for the kids and activities have changed a lot.

In the first years, the computer room at the day-care centre was open and functional. So, kids from various homes in the area would hang out there, mainly having fun with games. I thus started ways to use these PCs to further their learning. I got educational material from friends that I could install and I found selected websites which the kids could use online. With some of these, you are able to monitor their progress from your computer at home. I prepared a list of useful links to learning websites where they could solve maths or other tasks according to grade.

Starting the library, I checked the available book donations. Most of the books reflected life in Great Britain and are written in English. My aim was to enhance the focus of the topic to life in townships as well as to the children's, like losing parents, illnesses, bullying. Many books dealing with the children's life in a township are published in South Africa. Biblionef is a specialised source to get books with regard to these topics as well as in any of the official South African languages. I bought many books in English as well as in isiXhosa. I found the Western Cape government's holiday reading lists for the children. I bought a lot of books of these lists. I got a big box of children's books in isiXhosa donated by a friend of a friend in Cape Town.

During these years, many kids came to the combined computer room and library for doing their homework. That is when I bought the appropriate books like children's dictionaries and workbooks on various subjects, based on the national curricula. That was where the need for the library became even more obvious. I used to help individual kids with improving their reading skills. One-on-one they are less shy than in a group.

Together with an assistant I organized a spelling competition. The children prepared for that during the week before. We offered them YouTube videos where native speakers read the words in English.

Since the start of the tutoring programme, this is no longer necessary. The library, however, could still be used by the tutors. The catalogue makes it easy to find out what is there and the category markers help in finding them.

Also, during these years, there were no holiday activities. I started a lot of these e. g.


- knitting classes,
- making pizzas,
- painting easter eggs,
- folding paper into boxes or Christmas decoration,
- making jewelery,
- baking Christmas cookies,
- movie time,
- excursions to the beach.

These activities stopped when Home from Home offered holiday and extra mural activities for the children.

I have put together some examples in the illustrated timeline below.

Timeline:

<p>2010 March</p>	<p>Discussing the possibility of setting up a library for the children at Home from Home's day care centre in Khayelitsha with Jane and Pippa at their office in Wynberg.</p>
<p>April - July</p>	<p>Collecting donations from friends and family, contacting HfH Germany, Selecting a free library software, deciding how to organize the books on the shelves.</p>
<p>August- September</p>	<p>First holiday activities with the children in Khayelitsha in the computer room at the Day Care Centre with the help of a German friend who was a teacher.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">   </div> <p>Cataloguing the books which were at the computer room and preparing them for the shelves. Buying books with the money I collected in Germany. Looking up Websites for books which were important to the children. There were two lists I choose from: https://wcedonline.westerncape.gov.za/documents/ParentTips-LitNum/English-reading-list.html https://wcedonline.westerncape.gov.za/documents/ParentTips-LitNum/isiXhosa-reading-list.html</p>
<p>2011 January- March</p>	<p>The book shelf looked like this in February. I installed copies of learning games on the computers.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">   </div>
	<p>I trained Princess, an assistant, how to get the books ready for the shelves. I showed her the basics of cataloguing. I trained some of the older kids about how to keep order in the bookshelves as well as borrowing books and giving them back using the catalogue. From right to left: Princess and some of the older kids</p> 


<p>August</p>		<p>The library is growing</p>
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<p>December</p>		
	<p>Holiday activities: Reading to the children</p>	<p>Showing them pictures using my computer</p>

<p>December</p>	<p>Baking Christmas cookies with the children.</p>
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<p>2012 January</p>	<p>Knitting classes with wool donated by the German International School and with the help from family and friends</p> 
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<p>End of January</p>		<p>More shelves for books</p>
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<p>March</p>		
<p>September</p>		<p>I took Princess and some of the older kids to an education fair to show them possibilities for further training.</p>
<p>October</p>		
<p>December</p>		<p>Helping at Home from Home's Christmas Party</p>

Enjoying books

Holiday activities: painting and knitting

Presentation of Home from Home and my activities in Khayelitsha to friends and interested people at a friend's gallery in Hanover, Germany, raising funds for books



I sponsored the visit to Muizenberg Beach



Baking Christmas cookies. I prepared the dough at home.







Christmas decoration: Santa Claus



Making jewellery with used tealights



Helping to decorate the Christmas tree in some of the houses in Khayelitsha

<p>2013 January</p>		<p>Folding boxes. I got the paper from a friend.</p>
		 <p>Story time: Princess read the story and I showed a power point presentation of the book's pictures. I bought many books in isiXhosa as well as in English.</p>
<p>March</p>		<p>Painting Easter eggs. I brought the hard boiled eggs and colours. I picked up the kids at their homes by car. The eggs were eaten immediately after painting. They didn't last from Thursday to Easter Sunday.</p>
<p>April</p>		<p>Typing classes. We used Typing Web www.typingweb.com/typingtutor Up to 5 teenagers could work at the same time. I could watch them at my computer. I could watch them from Germany as well. But they worked only when I was there. They gave up finally. I copied educational games. The children liked to use them.</p>



Holiday activity: visit to the game room at Harare Public Library



Reading session



New books; Learning material from Smartbooks publishing

October

Garage sale to raise funds for books for Home from Home at our garage in Hannover

December



Preparing and distribution lunch to the Home from Home families at the Christmas party

2014
January



Setting up and cleaning the new library shelves. I brought my husband's drill and Avela drilled the holes and the boys helped to screw the shelves. The teachers use the shelves now. I bought the shelves with money from friends.



Holiday fun at Muizenberg beach. I payed for the taxies and brought a picnic for everybody.

Reading club for girls: each girl had to read one chapter of a book. I chose a book of which we had several copies.

Reading club for boys. I selected a book about football. We have a copy of the book in English and as well as isiXhosa. The boys decided to read one chapter in English and the next in IsiXhosa.



Supervising the kids doing homework at the day care centre.

February



Movie time in the room which is now the computer room: I brought my computer, a projector, a movie and drinks for the kids.

March



Handcrafting Easter decorations. A friend visiting from Germany came with the ideas. We bought the paper and explained to the children what to do.

April






Baking cookies. My friend prepared the dough at our home and the kids did everything else at the day care centre.



Making jewelry. I bought thread and beads. We added empty tea lights folded into leaf forms. The kids had a lot of fun.



Easter egg painting

<p>May</p>		<p>Movie time with my colleague from Warsaw, Poland. She brought nice videos for the kids.</p>
<p>June</p>		<p>New books: these books were donated by authors and publishers while I visited the Cape Town book fair. I asked for books which were interesting to the Home from Home children.</p>
<p>July</p>		<p>Learning how to type with voice instructions.</p>



Preparations for a game with 2 teams, team red and team blue. Painting toilet paper rolls in red and blue and cutting ribbons in the 2 colours and setting up the game with the toilet rolls. I brought the toilet rolls as well as the colours. The children had a lot of fun bringing the rolls down with small balls.



December



Fun at the computer room/library. The kids liked a lot the educational games I installed some time back.

December



Folding Christmas angels

2015
January



Girls club: Solving questions using dictionaries. Next day was boys club. They had different questions to solve.

I taught the teachers computer skills during breaks and helped them using the computer for writing letters.



The library moved to a former classroom and got more shelves.







March














The children liked to use the reading corner.





There is now a bigger and more comfortable reading corner in the library room. I brought the recliner pads

		<p>More shelves for books. Klaus set up the shelves.</p>
<p>April</p>		<p>Movie time A neighbour in Germany gave me old movies. They were in English as well as German</p>
<p>May</p>	 <p>Moore books</p>	 <p>I invited the Home from Home mothers and kids for an opening ceremony of the new library room. I organized something to eat and drink for the event.</p>
		<p>I prepared a car race especially for the boys. The cars had threads the boys must roll up on a match. I put the cars on a table and after the start sign they started to roll up the thread.</p>
		<p>A helper preparing books for the shelves</p>

<p>July</p>		<p>The crèche kids liked to use the reading corner. They came inside whenever I worked here.</p>
	 <p>Thembeke selecting a book for story time. There are many books in IsiXhosa for the kids' story time</p>	
<p>November</p>		<p>Klaus took the photos for the graduation certificates, I printed the certificates.</p>
		<p>Supervising the activities using computers. I copied the library catalogue and showed children and teachers how to search for books and then how to find the desired book at the shelves.</p>
<p>December</p>		<p>Baking Christmas cookies</p>

		<p>Christmas Party</p>
		<p>Visiting he water slides in Muizenberg. The social worker Laurean organized the bus ride from Khayelithsa as well as friends to help supervise the kids as well as a snack. I paid for the entry to the water slides and brought more friends to help. The kids had a lot of fun.</p>
<p>2017 January</p>		 <p>Pizza party</p>
<p>February</p>		<p>Working with the books</p>
<p>March</p>	 <p>Visit at Zola's house</p>	 <p>There was a beautiful vegetable garden.</p>

<p>April</p>		 <p>Easter eggs activity with Zola's kids</p>
		<p>I bought Hula Hoops with money donated by a German friend.</p>
<p>September</p>		<p>Celebrating the new computer room and library</p>

		<p>The movers put the books on the shelves at random. Klaus and I worked several days re-organizing the books according to age groups and topics.</p>
		<p>More isiXhosa books. I worked many hours at home making the books ready for the shelves. This involves putting markers on according to age group and language and then cataloguing so they can be found. I selected and bought these for a reduced price at a new shopping mall in our area.</p>

November		<p>Graduation Party: Klaus and I prepared the certificates and helped at the party. Klaus took pictures of each child with the kid's family and the certificate. The parents could get a copies of the photos from Thembeke's computer.</p>
December		<p>Klaus took the pictures of the families arriving for die family fun day. We both helped distrubuting the food.</p>
2018 January		
<p>Pizza party for Zola's children</p>		
September		<p>Playing with the kids. Sorting the misplaced books according to age groups.</p>
November		<p>I took a Christmas tree and Christmas tree decorations to Khayelitsha. The teachers decorated the tree. Thembeke put prepared parcels under the tree and explained Christmas celebrations.</p>

December



Graduation Party: Klaus took pictures for the certificates as well as during the party. I made the certificates, I made a new garland. You can easily exchange the year now.



Helping at the family fun party



I sponsored a pizza party for Zola's kids. They helped cutting peppers and decorated their own pizza.






2019
January



Working in the library and enjoying the kids during a break



Sorting the books according to the curriculum topics

		<p>It is a joy to see that there are more books at the shelves now than in September 2017.</p>
<p>April</p>		<p>Easter egg painting with the ECDC children. I brought the boiled eggs and the paint.</p>
<p>November</p>		<p>Same procedure as the last years: Klaus taking pictures, me preparing the certificates, updating the garland, helping at the party.</p>
		<p>Picture book time at the library</p>
		<p>Helping at the family fun party</p>

These activities stopped in 2020 due to Covid-19 pandemic.