



Vukukhanye

Update, July 2020



It has certainly been a challenging year as we face the realities of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Fortunately, thanks to your ongoing partnership Vukukhanye is managing to weather the storm and continue supporting the children at the Foster Home, our tertiary and school bursars, the children enrolled at the Vukukhanye Educare Centre (although all at home at the moment) and a number of vulnerable families in Chesterville. Thank you very much for your partnership - we wish you all health & strength at this time.

Children's Foster Home

The children living at the home are Dean and Yaya (Grade 12), Joey (Grade 7) and Mxolisi (Level 3 at Westridge i.e. he will finish school at the end of 2021). April and May were spent at home, doing their best to progress through work sent by WhatsApp from teachers. Dean, Yaya and Joey returned to school in June and Mxolisi will go back later in July. Tracy is now completing her 2nd year of teaching at UKZN (Edgewood) and lives mainly in res. The children have been stars – this is them doing their chores with a smile ☺



Thanks to support from The Starfish Greathearts Foundation and 'Women of Worth', everyone has enough cloth face masks, face shields and sanitizer as well as an infrared thermometer for the home. Nomakaya is doing a fantastic job of caring for the children since the sad loss of Tryphina last year.



As always there were maintenance and repair needs... thanks to Vince for helping get the washing machine repaired and Rob 'The Honey Man' kindly removed a bee hive from the ceiling, relocating the bees safely to Botha's Hill. Holes in the ceiling from water damage and a break-in were also repaired; fortunately covered by insurance.

The children were recently blessed with new clothes, slops and gowns from a kind community member; as well as with science toys donated by ToysRUs. These included a microscope and 'build-your-own' solar-powered robots; a great way to stimulate the children's interest in science & technology. Yaya whipped up her robot with impressive speed.

As schools have reopened, we have had to make sure the children have the necessary uniforms, stationery and COVID PPE items to take to school.



The donation from ToysRUs included a lot of new toys, arts/crafts activities, books, a toddler's discovery mat/tunnel and first aid items; which we were able to give to children in Chesterville.



Vukukhanye Educare Centre

The Educare Centre has been closed since the 17th of March due to the Lockdown. Maintaining contact (mainly by phone & messaging) with the families of the children enrolled however remained a priority. The teachers have been able to provide psychosocial support and as lockdown restrictions eased were able to deliver educational resources and toys to the children. This are some of the new and 2nd-hand toys, books and stationery which has helped keep children busy...



News from educare centre teachers on their efforts during lockdown...

"Since our children can't attend school, my colleagues and I have made time to teach the children some maths and how to write some words. This has been fun and exciting for these children - each child is given the opportunity to learn and write on the green-board and get the feeling of being a teacher. It's a big deal for them and influences them to want to come and also to tell their friends as they praise themselves on how they are mastering a sum or knowing how to write their names."



Funding from Starfish has allowed the teachers to give each of the children cloth face masks and for all the teachers to have masks, face shields and sanitizer.



In June a special COVID-Relief budget from the Starfish Greathearts Foundation was used to purchase food parcels for 40 families of children enrolled at the Educare Centre.



Food parcels being collected from the Educare Centre

As part of the process of preparing for the eventual re-opening Chesterville crèches at an appropriate time, the Cato Manor ECD Forum has provided training on COVID-19 protocols and assisted with a 'Self-Assessment Questionnaire' required by the Department of Social Development. The Vukukhanye Educare Centre is working on COVID-19 protocols, having the required equipment and receiving official permission; but has not set a date to re-open. Funding from The Starfish Foundation and assistance from the ECD Forum has been extremely helpful in acquiring hygiene and PPE items needed such as hand-sanitizer, disinfectant, cloth face masks, face shields for staff, posters, an infrared thermometer and foot-pump hand sanitizing station.

To date 137 cloth masks have been purchased, 40 face shields and a lot of soap, liquid soap and hand sanitizer



Support of Vulnerable Families

Our careworkers continued to identify and support vulnerable children. The total number of children supported in April was 97 (including 50 who received food), 135 in May (including 56 who received food) and 179 in June (including 138 who received food). The careworkers remain in contact with beneficiary families, monitoring their needs and letting them know when support is available to be collected. Besides the Foster Home, Vukukhanye usually provides food parcels (including food, sanitary pads, toiletries and household consumables) to approximately 24 families. As mentioned above, the June Starfish COVID-relief food budget allowed an additional 40 food parcels to be distributed to the families of children enrolled at the Vukukhanye Educare Centre.

Makhosi with food parcels & one of the children she is supporting. ▶



◀ Careworkers with new school uniforms for children returning to school.

Tiger Brands kindly donated 54 boxes (1296 x 200ml units) of children's fruit juices.



Health Heart and Home



Fill a coffee jar with the following ingredients... It can feed 4 people.



Share a Jar of Hope 🌈

- 1/2 cup rice
- 1/2 cup soup mix
- 1/2 cup lentils
- 1 unwrapped stock cube
- 1 pkt soup powder

Instructions. Boil 2 and 1/2 litres of water and add the jar contents.

More than 100 'Meals for 5' in a bottle were distributed to families in Chesterville, as well as via the 'Mhenge Society for the Aged' and the 'Chesterville Residents Association', who had contacted us during lockdown to say that they had clients in need of food.

Bursary Programme

There are 10 bursars who are part of the bursary programme at the moment, who are being assisted with fees, uniforms and stationery as required; five of whom are at school and 5 at tertiary institutions. Sofia is studying a 1 year course in "Aviation Support with Cabin-Crew" at Skyy Aviation, Neliswa is in her 2nd year of 'Travel & Tourism' at Berea Technical College and Nontsikelelo in her final year (N5 & 6) of a 'National Diploma in Chemical Engineering' at Central Technical College. Siphiwo (Human Resources Management) and Nolwazi (Public Management) have both completed their studies but are looking for in-service training placements. Congratulations to Nothando for completing her B.Com. in Supply Chain Management.

Mentorship & Career-Guidance

In partnership with Chesterville Secondary School and Container World, we have started working with about 10 learners per grade in Grades 9-12 at this school. The first formal career-guidance intervention for the Grade 12 group was scheduled for March, but had to be postponed due to the lock-down. Contact has been made via phone and WhatsApp, focusing initially on the Grade 12 group. Key goals of the programme are to expose learners to professional career-guidance interventions, to help them make well-informed Grade 10 subject-package and tertiary study choices; and be better positioned for successful tertiary study.

After conversations with the Grade 12 learners, it became clear that they were not familiar with the services of the "*Central Applications Office*" (CAO), which is a valuable tool in the tertiary study application process. They were also not aware of the study options in their area of interest or the entry requirements. Some of this was due to their inability to move around during Lockdown to do research and closure of the schools (which normally receive free copies of the booklet). We have made learners aware of where to access the 2021 CAO Handbook, how to apply, the fee, the deadline for submission, and how to use the book to find career choice options and institutions which offer courses in their field of interest. Each of the Grade 12 learners has been provided a list of study options in their chosen field of tertiary study. This is just a starting point as we start the journey with each learner to help align their academic results, motivations, strengths and passions with their list of priority tertiary study paths for 2021.