



Dear 'Friend of Lavender Hill High School',

18<sup>th</sup> August 2014

## Help for our Learners and help for our Community

One of the big issues facing a community such as Lavender Hill is the mind-set of people who previously never had a chance in life. Unemployment is frighteningly high, and therefore all the social ills attendant on people with no hope is rife – drop outs, drugs, people abuse.

Lavender Hill High School has recognised this problem and through the 'YES' School initiative has embarked on a program to track the reasons for drop outs, and to counsel learners in need. Where possible this will extend into the community, as a learner going home to a dysfunctional family in a dysfunctional community has little chance of improvement. This is not to say it is all bad:- the School is proud to announce that the parents of a learner has donated R10 000 to the School Hall fund, in thanks for what the school is doing.

The HCI Foundation has partnered with Lavender Hill High to track learners in need and for this we offer our very appreciative thanks. They will also be helping with mentoring, though much more is needed as mentoring takes time and dedication (and money!!) as only one person can be helped at a time.

Two counsellors, Bronwyn and Ivan Jones, have been appointed on a contract basis to track and record the drop-out problem. Bronwyn and Ivan are both pastors, having been ordained in 2009. They have been active in the school for two years now, and this is **their story in their words** (slightly abbreviated:- we have already told the story of the YES Program, developed by June Orsmond and Principal Manie):

The Principal together with the staff of Lavender Hill Senior Secondary School supported the Y.E.S programme .... starting with the grade 8's of 2012, having the vision for these grade8's that they would be the 2016 grade 12's. The Y.E.S programme started off with June and Claude Pause as her assistant. While it didn't work straight away, Claude's willingness and June's persistent nature meant we (Pastors Ivan and Bronwyn) found something to work with.

We start of by collecting all the grade8 learners' information. We file it and we make sure we take a photo of each of the learners. June developed 2 ID size photo's one for the learner's file and one to place into a key-ring with the Y.E.S logo at the back of the photo as an incentive for their co-operation. The 2012 and 2013 grade 8 learners also received a t-shirt.

After we have made contact with the learners by using the Information-sheet as a tool to befriend them, we go to the next step, the questionnaire. At first we used the questionnaire which the Van der Bilt students designed and it helped tremendously. For the grade 8 learners of 2014 we drew up our own questionnaire.

The PURPOSE of the questionnaire is to help us identify the reason(s) why the learners don't complete their schooling, and to determine the interventions that will be needed.

What we have found was that learners drop out of school due to:

1. Drug-abuse or experimenting with drugs
2. Being involved in gangsterism or hanging out with gangster friends
3. Literacy
4. Experiencing neglect at home
5. Learners with behavioural problems

We forward this information to the principal. As a couple we avail ourselves to be part of the intervention process as well. While we wait on professional assistance for areas 1, 2, and 3, we see to the learners that experience neglect at home, learners with behavioural problems and if the learner only hangs out with gangster-friends.

We write a report on each of the learners whom we work with and file it. At times the teachers would also ask us to speak to the learner and his or her parent(s) and most of the times the outcome of the meetings is successful. But due to the shortage of professional help that is available, we do have some of the learners dropping out of school. Example 17 grade 8 learners of 2014 for Jan-Jun dropped out of school already.



Photos of learners with their YES T-shirts, with Bronwyn and Ivan.  
They share the music room with Taswill (see below)

#### BUT IT IS NOT ALL JUST DOOM AND GLOOM

There are some of the learners who indicated that at some stage they've made an unwise decision due to rebellion or a lack of support. But thanks to God enabling HCI foundation to support Life-X-change financially to help our learners, they are still focused on the vision that they will be the grade 12's of 2016.

Thanks to Taswill Arendse the music coach who found it in his heart to allow us to make use of the class after many attempts to get a venue of our own, suitable for this project.

It is the desire of our heart to have a venue that we can organize to suit the need of the Y.E.S programme and have a counselling set-up.

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#### Board of Trustees:

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Bank account: The Lavender Hill Development Trust: Standard Bank (Blue Route): Account 28-224-668-1

## PHOTO OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Looking at these pictures we see how limited the outlook is.

We have been taught by Cobus of Life-X-Change during our first workshop how we are drawn to what the brain can see. This workshop was a great blessing. Looking at these pictures we can understand why very few of these learners have a vision for their lives. For this very reason we would like people to come along side our idea of introducing the learners to other areas here in Cape Town.



## TO CONCLUDE

We would not want to encourage the learners to get use to the GIVE ME, GIVE ME mentality so to break with this mind-set, we would love to encourage the learners who we work with this year to contribute to the funds for the school hall. Example: washing the cars of the teachers, R10 per car. All the money received will be given towards the school hall.

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And finally, an update on the news school hall, Thanks to the Garden Cities Archway Foundation, and the WCED:



Regards,

Stephen Bredenkamp

Trustee / Administrator: The Lavender Hill Development Trust.

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