



SINCE 1958

Youth TODAY

December 2009

A newsletter for friends of Girls and Boys Town

Young leaders share growth experiences

It's been an eventful year, especially for the youngsters who worked their way to the top of the Peer Group System. Our mayors and councillors share their experiences of being leaders ...



We're so proud of all of the Girls and Boys Town mayors and councillors - everything they've achieved in 2009 is because of their hard work and your generous support! Congratulations to them for being the best they can be!



"It was very exciting. I worked my way up to get there and could finally say, 'I'm a councillor for Girls and Boys Town'.

Then came the serious part of being a leader. I must say, having the privileges is nice, but at the end of the day you have to work for it. You have to help the boys change their lives, but it doesn't mean that a councillor is perfect. We also need to brighten our futures too."

- G.C. - Minister of Religion

The Mayoral Installation - what a nerve-wracking experience! It's scary to talk in front of all those people, but that's just one of the challenges of this position, and any challenge is part of life and learning. Being entrusted with so many responsibilities is an honour. For the first time in my life I feel that someone trusts me!"

- R.B. - Minister of Sports

"I was only 17 when I heard the big news: 'You are the mayor for 2009.' I was thrilled! Hiding my tears of joy, I said, 'The Lord is great.' Our Mayoral Installation was my big day. I was excited but relaxed. Thanks to the experiences Girls and Boys Town have given me, I had no problems speaking in public. That day I achieved something major - I was extremely proud of myself. Being mayor is truly an honour and a privilege. It's a tough and enjoyable position and I want to thank Girls and Boys Town and all the donors for making this opportunity possible for me." - T.M.

- Mayor and Minister of Finance

"After the installation the work began. As a council body, we had to get the system to run smoothly. The office and other staff assist us in situations where we feel that it's too much to handle. In times like that, a staff member or one of the council body members motivated me to carry on."

- W.v.d.M. - Minister of Health

"The installation was the most adrenaline-pumping event because it was the first time I'd been recognised so publicly and formally. The inauguration was nerve-wracking. But at the end of the day I was happy to say I'd pulled it off. Being a councillor is a challenge and an opportunity to be the best you can be. Nobody said it was going to be easy, but it's well worth it."

- C.M. - Minister of Education

Thank you!

Your investment creates opportunities for young people to succeed.



Disciplined practice through the year sees youth achieve well in events like The Argus, football and other sporting competitions.



Our Vision

Youth, families and communities; South Africa's strength and future.

Our Mission

Creating opportunities for youth to grow and develop into responsible citizens, able to contribute to family and community life in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, equality and solidarity with others.



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Registered as a Nonprofit Organisation
(Act 71 of 1997)

Registration No. 009-244 NPO

Registered as a Welfare Organisation
(Act 100 of 1978)

Playing our part

Our Macassar youth recently played their part in giving back to the Cape Town community that supported them so wholeheartedly. They picked up paintbrushes and went to work covering up the vandalism done by others. They painted a nearby reservoir and had a great time doing it!



FAMILY SERVICES

New life, new home, new start

Girls and Boys Town helped give Dali's family the new start they needed ...

Before Dali arrived at Girls and Boys Town, he'd been struggling to make good choices and wasn't attending school regularly. He battled to follow the rules set by his mother and their relationship was under a lot of pressure.

Patricia, his mother, felt like she'd let her children down. Her young daughter stayed with relatives while Patricia lived in a cramped room too small for the three of them. Dali often stayed with his grandmother, where he'd at least have a bed to sleep on.

Everything changed for them when Dali adjusted to life at Girls and Boys Town. His relationship with his mother improved as they began to talk to each other. Patricia said, "I didn't listen to him before. I was always quick to blame him." With the help of our Family Services worker,

Patricia learnt to express her feelings and listen to Dali.

As her worries about Dali were eased, Patricia was able to develop herself, and she started studying part-time. She began looking for alternative housing and even found a job. And all her efforts paid off when she was given a house in a rural area where her daughter could stay too.

Dali meanwhile started making positive choices and attending school regularly. He'll join his family at their new home in December when he leaves us. And although we'll miss him, we can't help but celebrate the success he's made of himself.

Our Family Services worker has walked this long path with Dali's family, offering support, direction and guidance when they needed it. This family has a strong bond – they've been given a new start and they're looking forward to just being together. What a wonderful way to see in the New Year!

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Motivated Matrics

The future can look bleak for students when their fear is holding them back ...

Our Training and Education Service team recently had the privilege of working with a group of Matric students at their school. They were encouraged to set realistic goals and taught study skills to keep focussed – hard work during the year would result in end-of-year results that reflected and rewarded all their efforts.

It was a relaxed setting where the learners felt comfortable, and took the opportunity to ask questions and raise their concerns or fears. Issues like university applications and how to apply, as well as the importance of choosing a career were discussed and problem solved. Learners were also offered a support system – the Girls and Boys Town hotline service and other services they might need to set them up for success. Most of



the learners came from underprivileged families, and needed a little motivation to give them a new outlook on the future.

Afterwards, some of the students personally thanked our training team for their guidance and support. And we thank you our donors for your friendship – without your support, we would not be able to help these students and others like them to reach their full potential.

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

Role model reaches out

A motocross event left our boys inspired and amazed ...

Alistair, an international freestyle motocross rider from Botswana, recently invited the Girls and Boys Town youth to attend a competitive event. The young people were over the moon at getting the chance to spend the day watching 'top of the range' riders perform gravity defying stunts. As one said, "I never thought I'd be chilling with the pro's at one of their events!"



The day was great fun, and the youngsters especially appreciated how laid back and down-to-earth Alistair was, and how he went out of his way to make them feel like VIP guests. "He's an inspiration and a role model. I now know that if you do what you're most passionate about, you'll succeed." – (Girls and Boys Town youth)

Alistair motivated and encouraged them, and seeing him perform high-flying stunts was the cherry on the top!

The girls and boys were overwhelmed by what they saw, and touched by what they heard. Alistair took the time to talk to each of them and give them words of encouragement. "He really inspired me and got me motivated. The little words he said to me really hit me deep." – shared a youth.

Girls and Boys Town couldn't thank Alistair enough for helping our children see that their talents shouldn't be wasted! "He made me leave with one thought – you can do anything you want, if you put your mind to it!" – (Girls and Boys Town youth)



Three cheers for soccer and supporters

Girls and Boys Town couldn't ask for better friends than our generous supporters who sponsored tickets for our boys to attend some of the Confederation Cup soccer matches!

The boys were so grateful for the opportunity and loved being able to watch the games. It was 'the chance of a lifetime'! It was wonderful for the boys to be able to do something that they knew most children could only dream of. For many of them, it was the first international soccer game they'd ever been to.

As usual, we couldn't put it better than the boys: "Your generous spirit has motivated me, as well as a number of other boys and girls you've supported. The thrill, the enthusiasm, the energy and the 'Africanism' has left its mark - it helps us to dream big and that's something we can carry with us for the rest of our lives." - J.C.

Thank you for giving our youth the opportunity for big dreams and dreams coming true!



REMEMBER

by supporting Girls and Boys Town you can:

- Earn BEE points
- Claim tax relief or both

ALUMNI

Dear Girls and Boys Town ...

I am an Alumni of Girls and Boys Town. Throughout the course of my life, I made a lot of wrong decisions ...

I never got the chance to thank all of the people who helped me when I was at Girls and Boys Town. Later I realised it was the best time of my life. They showed me I had potential, that I was unique and special, and that I was good enough.

Our principal at the time, was really a cool guy. And I always wonder how the teachers are doing ... one of whom inspired me to write poetry which I've had published.

Had I not been in Girls and Boys Town, I'm

sure I would've gone down a really bad road. I just wanted to say a big thank you for some amazing years. I was tennis player and cricket player of the year way back when, and I'm still chuffed about it to this day.

Thank you to everyone for all of the work you do, and the work you continue to do - I wish I'd paid more attention while I was there.

Regards,
A Girls and Boys Town Alumni.

EVALUATION AND RESEARCH

Top marks for Macassar Residential Centre



All Girls and Boys Town residential facilities receive an annual evaluation, and this year Macassar got top marks ...

Two professional Girls and Boys Town evaluators spent a day assessing the work and care provided for the youngsters at Macassar. A clean house with everything in its place is a challenge for anyone, and more so when you have a residence housing 60 teenagers. But when the evaluators looked at the physical condition, cleanliness and atmosphere of the youth living areas, they had to admit that they'd be happy for their own children's rooms to look that good!

The boys proudly displayed how neatly their clothes were packed, their perfectly made beds and well-decorated areas.

PEER GROUP SYSTEM

From Mayors to Ambassadors

With the support that our youth receive from friends like you, they can't help but succeed ...

It takes a lot of hard work to reach the top, and many helping hands. Thanks to your loyal support, two of our boys not only worked their way to being mayors at Girls and Boys Town, but they've also been selected for a soccer leadership programme that will tour England in 2010.

These young leaders of the future will be ambassadors for South Africa next year when they show off not only their soccer skills, but their leadership abilities as well. They've been participating in the Amandla Ku Lutsha Football League and both boys have demonstrated their limitless potential.

As part of the senior league, the one young



man completed a coaching course where he lead by example, encouraging his team mates along the way. As part of the junior league, the other never missed a session and was always enthusiastic. His teammates really value his contribution and he recently

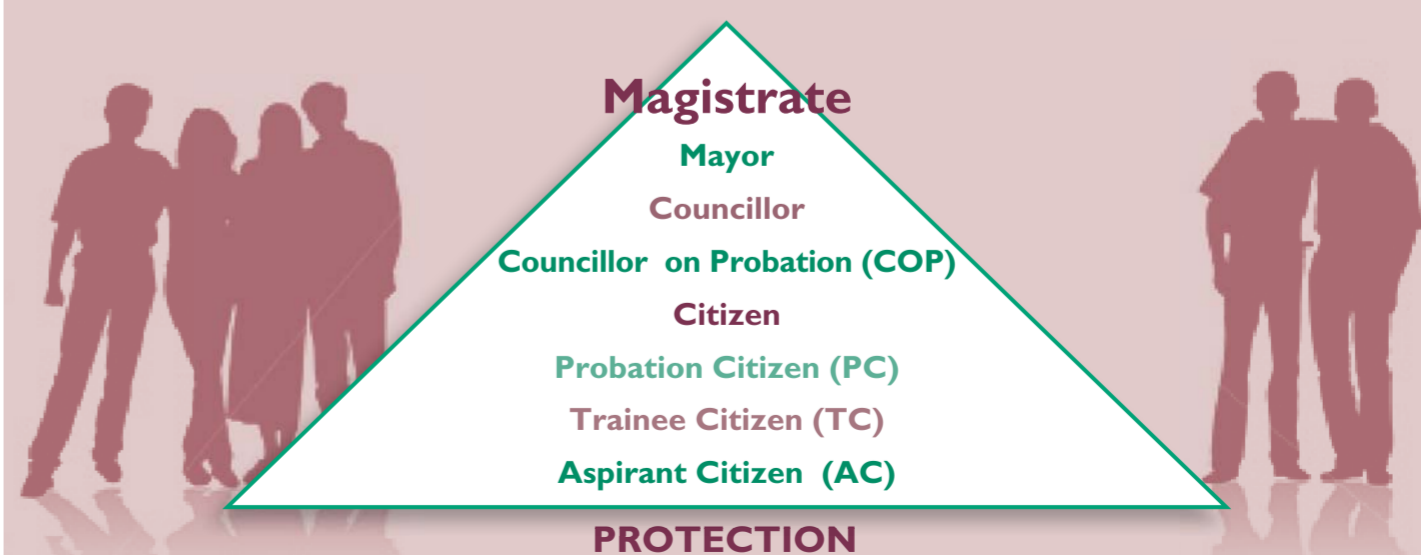
demonstrated his skills both on and off the field as a worthy ambassador at a tournament in Wynberg.

We're overjoyed by their success and know they join us in thanking you the donors who have supported Girls and Boys Town and given all the Girls and Boys Town youth the chance to shine.

Thank you!

PEER GROUP SYSTEM

The 'Ladder' of Achievement



From our CEO



New beginnings

In a few months' time, our mayors and councillors will hand over to the next generation of bright young achievers – a tribute to the miraculous growth that happens in Girls and Boys Town.

Thanks to your generous support, challenged youth who have never before been given the chance to shine, suddenly find their feet in the world and are able to turn their lives around.

That's why I love sharing the uplifting news from all divisions of our Girls and Boys Town family with you – because you've been part of this journey. All of your support is fed into our youth through patience, love, care, encouragement and motivation. You and I get to see them grow into mature, responsible and loving young adults. And not only that, but we're responsible for their family's healing and development of education too.

Girls and Boys Town's work allows youngsters the chance for a new beginning.

And we could never do it alone. Thank you for your kind and caring support. You give our boys and girls the chance to change their lives and take control of their futures.

May each one of you be blessed through this festive season.

Lee Loynes

Chief Executive Officer



Girls and Boys Town appreciates the support of the National Lottery.



From Girls and Boys Town's youth to our generous donors and sponsors ...

Happy holidays and thanks for everything you do!

"Thank you for all of your support and help. We really do appreciate what you have done, and continue to do. Thanks to you, Girls and Boys Town Magaliesburg is called home by many boys. Everything achieved by the boys, the staff and our community as a whole couldn't have been possible without your help."
Yours gratefully,

"I would just like to say thank you for everything you've done for Girls and Boys Town."

"You keep us alive. Thank you for your kind hearts - without you, we would have nothing. What I really mean to say is how much we, or should I say I, appreciate everything you do for us."
Blessings,

"Thank you for the effort you go to for us - it is really amazing."

"Thank you for being there for us Girls and Boys Town boys."

With much love from all of the boys and girls you've shown such kindness to.

May you have a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

Countdown to exams



It's been hard to turn a corner without coming across a girl with her head in a book at our Alpha Family home. During exams, the girls took it very seriously and studied every free minute they got! With so many friends and supporters wishing them well, we're sure they have done really well! Watch this space for news of their achievements ...



2009 at a glance ...



Our Macassar boys crossed the finish line first in a Go-Kart competition held in the nearby community.

Pastor Abrahams officially inaugurated the mayor at Macassar.



Girls and Boys Town youth relax after a day of hiking and climbing.

Our youth aren't the only ones who had to 'bury heads in books' this year. Here two parents share their experiences during one of our Common Sense Parenting training workshops.



The beautifully-maintained grounds at 2 of the 8 Girls and Boys Town residential centres that our youth call home.



Alive with possibilities

A student social worker at one of our residential centres, will soon be leaving us. She put pen to paper about her time at Girls and Boys Town ...

My stay has been very enlightening, and the experience I've gained has enriched me. I take pride in the fact that I could be part of Girls and Boys Town, and also that I could work with the first youth development centre in the country.

Girls and Boys Town has really come a long way - who would have thought that a dream by founders could flourish like this. I cannot begin to fathom the doors that their dream has opened for many different people - including me!

Like they say about South Africa, Girls and Boys Town too is 'Alive with possibilities'. There's so much promise in this place.

I thought of the young people as scary at first,

I was petrified, but children are just children and this place is like a huge family. I began to relax - I was laughing and joking with them.

The staff were helpful and accommodating. It was like having additional mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters.

It's very rare in life that one finds a place as beautiful as Girls and Boys Town filled with beautiful people. I'm honoured to have been part of this huge family!

