



# TLC Newsletter

ISSUE 5

THIRD QUARTER 2013

## UP-COMING EVENTS

- **TLC Social Services Extravaganza - 6 August**
- **Opening of applications for TLC 2014 group (August)**

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## Dealing with Teen Pregnancy

Through years of contact with educators, principals and learners, it is clear that the number of social problems that schools are dealing with is on the rise. One of the major challenges is that of teenage pregnancy.

The TLC Team received numerous requests from schools to provide resources to deal with this challenge. It is for this reason that on 21 May 2013 we hosted a TLC Forum focusing exclusively on the topic of teen pregnancy.

Lee McCoy, a social worker and expert in the field of teen pregnancy addressed approximately 100 educators on the challenge of managing teen pregnancy at the school level. Her focus was to equip schools to develop a teen pregnancy policy that would empower the pregnant learner and protect

the unborn child.

Lee has developed an empowerment model which outlines an intervention process that schools can adopt. The process covers nine aspects of dealing with teen pregnancy in the school, i.e.

1. Confidentiality and Consent
2. Disclosure
3. School Based Support Team
4. Networking and resources
5. Scholastic support
6. Parental support
7. Support of the boy child
8. Postnatal programme
9. Prevention

An important element of Lee's model is that the pregnant learner should be supported and she should not experience discrimination or disadvantage because of her pregnancy. This

approach certainly challenges the beliefs and attitudes that many hold towards teen pregnancy.

The law states that a learner may not be suspended from school because of pregnancy. Practically this poses many challenges at school, e.g. the need for first aid should a birth or medical complications arise, adjustment of the school uniform as a pregnancy progresses, absenteeism due to fatigue or pain, flexibility around homework, tests, exams etc. There are many aspects of teen pregnancy that need to be considered and each school should write up guidelines around these issues that are aligned with the law. These guidelines would then act as a policy to assist schools with decision-making around teen pregnancy when the time arises.

## TLC Applications 2014

Time waits for no man. This age old saying is proven every year as December rapidly approaches.

In the TLC project, it is now the time of the year where we invite more educators to experience the TLC programme.

To get a feel of the impact that TLC has made in the lives of educators all over Port Elizabeth, read the article titled "TLC is

Changing Lives" on page 2.

If you have the desire to be a change agent in your school and community; if you have the heart for children and youth; if you want to see people flourish and rise above their challenges; and if you want to change your life — consider participating in our 2014 TLC Programme.

The TLC programme is designed

to equip educators from disadvantaged schools with basic counselling skills. Participants are required to provide these basic counselling services to learners at their schools.

For more information about the application process, contact the project coordinator, Samantha Naicker (details on the back page).

## Procedure for Special School Placement



At every school there are learners that experience learning barriers. If these barriers cannot be dealt with at school, educators need to have the knowledge and resources required to refer these learners for special placement.

The following is a step-by-step procedure, outlined by Educational Psychologist, Antoinette Human, that educators can use when working with learners that have learning barriers.

1. The educator must identify and screen the learner with the learning barrier.
2. The educator must attempt to support the learner at school.
3. If there is no progress, refer the learner to the ILST based at school.
4. The ILST and educator must develop an

IEP (individual education plan) for the learner.

5. If there is still no progress, special school placement should be considered.

6. Obtain a psychological assessment report from a psychologist which will ascertain whether special placement is appropriate.

7. If a recommendation for special placement is made by the psychologist, the educator must obtain the special placement forms from the DoE (Park Drive).

8. Discuss the advantages of special placement with the parents and obtain parental consent.

9. Complete application forms in full, attach the relevant reports and send them to the DoE (Park Drive). Await the final decision.

Please note that the school must first assist and support the learner at school before referring the learner for special placement.



Quotes to Remember...

*"It's the action, not the fruit of the action, that's important. You have to do the right thing. It may not be in your power, may not be in your time, that there'll be any fruit. But that doesn't mean you stop doing the right thing. You may never know what results come from your action. But if you do nothing, there will be no result."*

Mahatma Gandhi

## TLC is Changing Lives

One of the most rewarding aspects of the TLC programme is the positive impact that it makes in the lives of the participants. Below are accounts of TLC participants who have shared their stories.

**"The opportunity that GMSA Foundation has provided me with is invaluable. I grew in person, and applied my knowledge (from TLC) in many areas within the sphere of school scenarios.**

**Furthermore, I sharpened my counseling skills... you know the incline, the probing, etc. I realised that counseling is an art on its own. The case studies were contemporary. I used them at school for teachers to interact and for me to get the feel of their thoughts. Many potential conflict situations were defused via the use of case studies.**

**Thanks GMSA Foundation – TLC. WOW!! A great program."**  
**Thomas Matthews—2013 Participant (Adolph Schauder Primary School)**

**"TLC motivated me to know the legal aspects of the challenges that our kids are facing. It also motivated me to**

**network, not only locally, but internationally as well. I have made many contacts across the board. I also received resources that helped other schools and organizations. Reaching out and networking is very important.**  
**June Plaatjies— 2011 Participant (Sydenham Primary School)**

**"I have learnt that if you want to walk fast, you will walk alone. But if you want to walk far, walk with others. The meaning for me is that WE need to help learners realise their dreams. It is a team effort. It is something we cannot do alone."**

**Sindy Somniso— 2011 Participant (Dumani Primary School)**

**"TLC has empowered and equipped me to give much needed assistance to our learners and parents. It has also made me aware of what our learners, their parents and families are exposed to and are going through seeing that I've led quite a shielded life."**

**Etricia Lewack—2011 Participant (Astra Primary School)**

# The Helenvale Urban Renewal Project and TLC

The Helenvale Renewal Project was launched in 2007 with the vision to renew one of the poorest communities in the Nelson Mandela Bay, i.e. Helenvale.

Helenvale has a population of approximately 30 000 people. The area is characterized by high levels of drug and alcohol abuse, overcrowding, teen pregnancy, gangsterism, drug lords and prostitution. Education is limited, unemployment is rife and living conditions are poor.

The Mandela Bay Development Agency (MBDA) has taken on the challenge to renew Helenvale. Their approach is

holistic, incorporating all facets of life, not only the upgrading of the land. MBDA also has a “bottom-up” approach as opposed to a “top-down approach”. This ensures that the community members play an important part in deciding what the vision is for the area, and they are included in the entire process. The approach focuses on empowering, educating and creating employment for community members.

As part of the social renewal aspect of the project, MBDA has funded the training of 20 child and youth care workers from the area in the TLC programme.

The TLC programme has been specially

packaged into 4 months, with sessions once a week. All the components of the usual TLC programme are included in this training programme.

The programme started with an orientation session on the 20 June and will run until October, ending with a certificate ceremony and a celebration of success.

**Sources:**

Mandela Bay Development Agency: [http://www.mbda.co.za/news\\_29112011d.html](http://www.mbda.co.za/news_29112011d.html)

Affordable Land and Housing Data Centre: [http://www.alhdc.org.za/static\\_content/?p=1930](http://www.alhdc.org.za/static_content/?p=1930)

## The SACE Code of Professional Ethics

A very important module in the TLC programme is the Ethics module. Before educators are trained in counselling skills, they need to grasp the concept of ethical practice. This module is therefore strategically placed directly before the two counselling workshops in the programme.

Potter Stewart says,

*“Ethics is knowing the difference between what you have a right to do and what is right to do.”*

Simply speaking, ethics is the study of what is right and wrong. On the mandatory level, ethics is about abiding by rules and regulations, laws and legislation. On the aspirational level, ethics is about behaving in a way that is in the best interest of others.

Each profession has its own ethical code which guides its members to behave in ways that protects the public and themselves. The ethical code for the education profession is called the SACE Code of Professional Ethics. Educators need to familiarize themselves with the expectations highlighted in this code. A copy of the Code can be found on the SACE

website at [www.sace.org.za](http://www.sace.org.za).

The following is an extract from the SACE Code of Professional Ethics. It speaks to the relationships between an educator and his/her learners:

*“An educator:*

- 3.1 respects the dignity, beliefs and constitutional rights of learners and in particular children, which includes the right to privacy and confidentiality;*
- 3.2 acknowledges the uniqueness, individuality, and specific needs of each learner, guiding and encouraging each to realize his or her potentialities;*
- 3.3 strives to enable learners to develop a set of values consistent with the fundamental rights contained in the Constitution of South Africa;*
- 3.4 exercises authority with compassion;*
- 3.5 avoids any form of humiliation, and refrains from any form of abuse, physical or psychological;*
- 3.6 refrains from improper physical contact with learners;*
- 3.7 promotes gender equality;*
- 3.8 refrains from any form of sexual harassment (physical or otherwise) of learners;*

- 3.9 refrains from any form of sexual relationship with learners at a school;*
- 3.10 uses appropriate language and behaviour in his or her interaction with learners, and acts in such a way as to elicit respect from the learners;*
- 3.11 takes reasonable steps to ensure the safety of the learner;*
- 3.12 does not abuse the position he or she holds for financial, political or personal gain;*
- 3.13 is not negligent or indolent in the performance of his or her professional duties;*
- 3.14 recognizes, where appropriate, learners as partners in education. “*

From the Code, it is evident that it is the duty of educators to ensure that learners are treated with the utmost care and respect at school.

It is from educators, parents and other adults that children learn to be moral and ethical. If we are not, they cannot learn to be. We are role-models whether we want to be or not. Let us be more conscious of this and impart goodness, morality and the importance of ethical living to the next generation.

**“Ethics is knowing the difference between what you have a right to do and what is right to do.”**  
**Potter Stewart**



### **GMSA Foundation TLC**

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#### **About TLC:**

The Teacher Learner Care (TLC) initiative was launched by the GMSAF in an endeavour to assist 'at risk' learners. Many South African learners are considered 'at risk' in the sense that they are affected by factors that impact on their present and future well-being and holistic development. These are factors such as the loss of one or both parents, severe illness (i.e. TB, HIV/AIDs, etc.), abuse of drugs, gang membership, the impact of dysfunctional family life, sexual abuse, teenage pregnancy, suicidal tendencies and learning difficulties.

Research was commissioned by the GMSAF into the psychological and sociological challenges faced by primary school learners. The research indicated that learners want to confide in teachers or another trusted adult as the primary care person. The programme is therefore designed to prepare teachers and other care workers to counsel children and youth. The programme is offered to both primary and high school teachers as well as other agencies who offer child and youth support services.

If you would like to give us feedback about the TLC Newsletter or if you would like your school/TLC centre to be featured in a future issue, please feel free to contact the editor at the above cell phone number or email:  
[naicker.psychologist@gmail.com](mailto:naicker.psychologist@gmail.com)