

The year has gotten off to a flying start with lots of new developments, and 2008 is proving to be a very busy one for Home from Home.

The Christmas Holidays were busy and eventful, with many of the children going away on camps, to visit family members or away with their House Mothers. For those left behind, there were outings to the beach and parties over the festive season.



Enjoying sand between the toes!



Six of our children started Big School (Grade R or Grade 1) and we had some very excited children ready for their big day – in their big uniforms!! For us, it is such a sign of joy and achievement seeing children who came to us as babies or toddlers now well and happy, starting school. All the children, except one, were able to pass up to the next grade at the end of last year – another fulfilling sign that the Home from Home children are progressing and coping well at school.



At the beginning of the year, two of our children returned into the care of family members, something that fills us with a sense of loss, but in these cases was in the best interests of the children and their long term development.

All ready for a day at school!

The Lizo Nobanda Day Care Centre re-opened on January 7th, having been painted and refreshed over the Christmas break and soon filled up with 42 children. We continue to be blessed with volunteers from Cross Cultural Solutions, who help the staff every morning and are offering the children additional new experiences, particularly in the art and craft field that they would otherwise miss.



A proud House Mother and three smart students!

We welcome Catherine as our new House Mother who has taken over from Patience, and the children are adjusting well to their new carer. We also said goodbye to Portia, our community worker, at the end of last year, and we are now very busy interviewing for the positions of two assistants, as well as that of a Project Manager, who will be based in Khayelitsha and oversee all of our work there.



The kids having loads of creative fun!

This time of year is always very busy with visits from supporters and friends of Home from Home from around the world, and we're always delighted to see both new and old friends on their visits to South Africa. The children are always excited to welcome visitors to their homes, and proudly show them around.

All of our House Mothers have attended a Child Care Course, held by Hope World Wide, which they all really enjoyed. We know that it is vital for their career and personal development, as well as having a greater insight into the care of their children. Further training courses are coming up, with our House Mothers being offered help in efficient housekeeping and first aid courses for those who haven't

yet attended one. We welcome Michelle, a psychologist, who is running monthly staff support meetings in addition to our monthly House Mother meetings.

Now that Home from Home is nearly three years old and is increasing in size, we are in the process of restructuring our organisation in order to work at maximum efficiency and to ensure we are spending every cent of donor funds wisely. We are putting a lot of time at the moment into writing up our policies and procedures and formalising our partnership agreements so that we can spread the Home from Home model of care wider into South Africa. Thinking of our long-term development, we are in the process of setting up the Home from Home Educational Trust. Although our oldest child is only 14 at present, we know that time flies and we want to be prepared for the time when our children leave school. The Educational Trust is being set up to give children in foster care (including Home from Home children) a chance to go on to tertiary education, as well as to provide extra educational opportunities for the children whilst still at school. If you'd like to know more about this, please contact the Home from Home office.

## New Homes

There has been a delay in the planning approval for the homes in Kayamandi, Stellenbosch, but this is being handled very competently by our project partners. The plans for the Hawston home have been approved and a contractor appointed, so we're expecting construction to begin imminently.

In the Goodwood home, we are currently interviewing for a House Mother, so we hope that this home will be up and running very soon. An architect is currently working on plans for the homes in Vrygrond and we're keen to make a start in this new area. Plans are at council awaiting approval for our seventh home in Khayelitsha. See – we told you 2008 was going to be a busy year for Home from Home!



Home from Home kids having a game of cricket!



At the same time we are still being approached by other organisations that are keen to partner with us in different areas with a view to set up new Home from Homes.

We are also going to be moving office in the next few months – we'll let you know details in our next newsletter, but our contact details will remain the same for the time being!

## Thank You

We continue to be incredibly grateful for all of you who help us in every way possible – from offering us ongoing prayer, support and guidance, to those of you who contribute practically with your time, money and resources. Unfortunately we can't mention everyone by name but remain assured that without your help and support, we simply couldn't do the work that we are doing and help the children and communities that we are.

**And no sooner than we wished you all a Merry Christmas, we're wishing you all a blessed Easter. For everyone travelling, we pray for you to have safe yet exciting holidays. And for those remaining at home, we hope that you have a restful time with your loved ones.**

### CONTACT DETAILS

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