



the Parent
Centre

IZIKO LABAZALI
THE CENTRE FOR THE PARENT

Newsletter

Fourth Term 2011

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MEMBERSHIP

Membership of The Parent Centre includes access to our library, and an outstanding selection of parenting books. Whether you are a parent, or someone working with parents and/or children, you will find relevant and up-to-date titles on a broad range of parenting issues.

Membership also entitles you to a discount on workshop fees.

Dear Members

The last quarter of the year is upon us and some of us haven't done half the things we planned. However, let us take heart from the fact that we have embarked on new initiatives and finalised some old ones - notably our information brochures! No more "home-made" brochures for us! Check them out on our website. Thanks to Zeenat Hendricks for her initiative and Taariq Latiff for his fine artistic skills.

Zeenat has also launched our Facebook page and put us on Twitter. The Parent Centre is surging ahead becoming thoroughly "modern"!

This brings me to another addition to our

staff. We welcome Bronwyn Thomas to the Admin team. Since I'm on the topic of new additions - what about Safura's brand new granddaughter? Congratulations Safura!

Finally, Celeste Van der Merwe, our director, will be retiring at the end of the year. She has no idea what she's going to do besides catching up with her reading.

In her place, we welcome Venecia Barries, current manager of the Parent-Infant Home-Visiting Intervention Programme.

Yours in Parenting
Fouzia Ryklief

My thoughts and words of farewell as Director of the Parent Centre

Since 1997, when I formally became a member of The Parent Centre family, my "river of life" has taken many challenging twists (constant changes in state policies and demands), trying to stay afloat when traversing the rapids (financial) and enjoying the spells of cool, smoothly flowing waters (settled staff and programmes running well).

During any journey one undertakes, there are many people you meet along the way - some just for a few short steps and others who accompany you across the entire trek. I have had the privilege of the companionship and mentoring of many Parent Centre stalwarts, both colleagues and Board Members as well as donors, which have contributed immensely to my management and leadership of this extraordinary organisation.

There have also been many "learnings"

gained from parents and other courageous persons who have participated in the varied programmes offered by the Centre - sharing their dreams and aspirations for the children in their care and for children in general.

I salute all and I express my sincere gratitude, knowing that all of the accomplishments of the Centre was, and is, a consequence of cohesive, focused teamwork.

I believe that my competent and skilled successor, Venecia Barries, will continue to enjoy the encouragement and support of all staff, management board, funders and beneficiaries in her journey as the leader and in her quest to take the Centre to greater heights - striving to enhance the bonds between parents/caregivers and the precious children in their care.

Celeste Van der Merwe.

Young Mom Support is a social support group for young and teenage moms in the South Peninsula. The group was founded in 2010 by Tracy Engelbrecht, a former teenage mom and author of *The Girl Who Couldn't Say No*, which tells the story of her teenage pregnancy at 15.



Young mothers at the Community Parenting Indaba in Fish Hoek.

What we do

Young Mom Support aims to provide a safe, healthy and non-judgmental environment for young mothers of all races, cultures, religions and family situations to socialize with their children. Often, young mothers are assumed to be uninterested in their child's development and well-being, and can sometimes feel excluded from other parenting forums.

We hope that having a group of friends with the same priorities and interests will help to beat the loneliness and isolation that sometimes comes along with being a young or teenage mom, even when there is good family support.

We offer information on parenting-related issues and refer our members to professional service providers such as counselors or social workers where required.

Our group offers a place to be themselves, grow as parents and speak of their frustrations and fears, long BEFORE they get to a point where they feel like they're not managing. It's an informal, friendly, non-intimidating setting where the moms and group leaders get to know each other as equals – mother to mother, without the barriers sometimes encountered in a formal counseling situation. We have built lasting friendships with our members and have come to consider them as family. The feedback received by our mothers is heartwarming and encouraging, and shows that even the smallest words of encouragement and affirmation can make a huge difference to a mother's feeling of worth.

Why we do it

Established, "older" mothers are always advised to look for support in their communities and family structures, to take time for themselves and to be realistic in their idea of what being a "good mother" means – and urged not to feel guilty about it.

Young mothers have many of the same stresses and fears as any other mother – they need the same support, the same amount of rest and "me-time", the same opportunity to be heard and respected for the work they're doing. In reality however, their parenting is often judged more harshly than that of older mothers and they have to work that much harder

to be regarded as "a good mother". They also often face other challenges such as completing their education, providing for their child, changing family dynamics and finding their own place in the world.

Isolation, judgement, loneliness, lack of material, physical and emotional support damages a mother's sense of value in herself – and thus her ability to parent confidently and successfully. This is not healthy for mom, not healthy for baby and not healthy for society which has to live with the consequences of poorly-parented children

We aim to offer support before it gets to the point where professional intervention is required, and offer respect and recognition to those young moms who are doing it right. Children raised by mothers who are **STRONG, CAPABLE, RESILIENT** and **BRAVE** are always going to do better than mothers who feel vilified, rejected and punished by society.

We meet monthly at The Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation Youth Centre, Guinea Fowl Road, Masiphumelele.

For more information:

Website:

<http://youngmomssupport.co.za>

Email:

info@youngmomssupport.co.za

Call Tracy 072 986 3105



HOW TO TALK SO KIDS WILL LISTEN AND LISTEN SO KIDS WILL TALK

This two session workshop is adapted from the book of the same name. It will cover key communication skills, including a positive discipline approach.

Dates: 19 & 26 October 2011 from 09h00 – 12h00.

Venue: The Parent Centre, Upper Level, Wynberg Centre, 123 Main Road, Wynberg.

Telephone to register: 021 7620116

Cost: R340 per person / R510 per couple

The facilitator will be Helen Gosnell

General Principles

The physical leaving of one parent, whether as a result of death, divorce or abandonment is very painful for the adults and extremely traumatic for the children, regardless of their age.

It results in serious emotional stress for the children. They feel torn apart because they feel they are expected to take sides, especially if the remaining parent talks badly (in the presence of the child) about the absent parent.

They feel responsible to “look after” the remaining parent and brothers and sisters, especially if they are the eldest and when the remaining parent is in severe distress, emotionally or financially.

Children have different reactions to, and different understanding, of divorce, depending on their age.

Children between 5 and 10 years of age suffer more openly. They become very distressed, experiencing loss, rejection, guilt and loyalty conflicts, as well as fear that they will never see the other parent again.

These children hide their feelings but act aggressively towards the remaining parent and they also tend to be aggressive with the brothers and sisters and other children at school. Their feelings need to be acknowledged.

They find it difficult to concentrate at school and the schoolwork often suffers.

Fantatising about their parents getting back together again is very common in this age group.

Children between 10 and 12

years are more realistic and have a clearer understanding of what is happening.

They can be **very angry toward the** parents because they have a very strong sense of right and wrong and they therefore tend to judge their parents. They struggle with feelings of shame.

They become **anxious** about the resulting lack of stability in their lives. This anxiety and stress are expressed in the form of physical illness such as headaches and stomachaches. Disturbing behaviour such as lying and stealing are common symptoms of this distress.

Bad feelings that are not acknowledged and dealt with result in bad behaviour! While feelings are ok, bad behaviour needs to be dealt with.

How can you help the children?

Tell the truth about what is happening:

e.g. “Mommy and Daddy have not been getting along for some time now and have decided that it will be better if we part.” Children do not need to know all the painful reasons for the divorce.

Reassure them of your love and that they will still have both parents but that they will no longer be living together.

The parent may have stopped loving the other parent but say that you will not stop loving them.

Make it very clear that the divorce is not their fault – Tell them it is not happening because of something they have done.

Make it clear that there is nothing they can do to save the marriage.

Primary School age children fantasise about this.

Explain in detail what changes will take place.

This will help them to feel more secure - not knowing what is going to happen is more scary for children than knowing the truth.

Help them to express their feelings about the divorce or separation.

Do not put the eldest child in the role of the parent who has left - children, like you, need adult support and comfort.

Try to change as little as possible, the circumstances

under which they live, e.g.

If at all possible, try and keep their living arrangements the same or keep them at the same school.

Don't relax discipline because you feel sorry for them. Children need the security of firm rules and consequences.

Finally, work on maintaining a cordial relationship with the other parent.

This will positively influence the adjustment of all to the situation. Of course, this is not easy during the early days because of the parents' feelings toward each other.

It is therefore imperative that parents seek counseling for themselves if they are struggling to work together for the benefit of the children.

There is an excellent article by Angela Hutchison on “Coping with the effects of Divorce” on our website: www.theparentcentre.org.za

The Parent Centre offers individual counselling to help parents help their children during the process of divorce.

The Children's Act makes provision for a Parenting Plan to assist divorcing parents find the best arrangements for the children.

SUPPORT GROUPS FOR PARENTS

These groups provide a space for parents to focus on themselves, to be listened to and understood and to get support and ideas from other parents.

Moms-to-be and Moms and Babies Support Group

meets every Thursday, from 10 am – 12 noon at the Kingsbury Hospital, Maternity Section, 2nd Floor, Wilderness Road, Claremont.

Facilitator: Margaret Flack-Davison 021 7620116

NB! Please check our events calendar on our website for the monthly programmes

Woodlands Parent Support Group, Mitchell's Plain

This group of mothers, grandmothers and other caregivers meets fortnightly on Wednesdays at Woodlands Community Hall, corner of Selena Way and Mitchell Avenue, Woodlands, Mitchell's Plain.

Facilitator: Marilyn Matroos 021 3721121

Tafelsig Mother and Child Support Group

meets every Tuesday between 10 am and 12 noon at the Youth and Family Care Centre, corner of AZ Berman and Kilimanjaro Rds, Tafelsig, Mitchell's Plain.

The Group caters for mothers and children from birth – 5 years.

Facilitator: Nasiera Ebrahim 021 7620116

Hanover Park Mother and Child Support Group

meets weekly at the Hanover Park Community Centre, Hanover Park Avenue, Hanover Park on Tuesdays from 10 am – 12 noon.

Mothers and children between the ages of 0 and 5 years are welcome.

Facilitator: Sharon Paulus 021 7620116

Gugulethu Parents Support Group

This group consists of parents, grandparents and teenage parents and meets weekly on a Wednesday at 10.30 am at The Hall, No 142A, NY1, Gugulethu

Facilitators: Lephina Mojakgolo and Bulelwa Kuse 083 257 3541

Gugulethu Men's Group

This group welcomes all fathers – older, younger, teenage fathers and grandfathers, to its weekly support group. The group meets at Nobantu Primary School, NY89, Gugulethu, on Wednesdays at 3.30pm

Facilitator: Charles George 083 257 3541

Silvertown Parents Support Group (run in partnership with the Family Church)

The group meets every Wednesday from 10 am – 12 noon at the Genesis Educare Centre, Lower Klipfontein Road, Silvertown.

The group welcomes all parents, grandparents and other caregivers with children between the ages of 0 and 12 years.

Facilitator: Jann Watlington 021 7620116

Nyanga Parent Support Group

meets every Tuesday, from 10.30 am – 12.30 pm at the Nyanga Art Centre, 1st Avenue, Mau-Mau, Nyanga East. All parents and caregivers are welcome.

Facilitator: Lephina Mojakgolo 083 257354

Khayelitsha Support Group

meets on Wednesday from 11 am – 1 pm. Parents and caregivers and their children aged 0 – 5 years are welcome.

Facilitator: Marjorie Feni 083 2573386

INDIVIDUAL COUNSELLING AT WYNBERG HEAD OFFICE

We offer counselling for any Parent or Caregiver who experiences difficulties with their children. The counsellors are trained professionals. Fees are charged on a sliding scale.

PARENT AND CHILD UNDER 3 COUNSELLING

This is a new service which is offered at our Wynberg Office. It involves sessions with the parent and child and will cover common challenges such as eating and sleeping problems, presented by young children from birth – 3 years. Fees are charged on a sliding scale.

NB! The above services will not be withheld if prospective clients experience financial difficulties.

PARENTING AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SUPPORT

We offer

- Training courses on parent guidance counselling, facilitating parenting workshops and groups.
- Single talks on all aspects of parenting to groups of parents and caregivers in community venues.
- Parenting workshops in community venues.
- Support Groups for parents

PARENTING & LEADERSHIP

This course covers parenting skills and workshop facilitation for professionals and Community Workers who wish to become involved in parenting work in their settings and communities. It is run at this office once a school term.

Mentoring and Support is offered to those who will be engaged in implementing parenting work in their settings. Quarterly meetings to this end take place at the Centre.

For more details contact: Safura at 021 7620116 or

Email: safura@theparentcentre.org.za

NB: Qualified social and social auxiliary workers will earn 20 CDP points. The course is registered with the SACSSP. Interested parties with other professional qualifications need to enquire from their professional boards whether they will earn CPD points for this course.