

## HOPE Cape Town Community Intervention Programme - Social work

HOPE Cape Town is currently contracting a social worker, who is a qualified play/family therapist, to provide services in poorly resourced communities. This includes individual counselling and play therapy sessions for children, and family counselling sessions for families of HIV positive children. The focus is usually on dealing with the diagnosis of HIV and living positively despite having HIV. Subjects such as coping with abuse, post-traumatic stress and how to get your children into school are also covered. We also host intermittent educational parenting workshops where parents are taught how to communicate with and discipline their children.



### Goals and objectives of the project:

**Goal 1:** Provide social service support to improve stability and enhance personal growth within the community.

#### Objectives:

- Provide information regarding application of official documents and grants
- Provide psychosocial counselling to individual community members
- Evaluate and refer individuals to resources already available in their communities. (i.e. drug rehabilitation)

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- Assist and support caregivers with placement of children in schools
- Develop and facilitate support groups around common themes

**Goal 2:** Provide a therapeutic programme to support children (and their caregivers) with developmental and psycho-social problems.

### **Objectives:**

- Provide play therapy to children with social and emotional problems
- Provide psychosocial therapy to older children and adults
- Provide parental guidance in assisting children
- Develop and facilitate social skills or developmental groups for children around common denominators

### **Child Sponsorship**

We provide financial sponsorship to deserving HIV affected children and families to provide them with the following:

- Medical devices e.g., reading glasses, sunglasses for children suffering from albinism, hearing aids
- School / crèche fees
- Fees for transportation to school or to hospital visits
- Fees to assist in paying for school uniforms, stationary, food, outings

Costs vary from child to child depending on the needs of that specific child.

### **Nutrition**

We have started nutrition programmes in various communities. We are involved in nutrition programmes where mothers are taught how to cook healthy food for their HIV positive children and themselves. They are also taught how to preserve fruit and vegetables that are in season, for later use or to generate an income. We also assist communities to establish vegetable gardens by teaching selected community members how to grow and maintain a vegetable garden. The vegetables from these community gardens can be used to feed vulnerable children.

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HOPE Cape Town contracts a registered dietician at times to host workshops for caregivers of children in the communities where they live.

### **The objectives of this health promotion are to:**

- Promote better eating habits and to reach optimal nutritional intake of all nutrients
- Enhance quality of life through health and nutrition promotion
- Promote appropriate foods for individual circumstances and reduce food insecurity
- Provide education on how to prevent weight loss during illness
- Promote and advise on breast feeding

### **Social Work Services**

HOPE Cape Town contracts a social worker to provide counselling and therapeutic group work for HIV positive children within the communities we serve. This includes individual counselling/play sessions for children, and group counselling sessions for families which focus on coping with the HIV diagnosis and living positively.

We have started therapeutic playgroups / school preparation groups in a local township. Large numbers of children of school going age are not attending school. Our social worker assists parents with enrolling (and keeping) their children in school, and runs groups in order to prepare the children for school by teaching basic numeracy and literacy skills.

### **Occupational Therapy Services**

Many of the children we work with have low self-esteem, and this can lead to other behavioural problems.

We are currently hosting a GO-Box project at Tygerberg Children's Hospital and at community level in some of the low income areas that we serve. This is an early childhood development programme developed by occupational therapists working with HIV positive children at Groote Schuur Hospital. HOPE Cape Town has contracted a registered occupational therapist that has adapted this programme and is currently running this 10 month programme with groups of HIV affected children. Caregiver-child pairs are initially supplied with an empty box and as the sessions progress the box is filled with age appropriate tools. The caregiver can then use these tools to teach, interact and play with his/her child. This is an interactive programme where caregivers are shown practical ways to stimulate their children and given the opportunity to practice their new skills in a supervised environment.