



COMMUNITY CHILD RIGHTS WORKSHOPS: Bitou Municipality 2021

OCTOBER 2021



**Commissioner
for Children**
OF THE WESTERN CAPE

**#littlevoicesMUSTcount
#kleinstemmetjiesMOETsaakmaak
#amazwiamancinciMAKAVAKALE**



Acknowledgements

To the children in Bitou, thanks for sharing with us your community mapping, dreams and worries as well as recommendations to government. Wishing you all the best for your future.

To all roleplayers in Education, Social Development, Health as well as Cultural Affairs and Sport, thanks for your warm welcome into your service sites. We enjoyed conversing with you about children's rights.

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Executive Summary

The CCRWs are one of the key strategies for the WCCC to gather information on the character of childhoods in the province and the lived realities experienced by children in the context of their communities and homes.

The Bitou Community Child Rights Workshops (CCRWs) was the fourth expedition of the Western Cape Commissioner for Children (WCCC), after completion of similar visits to Matzikama, Bergrivier and Hessequa municipalities. Five members of the WCCC team travelled a total of 1339km from 17 to 22 October 2021 to the communities of Plettenberg Bay, Kwanokhuthula, Wittedrift and George to conduct workshops with children in three Child and Youth Care Centres (CYCCs) and three high schools. We also visited two clinics and one Mass Opportunity Development Programme at a primary school and met with social service providers.

The CCRWs are one of the key strategies for the WCCC to gather information on the character of childhoods in the province and the lived realities experienced by children in the context of their communities and homes. These workshops employ experiential learning methods to encourage children to share community safety maps, their personal dreams and the worries of children in their communities. They also get the opportunity to share recommendations for service improvements with the departments of Education, Health, Social Development as well as Cultural Affairs and Sport, using the WCCC as platform to report on their contributions. The authentic voice of children, parents and service providers are represented in the reports of the WCCC by presenting their charts and cards they illustrate and write on. Key quotes are used liberally in the reports and form the basis of findings and analysis.

Key findings from the data collected from children on community safety maps point to socio-economic differences between children

influencing their experiences and perspective on community safety. The results also noted that these service points, enable positive experiences, they are viewed as places of refuge by children. When dreams and worries of children were analysed key findings were that they yearned for a soft life as compared to the life of hardship they currently experience, they want to escape their life of struggle, and wanted to change their communities by helping those in need when they reach stability in adulthood. Children would like us to share with government that they need positive adults in their lives, and they do appreciate the value of visionary and competent leaders at service sites.

Adult stakeholders wish to inform high-level government decision makers of their lessons learnt on the frontline. An analysis of their inputs point to children needing a more varied sense of educational opportunity and that prevention programmes are too scarce.

In conclusion, WCCC poses questions to encourage parents, government and other service providers to consider whether they are achieving a balance of children's protection, provisioning and participation rights in their service orientation. If we are to promote, protect and realise children's rights we must achieve the perfect balance of welfare and autonomy for each child at each age and stage of development.

Introduction

Community Child Rights Workshops (CCRWs) is one of three child participation models practiced in the office of the Western Cape Commissioner for Children (WCCC). The office is an oversight mechanism for the Western Cape Departments of Education, Health, Social Development, as well as Cultural Affairs and Sport. CCRWs are planned in collaboration with the Department of Local Government and the WCCC mandated departments who are instrumental in the planning and implementation phases of the project.



THE OBJECTIVES OF THE CCRWS ARE TO:

- Share the mandate with children and adults;
- Advocate a child rights approach with stakeholders; and
- Monitor services provided to children by government services and civil society stakeholders.

While CCRWs enable the Commissioner to engage directly with children to fulfil her mandate, it also provides an opportunity to walk the streets and converse with children and adults in communities. This assists in enhancing the understanding of the conditions in which children live and are expected to thrive in.

While visiting a community, the WCCC also engages service providers in the areas of Education, Health, Social Development as well as Cultural Affairs and Sport with the aim of understanding grassroots issues and their recommendations to higher levels of decision makers in government. In addition, CCRWs are also a means for recruiting Child Government Monitors (CGMs) for the

office. CGMs share their childhood experiences with the Commissioner, ensuring that she remains aware of the challenges and needs of children in different communities throughout the province. Recruiting monitors at workshops permits the Commissioner to maintain a connection with the municipalities after she visits.

The Western Cape Commissioner for Children gained impressions of the Garden Route District Municipality by visiting 17 service sites located in the George and Bitou Municipalities. For the first time the programme included Child and Youth Care Centres and several different types of educational institutions into the visits. These topics will be further expanded in the research agenda of the WCCC. There are many insights we draw especially from these two spaces which we highlight in this report.

This report presents the key insights gleaned from the WCCC engagements with children, service providers and parents. Where possible, primary data will be presented at granular level so that government departments can understand the context of concerns and accurately plan intervention if necessary. Before delving into this primary data, below we present the socio-economic profiles of the municipalities that the WCCC visited; which help frame the context of the communities visited.

Bitou: At a Glance

Demographics

Population Estimates, 2020; Actual households, 2019



Population

67 139



Households

12 500

Education

2019



Matric Pass Rate	89.6%
Leamer retention rate	52.4
Learner-Teacher Ratio	32.3

Poverty

2018



Gini Coefficient	0.65
Human Development Index	0.71

Health

2019



Primary Health Care Facilities	Immunisation Rate	Maternal Mortality Ratio (per 100 000 live births)	Teenage Pregnancies - Delivery rate to women U/18
5	52.3%	0.0	0.0%

Safety and Security

Actual number of reported cases in 2019/20



Residential Burglaries	DUI	Drug-related Crimes	Murder	Sexual Offences
596	93	254	19	103

Access to Basic Service Delivery

Percentage of households with access to basic services, 2019



Water

92.4%

Refuse Removal

88.0%



Electricity

94.1%



Sanitation

83.7%



Housing

71.3%



Road Safety

2019/20

Fatal Crashes	8
Road User Fatalities	8

Labour

2019

Unemployment Rate (narrow definition)

17.8%



Socio-economic Risks

Risk 1	COVID-19
Risk 2	In-migration
Risk 3	Low Learner retention rates

Source: Socio-economic Profile: Bitou Municipality (2020). Western Cape Government

George: At a Glance

Demographics Population Estimates, 2020; Actual households, 2019



Education	2019
 Matric Pass Rate	82.0%
Learner retention rate	66.8%
Learner-Teacher Ratio	29.7

Poverty	2018
 Gini Coefficient	0.60
Human Development Index	0.76

Health 2019

	Primary Health Care Facilities	Immunisation Rate	Maternal Mortality Ratio (per 100 000 live births)	Teenage Pregnancies - Delivery rate to women U/18
	12	66.0%	85.9	15.0%

Safety and Security Actual number of reported cases in 2019/20

	Residential Burglaries	DUI	Drug-related Crimes	Murder	Sexual Offences
	1 568	672	1 439	75	379

Access to Basic Service Delivery Percentage of households with access to basic services, 2019



Road Safety	2019/20
Fatal Crashes	33
Road User Fatalities	51

Labour	2019
Unemployment Rate (narrow definition)	14.3% 

Socio-economic Risks
Risk 1 Job losses
Risk 2 Safety and Security
Risk 3 In-migration

Source: Socio-economic Profile: George Municipality (2020). Western Cape Government.



Key insights from visits around Bitou and George

Visiting CYCCs from levels 2-4¹ provided sobering insights to the WCCC of the physical infrastructure, ethos of care and lived realities of children in these settings. Engaging vulnerable children in these spaces and places reinforced that a **deeper understanding is required of the child protection system.**

Engaging vulnerable children in these spaces and places reinforced that a deeper understanding is required of the child protection system.

The WCCC visited mainstream schools, schools of skills, and schools for children with special needs. It provided an appreciation for **customised and relevant education** that meets a child where they are in relation to capabilities and potential contributions to society. Mainstream education will be further problematised in our research in seeking a greater understanding of

our commitment to the right to education.

When we visited a community health centre that attained a silver level in relation to ideal clinic status, the WCCC noted the inputs required to achieve these levels of excellence in service. Particularly reassuring was the Clinic Manager's intention to **take services to at-risk adolescents in the community** who are wary or have lost trust in adult guidance.

The contributions of the Mass Opportunity Development (MOD) programmes to child wellbeing and happiness was evident in our visits. The involvement with children in these settings **brought joy to adults and children alike.** The value of these initiatives should not be underestimated, and children always request more of these types of resources on community level.



RIGHT: Learners in conversation at Plettenberg Bay High workshop.

¹ **Level 2 Residential Facility:** provides a placement for children in need of care and protection in less restrictive CYCC residential care programmes for temporary placement or long-term placement.

Level 3 Residential Facility: provides a placement for children in need of care and protection in more restrictive CYCC programmes. These are mainly specialised

behavior modification/assessment programmes or a secure care programme.

Level 4 Residential Facility: provides placement for children in conflict with the law (awaiting trial and sentenced youth) in accordance with the Child Justice Act. The residential care programmes include in-house diversion programmes.

Method of engagement with children

The first visit to Outenikwa CYCC was very sobering as for many in the team this was their first engagement with children in CYCCs.

This visit to Bitou Municipality was scheduled as soon as the third wave of COVID-19 (Delta infections) abated and the country was once again moved to Alert level one with less restrictions on travel. In total, the full team of 5 staff of the Commissioner's Office (including the Commissioner) visited seventeen (17) service sites from 18 – 23 October 2021.

For the first time the programme included visits to levels 2-4 Child and Youth Care Centres (CYCCs). The first visit to Outenikwa CYCC was very sobering as for many in the team this was their first engagement with children in CYCCs. The team was also able to visit a range of schools from mainstream to special schools and schools of skills. At special schools WCCC conducted observation visits

Table 1: WCCC Bitou schedule

DATE	INSTITUTION	TOWN
18/10/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outenikwa CYCC • Bethesda CYCC 	George
19/10/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olympia School 4 Skills • Carpe Diem School • DSD & Badisa 	George
20/10/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Murray High • Kwanokuthula Clinic • Masizame CYCC 	Kwanokuthula
21/10/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plett High • Wittedrift High • Plett Clinic 	Plett Wittedrift
22/10/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kids of Kurland • Bitou 10 Foundation • MOD Centre (DCAS) • DSD & Child Welfare 	Crags Harkerville Kwanokuthula Primary Kwanokuthula Primary
23/10/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This time slot was reserved for Bitou Family Care who failed to honour the appointment • RCL Consultation 	Crags Murray High School

The workshop activities with children have become standardised and include collecting information from community safety mapping, data on children's dreams and worries as well as providing an opportunity to make recommendations to government for service improvement.

and did not conduct workshops with children. At schools of skills, the Commissioner conducted a redacted version of the programme focussing on recommendations to government. In total, WCCC engaged 144 children.

The workshop activities with children have become standardised and include collecting information from community safety mapping, data on children's dreams and worries as well as providing an opportunity to make recommendations to government for service improvement. In CYCCs, the method of engagement was adapted and did not explicitly focus on children's worries. This was deliberate as the WCCC did not have enough opportunity to understand the risk profile of each child who participated in our workshop. The Commissioner also did not want to trigger any undue distress.

Children raised their concerns and worries either through the community/site mapping activity or in person with the staff, when they felt comfortable. The social worker in the team, kept a close eye on which children may need referral or intervention after our session.

In addition to engagements with children, the team engaged a range of stakeholders from government service sites (i.e. educators, principals, social workers, healthcare practitioners) as well as NGOs. The aim of these meetings were to understand service delivery challenges from the perspective of service providers, provide recommendations to higher levels of decision makers in government as well for them to provide their account of key issues afflicting the communities they service.

Table 2: Number of children engaged per community / area who participated in the Community Child Rights workshops



COMMUNITY / AREA	NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN CCRWS
George	74
Plettenberg Bay	14
Kwanokuthula	36
Pine Trees	2
Crags	3
New Horizon	9
Wittedrift	2
Kranshoek	4

THE WCCC'S IMPRESSION OF COMMUNITIES ACROSS BITOU

The communities of Kwanokhutula, Kranshoek and the Craggs resembled the marginalized township communities that border the City of Cape Town.

When in Bitou, the team was amazed by the scenic landscape of the Garden Route; which also crept its way into all of the communities visited. Against the mountainous backdrop and endless landscapes were the communities of Kwanokhutula, Kranshoek, The Craggs, and Witterdrift; which all surrounded the tourist centre of Plettenberg Bay. There were noticeable differences between these bordering communities. The communities of Kwanokhutula, Kranshoek and the Craggs resembled the marginalized township communities that border the City of Cape Town.

Kwanokhutula and The Craggs, for example, can be described as a township community with a mix of formal and informal dwellings; with Kwanokhutula greeting visitors as they enter Bitou, whereas The Craggs is located on the outer most skirts of Bitou – bordering the Eastern Cape. In comparison to this, the vast rural plains of Witterdrift and the coastal enclave of Plettenberg Bay seemed to house the more privileged elite.



RIGHT: Workshop at Witterdrift High.



Discussion of Workshop Findings

ACTIVITY 1: COMMUNITY SAFETY MAPPING

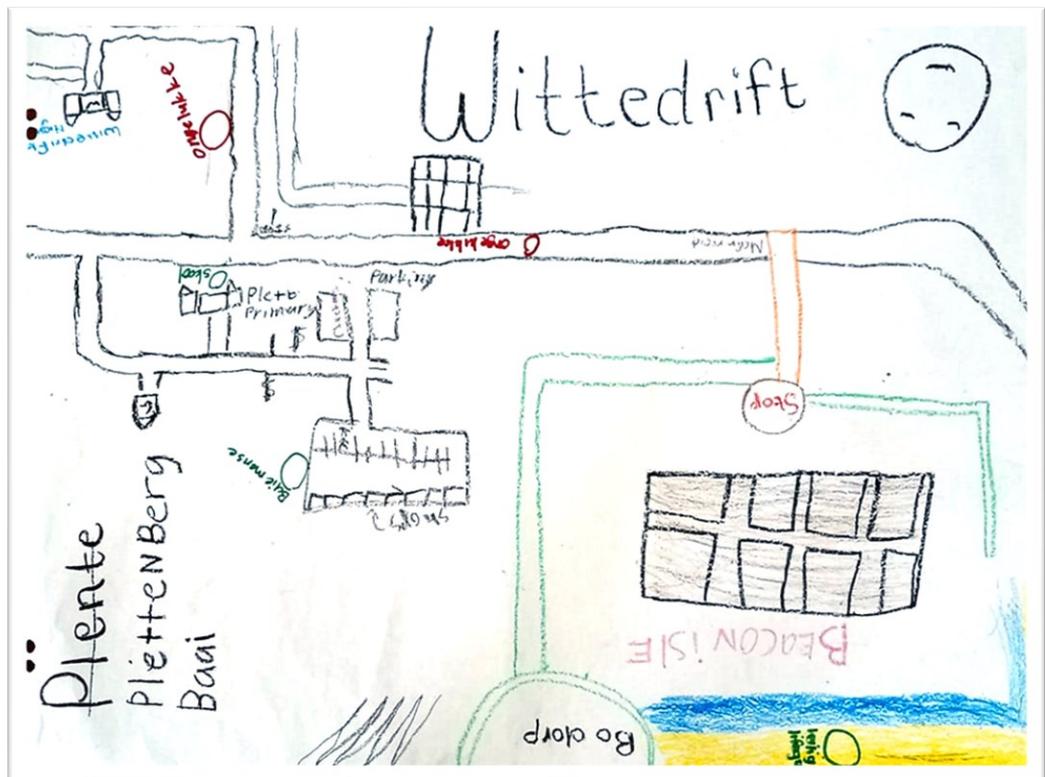
Method

Children work in groups to represent their CYCC, school or community on a 2-dimensional drawing as a map. After they draw the map, they are asked to mark in red (unsafe/dangerous places) and in green (safe places) on the map providing some explanation. Especially dangerous places are discussed to understand whether the danger is immediate and requiring action. This section will present community safety maps from various regions of Bitou, which include Plettenberg Bay, Wittedrift, Pine Trees, Kranshoek, New Horizon, The Craggs and Kwanokhutula. Each community map will be depicted, followed by a narrative description of the map and in conclusion an analysis of findings is presented.

Reports from schools

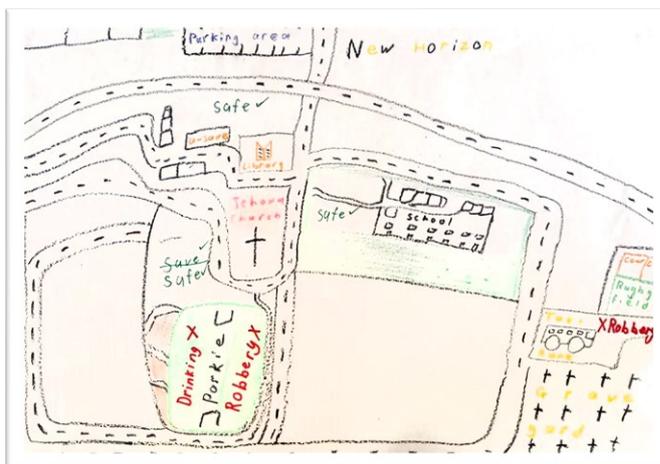
In the Plettenberg Bay, children were concerned about busy roads where children can be involved in accidents and the beach where children can drown, sometimes due to rip tides, or are at risk of shark attacks. Safe places were the shops where food and clothes are purchased. Educational facilities were also considered positive spaces. Other service facilities such as hospital, clinics, and churches are also safe spaces. However, in the town there is also a threat from 'thieves' (*skelms*). Children also reported that in town there may be violence (*mes steek* – stabbing) and the sale of dagga.

Children work in groups to represent their CYCC, school or community on a 2-dimensional drawing as a map.



RIGHT: Community Safety Map of Wittedrift

RIGHT: Community safety maps, New Horizon and The Craggs (2021).



In New Horizon, children once again reported taxi ranks and parks to be unsafe due to the risk of drunk people and robbery, they also added the graveyard as dangerous places. Taverns and drug houses were frowned upon. The school, library, shops, sport fields and church were designated safe zones.

In Craggs Kurland Village, the national road and the adjacent taxi rank were considered dangerous due to car accidents (*ongelukke*). Close to the taxi rank there is a garage, fast foods and a coffee shop is safe because there are 'lots of people'. The farm areas and roads are dangerous especially where young people congregate on a corner, as children and youth risk being stabbed (*steek, gevaarlik hoek vir jong mense*).

The churches and rugby/netball fields as well as Bird of Eden / Monkey Land is not explicitly marked as safe or dangerous. The 'skeem' (low-cost housing scheme), bus stops and shops are marked as dangerous due to the risk or occurrence of rape and robbery. Taverns are dangerous because people get drunk and stab each other (*dronk, steek mekaar*). The primary school is considered a safe and positive space.

In Kwanokuthula, children noted they were at risk of sexual harassment, rape and kidnapping which can occur near Murray High School and the taxi rank as well as at the stadium and the spaces near the police station and Department of Home Affairs building. The other main risk is from alcohol and drug abuse (and resultant negative behaviours) from adults and peers which happens especially in the vicinity of taverns. At places such as shops, there is the risk of theft. The forest is viewed as 'dangerous territory' and residential spaces referred to as 'shacks' are also unsafe. The Phakamisani Primary School, the clinic the Department of Home Affairs and police buildings as well as churches are considered safe spaces.

RIGHT: Community Safety Map Kwanokuthula (2021)



Analysis of Safety in Communities

1. Socio-economic differences in the experience of safety

There are clear differences in the nature of safety perceptions when one compares the different areas. In Plettenberg Bay, (a bustling seaside tourist attraction), and Wittedrift, (an affluent rural village) children are chiefly concerned about the dangers posed by the physical environment; such as the ocean where children may drown and main road where children may get knocked over by cars. When compared the poorer, more marginalised communities of New Horizons, The Crags and Kwanokhutula, the perception of safety is starkly different. In these areas, children note that they are at risk of violence and physical assault; which are most likely to be experienced in areas like taxi ranks or isolated parks. They also experience a variety of social ills, such as binge drinking at taverns and shebeens; and drug abuse throughout the communities; which fuel violence and abuse throughout their communities².

2. Service points viewed as a place of refuge

A common finding across all communities concerns the places that children see as safe. In each community, children indicated that service points were considered safe places. This includes schools, creches, police stations, libraries and clinics. Many also mentioned that churches were equally safe³. Children may consider places like schools, creches and libraries safe because they are able to congregate with other children in those spaces, which are largely free from adult interference –

apart from their necessary interactions with teachers or staff.

ACTIVITY 2: DREAMS AND WORRIES

The findings of activity two (focused on children's articulation of their dreams and worries written and submitted on cards) is presented below. This visit to Bitou Municipality and George, included the inputs of children living in Child and Youth Care Centres (CYCCs). Children in 3 CYCCs were only asked to submit their dreams and not their worries (considering they are particularly vulnerable). Whereas, the children at schools were requested to document and share both dreams and worries.

Dreams of children in CYCCs

The boys and young men from **Outenikwa CYCC** shared dreams about future **professions, family life, and travel**. Sporting professions included soccer (which was most popular), rugby and golf. Some boys expressed aspirations of becoming a pilot and mechanical engineer. A 14-year child told a heart-warming story of visiting an airport and being inspired to be a pilot. A few boys and young men noted they would like to work in law enforcement such as with the police or the army. This was interesting as some of the boys are assigned to the CYCC because they are in conflict with the law.

A 20-year old young man in the group expressed his **aspirations for family life**. He said: "I want to be a good dad and be a good example for my children." The Commissioner could build on this comment to talk about the positive effect of positive male role models in families and conversely about the effect of toxic masculinities. Some of the boys in

² Van Niekerk, A. & Mathews, S. (2019). Socio ecological model of risk and protective factors of violence against children

³ De Lannoy, A, Fortuin, A, Mpofo-Mketwa, T, Mudiriza, G, Ngcowa, S, Storme, E and Smith, C

(2018) Unpacking the Lived Realities of Western Cape Youth. Exploring the well-being of young people residing in five of the most deprived areas in the Western Cape Province.

There are clear differences in the nature of safety perceptions when one compares the different areas.

these centres have been inducted into gangs which is a prevalent form of toxic masculinity. These gangs use ink markings on the body (tattoos) to identify a boy as being associated with a gang. Many of the boys were upset about being marked with tattoos — possibly against their will. A 16-year old boy says: “my dream is to remove all my tattoos.” They asked the Commissioner to investigate how to remove tattoos. The centre management noted that the relationship with the Department of Health would be re-activated to attend to this matter. However, this will only address the consequences of toxic masculinities and practices in these institutions, not the cause of the problem.

One child noted about her dreams for the future: “move to somewhere sunny, but honestly anywhere that’s not here.”

A ‘dream car’ was a clear aspiration for many boys. Two inputs also included talk of travel: “I want to travel to many countries”. **Cars and planes** featured strongly in the dreams of the boys at this CYCC.

At Bethesda CYCC children expressed dreams of **happy families and prestigious careers**. They were keen to escape their current reality as wards of the state. One child noted about her dreams for the future: “move to somewhere sunny, but honestly anywhere that’s not here.” Children in this CYCC were removed from parental care and this centre becomes their home for however long they need support until the age of majority or if they continue with studies until the age of 21. Some children stay in CYCCs for many years and never return to their families. Their experience of family life thus informs their need to create happy families for themselves and sometimes also for other children. A child shared: “I also want to make children without parents feel happy and not sad.” (*Ek wil ook laat nie kinders sonder ouers ook gelukkig voel en nie hartseer nie.*) Thus, children would like to be part of happy families when they can create families of their own.

Children’s career goals at **Bethesda CYCC** focused on professional careers. They wanted to become doctors, engineers, lawyers or become ‘celebrities’ by being dancers, singers, rappers and actors and ‘become rich’. Children were aware that good careers will set them up for good lifestyles.

At the **Bethesda CYCC** in George, children expressed their dreams in **career options** such as ‘acting’, becoming a ‘shoe designer’, ‘lawyer’ or ‘entrepreneur’. All in the effort of becoming ‘rich’. Dreams were focused on careers.

Dreams of children in schools

When we visited children at their schools, we understood that they were firmly rooted in the identity of the communities they lived in rather than the schools they attended. We asked children from different communities to group together for reporting their dreams and worries. The communities where the children who were interviewed lived included: Pine Trees (2), Plettenberg Bay (14), Kranshoek (4), Kwankuthula (36) The Craggs (3), and Wittedrift (2). The 61 dreams of the children will be presented separately for each community.

The two children from **Pine Trees** expressed their dreams very eloquently: “My dream is very complicated I want to be a teacher, then I want to get promoted and be a principal, from a principal I want to be the minister of education.” Another child said: “I see myself as a successful young woman who is a successful doctor. I also want to build a home for homeless children.” These children demonstrated the pathway for their **career goals** and wanted to **help others** when they attained success.

Children from **Plettenberg Bay** expressed their dreams in the form of **career aspirations and their contribution to society**. Once again



prestigious careers like 'doctors', 'lawyers' and 'accountants' were mentioned along with aspirations of becoming a professional 'soccer player', even internationally. One child described in detail the facets of their future life: "I would like to become a qualified accountant. I will work at SAIPA [South African Institute of Professional Accountants]. Also work with people with depression. And have 2 children and a husband." (*Ek sal graag 'n geoktoreerde rekenmeester wil wees. Ek sal by SIPA werk. En ook mense met depressie werk. En 2 kinders en 'n man hê.*) Another child envisioned a life in service of others: "To start my own workplace and help people who are poor. To help moms who don't have anything for their newborn baby. Help people to get jobs and to feed their kids. I want to do that because when I help someone, I feel happy about it." Children were also concerned about the homeless and a clean environment. A novel career option expressed: "To invest in Bitcoin. To become a professional Minecraft player." This shows that children are aware of the **current trends of professions** and opportunities online using technology while still reflecting the popular options for professional or sporting careers.



In **Kranshoek**, **professional careers** would be the way children are able to move from their current communities and **create better lives** for themselves and their families. A child articulated: "I am out of Kranshoek. I have a happy and simple life. I am married and have a child. I studied 7 years to become CA [chartered accountant]. I have a good job. I am happy." (*Ek is uit Kranshoek uit. Ek het 'n gelukkige en simpel lewe. Ek is getroud en het al 'n kind. Ek het 7 jaar se studies om 'n CA te word afgelê. Ek het 'n goeie werk. Ek is gelukkig.*) Becoming a professional was viewed as a means to take care of the more vulnerable in their families or in society.

The children of **Kwanokuthula** introduced us to the concept of a **soft life**. It was beautifully articulated as follows: "I want to own myself. I want to live a soft life." **Independence and a good standard of living** could be attained by becoming professional according to children in this community. The soft life included becoming a top professional, owning a 'mansion or penthouse' and having a garage 'full of cars' and being able to travel the world. Another strong theme for children who lived in Kwanokuthula was to bring change in their community. For example, one child shared: "I also want to build a care centre for children who grow up not having what they need." Some children envisioned they would make a difference by becoming involved in politics: "I want to run for mayor and bring change into my community. Many politicians come and make empty promises. Housing and corruption are big problems in my community. Every day I feel pressured to make a change as if I'm the one to end the misery." Children are well aware of the dynamics and socio-economic situations in their communities and want to be change agents.

Children from the **Crags yearned for toys** that seemed unattainable such as a 'soccer ball' or a 'Play station'. One child also shared their view on **supporting their community**: "To become a teacher one day. To help others. Give other teenagers advice. To help homeless people on the street." (*Om eendag 'n onderwyser te word. Om anders te help. Raad vir ander tieners te gee. Hawelase mense te help wat op straat is.*)

The **Wittedrift** children also dreamed of becoming a dancer and a **help to their community**. Children expressed a lot of benevolence and empathy towards others while also wanting to attain their own goals.

Worries of children in schools

Only the children the WCCC team engaged at schools were asked to share their worries. Children from different communities were spread across various schools. Instead of collating their worries per school, the team asked them to report on the worries of children in their communities where they reside. The Commissioner received a total of 65 worries representing the communities of Plettenberg Bay, Kwanakhuthula, The Craggs, Kranshoek, New Horizon and Pine Trees. The worries of the children will be described per community.

One child said: "In some areas houses are too close together or not properly made and children's items often get wet or burned during fires or storms." This comment denotes awareness and empathy for children living in precarious settings.

Most of the children we engaged reported coming from the **Plettenberg Bay area**. Children had very different experiences depending on which part of Plettenberg Bay they resided in — race was a determining factor for the exact location of a child's residence. However, these responses were all consolidated as representing the children living in Plettenberg Bay. The **children were aware** of some of the realities in different areas. One child said: "In some areas houses are too close together or not properly made and children's items often get wet or burned during fires or storms." This comment denotes awareness and empathy for children living in precarious settings.

Generally, the children from Plettenberg Bay report many **threats to their safety** including: "riots, drunk drivers, drug dealers, paedophiles, robberies, and kidnappings." They are also worried about other threats to children's safety such as: "suicide, knife stabbings, gun shootings, theft, rape, drug abuse, child abuse, women abuse, mental illness like depression, bulimia and self-harm." (*Selfmoord. Mes steek. Gun skiet. Dief stal. Verkragting. Dwelm misbruik. Kinder mishandeling. Vroue mishandeling. Mental illness Depressie. Bulimia. Self-harm*). Thus, they fear

harm from others and also note that children may inflict self-harm. One child also reflected on particular areas which have become unsafe for children to move freely, they noted: "The children don't want to go to the main harbour because there are too many dangerous 'characters'. They cannot go to the river anymore because too many children die there." (*Die kinders wil nie meer op die main port kom nie want daar is te veel karonglers. Hulle kan nie meer revier to gaan nie want daar gaan te veel kinders dood daar.*) Children understand that they need to limit their movement and freedom to remain safe.

School was also a place that evoked worry for children from Plettenberg Bay, one child reported many **stresses at school** including: "school reports, school studies, and schoolwork." (*Skool rapporte. Skool studies. Skoolwerk.*) Others also noted that bullying at school was a big problem. Therefore, children seem to struggle in general with what is expected at school, they are concerned about their results, and they are affected by bullying at school.

Children from **The Craggs** reported worries about being **bullied into anti-social behaviours** which can even happen at schools. One child said: "Children are threatened [forced] to smoke. Girls get raped. Children get bullied. Many do not want to go to school because of the bullying." (*Kinders word gedreig om te rook. Meisies word verkrag. Kinders word geboelie. Baie wil nie skool toe gaan as gevolg van geboelie word.*). Violence seems to be ever-present and especially girls have their bodily integrity violated.

Even in **Kranshoek** children's **personal safety** was the main concern in addition to experiences of deprivation. A child articulated it as follows: "Scared of being left alone at home, assault by parents [due to

the child's choice of boyfriend], rape, going to bed hungry, murder, unemployed parents which is the cause of being homeless. (Scared of being left alone at home. *Aanranding deur ouers (boyfriend). Verkragting. Honger gaan slaap. Moord. Werkloosheid van ouers/ oorsaak van geen blyplek.*). Children lived difficult lives, dependent on the means of their parents and the multiple threats to their safety.

In **New Horizon, safety in and outside the home** was a concern as well as what children do to try to cope with their reality. One child noted about the effects of living in a bad home: "They are scared to come home because their parents abuse them. They can't stop taking drugs. They are addicted to smoking." Another child reflected on safety within the community, they said: They are scared to be outside late because people would do anything to you. They would rob you, assault you or rape you." In New Horizon neither their community nor their homes were safe spaces.

In **Pine Trees**, the children lived in a **forested area** which posed threats to their safety. They reported they were unsafe from people who tried to 'murder' or 'rape'. The environment also posed challenges - a child noted: "My community's worries is forests are too deep so they children might get lost and get eaten by the wild animals." Children seemed to not be protected from the dangers posed by people or animals who could harm them.

Life for children in **Kwanokuthula** is very challenging. There are a **range of worries** reported which speak to the nature of the relationship of parents and children, fear of violence, substance abuse, lack of recreational facilities and opportunities for talent development, early pregnancy as well as homelessness and deprivation. One child reported their general worries as

follows: "I am so worried about the children of Kwanokuthula Bitou. Some of the children are smoking drugs and some of them drop out of school at the young age and teenage girls get pregnant at the age of 14 or 15 years old." There is a strong pull towards risky behaviour. Children point out the role of parents and government in child wellbeing, a child said: "I am worried that the children of Bitou they don't get enough needs from their parents when the children receive a grant money from the government the parents choose to buy alcohol and then the children's they are starving because they don't get enough needs so the **social workers must stand up for the children's in our community.**" There is a call for government to act to support parents properly in the care of their children. Children also recognise that sometimes parents are just not coping to provide for them, a child noted: "My worry is many kids live on the street and they don't have shelter and it hurts because every rain, wind, sun hits them just because they don't have home. Our dreams are to be successful and fulfil our parents dreams and make their prayers come true, so that one day they can see us wear our graduation gowns." Child and parents have dreams of a better future. However, this is also hampered by lack of opportunities to develop talents in communities. A child articulated: "They [children] are worried about a children's centre. They don't have a place where they do activities like music, dance, drama, or acting where they can go to avoid smoking drugs and to avoid getting pregnant." Children recognise they need parents and government to work together in order for them to thrive and achieve wellbeing.



Summary of worries

Children in Bitou reported that threats to personal safety, living in threatening environments, domestic violence and school stresses were the main worries of children in this municipality. Children from different communities expressed the specifics of their worries well. Communicating worries can be both triggering and comforting depending on the wellbeing of the child. Therefore, it is important to have referral mechanisms in place and a way to check up on children after having conducted these workshops.

The social worker in the WCCC team does immediate debriefing of a child when distress is triggered in the workshops. When there is a need, she refers the child for further support from DSD or its partners

*RIGHT:
Workshop at
Murray High
School.*



ANALYSIS OF CHILDREN'S DREAMS AND WORRIES

A soft life

For the first time since starting Community Child Rights Workshops as the Commissioner for Children in October 2020 the WCCC heard children conceptualise their ultimate aspiration as living 'a soft life'. This concept is spoken about in popular culture, music, and social media. This term is so apt for all the expressions of wanting a different type of life than they currently have. It brought home the fact that this dream is formulated in contrast to their current realities — perhaps if taken literally, they are living a hard life. Characterised by the opposite of what they dream of. From observation and their articulation of their worries and community maps we can infer that a hard life includes experiences of or exposure to violence, deprivation, neglect, and struggle.

Conversely, they believed that attaining a professional qualification and job (often the typically prestigious careers such as becoming lawyers, doctors or accountants) alternatively becoming celebrity actors or sports players, was the way to escape a hard life. It was the way to attain the means to afford a soft life, a good lifestyle with big houses, many cars, and the ability to travel.

This speaks to the levels of inequality in South Africa. Children who grow up in more challenging circumstances see 'rich' people close to them daily. They see them in the main towns, their parents may be employed by the upper class, they read about them, and see them on the television. These are not distant figures in far-off lands. The reality of living in an unequal society is that children are confused about why their circumstances are dire in contrast to others who always

seem to live well, seemingly with no concerns.

Children have decided that professional careers are the means to social mobility. Accordingly, education is considered the vehicle to escape one's current social position⁴. However, although education may be one pathway, the solution is not as simple as that. There is a confluence of structural factors that result in some people living lives of deprivation. There are also challenges in the education system.

Trapped in a life of struggle

Children seem to be escaping their realities with unrealistic aspirations for their future. They want to be professionals one day but now they are trapped in a life of struggle. Many have not figured out what it will take for them in their current situation to transcend to a better future. For this transition to take place well, it will take agency and structural factors to line up. While some children break out of cycles of living in impoverished circumstances with what seems like sheer 'grit', there are other internal factors at play as well. For example, if you want to become a medical doctor you need to be good at maths and science at school. Without these talents, articulating that you will become a medical doctor is unrealistic. Schools need to guide children and cater for other professions than the mainstream ones that result from University degrees. A sense of self-worth and direction for the future may be better accomplished by early assessment of aptitude and then the specific learning support needed.

Instead, children articulate pipe dreams out of desperation to escape their trajectories of struggle. They grow up deprived of their basic needs, their parents unable to provide for them. Their communities

From observation and their articulation of their worries and community maps we can infer that a hard life includes experiences of or exposure to violence, deprivation, neglect, and struggle.



⁴ Lannelli, C. & Paterson, L. (2005). *Does education promote social mobility?*

are not well-resourced, and the pull of risky behaviour is far stronger than the resources that foster healthy self-esteem and affirm individual strengths and talent. When they do not achieve what they believed was their future realities, they may become despondent and even lose hope.

Changing my community

Children's awareness of the challenges in their communities continues to drive their eagerness to be change agents. Children seem to be taking disproportionate responsibility for the state of their communities and their society as they have empathy for those in their immediate circumstances who struggle to survive. They worry about vulnerable individuals in their communities, especially other children who suffer from abuse and neglect.

So, in the future, when they are older and have more resources, they would like to rescue those who need help and support. They want to build shelters, they want to feed those who are hungry, they want to provide better opportunities for those who have lost their way. This is a constant worry for some children. It may also be projecting what they themselves are experiencing and therefore a current cry for help. This may be alerting us to an unfair mental health burden.

More needs to be done to build social support systems in communities for families that struggle. In the case of children, parents are the first duty bearers for their wellbeing with government charged with creating an enabling environment.

ACTIVITY 3: RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNMENT

Children's recommendations were requested for the four (4) mandate departments of the Commissioner i.e.. Departments of Education, Social Development and Health as well as Cultural Affairs and Sport. A high-levels analysis of these recommendations are discussed below and a detailed table of children's submissions to the WCCC are provided in Appendix 1.

Department of Education

Children focused on a number of topics; which included learner guidance and support, school management and teacher conduct, learning during COVID-19, as well as the behaviour of their fellow learners. In terms of learner support, children at **Plettenberg Secondary School** were very grateful for the ways in which the Department of Education supports underprivileged learners at their school. This includes school fee exemptions for some learners; which allows them to fulfill their dreams. They said: "The Department gives one learner in PBS a chance to reach her dreams." (*Die Dept gee een van die learners In PSB n kans om haar drome to behaal*"). There was also mention of a school feeding programme at the school, which they thought was noteworthy. They noted: "The feeding scheme as school for children who do not have food at home." (*Die koskombuis vir die kinders wat nie kos het by hulle huise nie*"). Recommendations concerning learner support going forward revolved around subject choices. They recommended: "Give more attention to subject choices for children." (*Gee meer aandag vir kinders se vak keuses*) and the need to assist learners who require catch-up support, they asked: "help those who are slow in learning, to get extra classes after school".

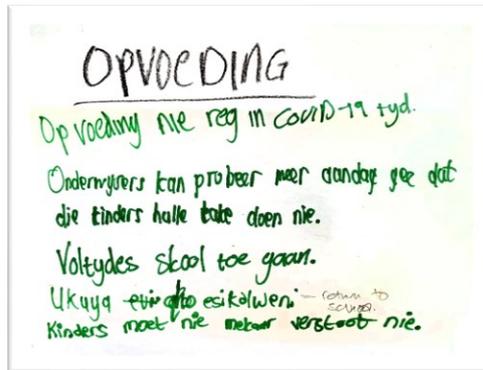


Children were quite concerned about school-based bullying and drug use; saying that schools should protect learners from bullies. Children shared: "Make the children safe from bullies" and that learners must stop using drugs at school, they noted: "No drugs should be used at school". Another school management concern related to teacher conduct; specifically focusing on the need for teachers to be less stressed. They appealed: "the teacher must do their work and stop stressing". (*Die onderwyser moet hulle werk doen en minder stress*). Children demanded that teachers stop using corporal punishment.

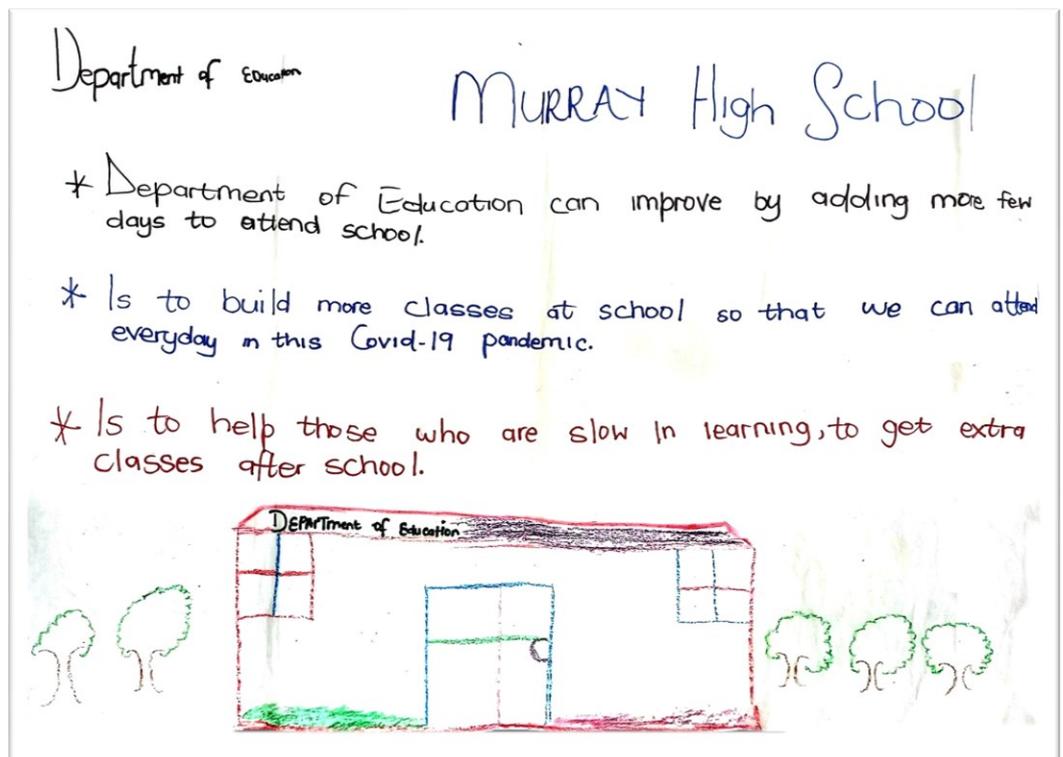
They stated: "the teachers must stop hitting the children." (*Die onderwysers moet ophou die kinders slaan*). And finally, learners believed that schools should not be too prescriptive when it comes to a learner's physical appearance, saying: "less rules for appearances (*dress code*)."

Children were aware that the tuition times they received during the COVID-19 pandemic was insufficient and expressed their desire to attend school more often during lockdown, recommending: "we should go to school more often". This sentiment was also commonly expressed during the WCCC's child consultations about #LearninginCOVIDtimes. Learners recommended that the Western Cape Education Department consider the following as ways to increase school attendance during the pandemic:

- Increase the number of days that children may attend school. "The department of education can improve by adding more few days to attend school".



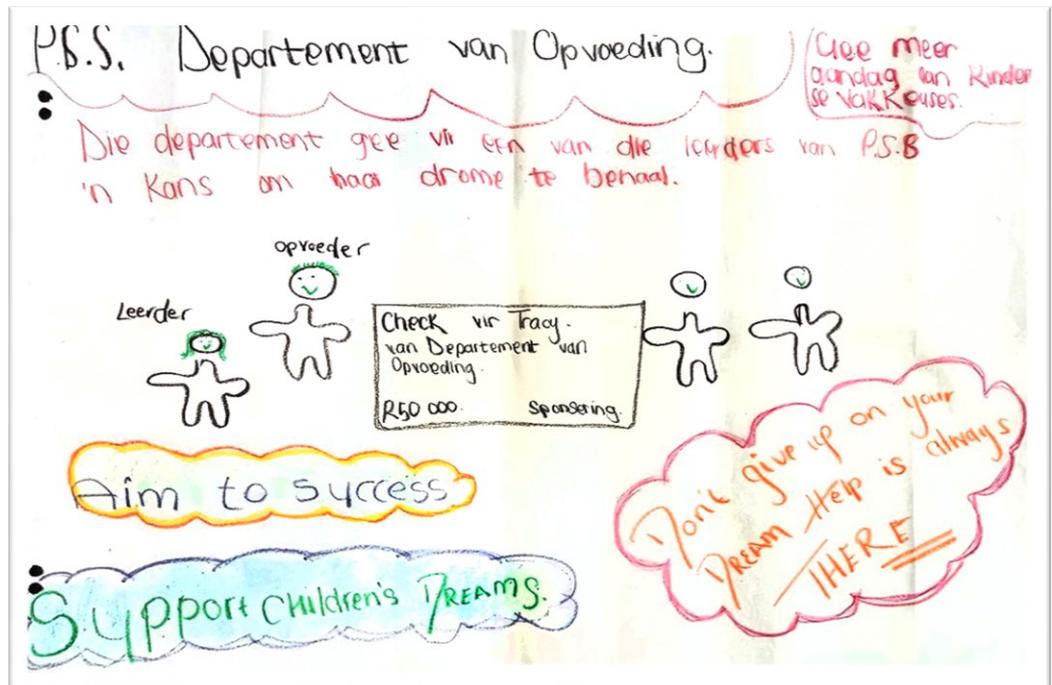
RIGHT: First and second poster: Children's recommendations to the Western Cape Education Department.



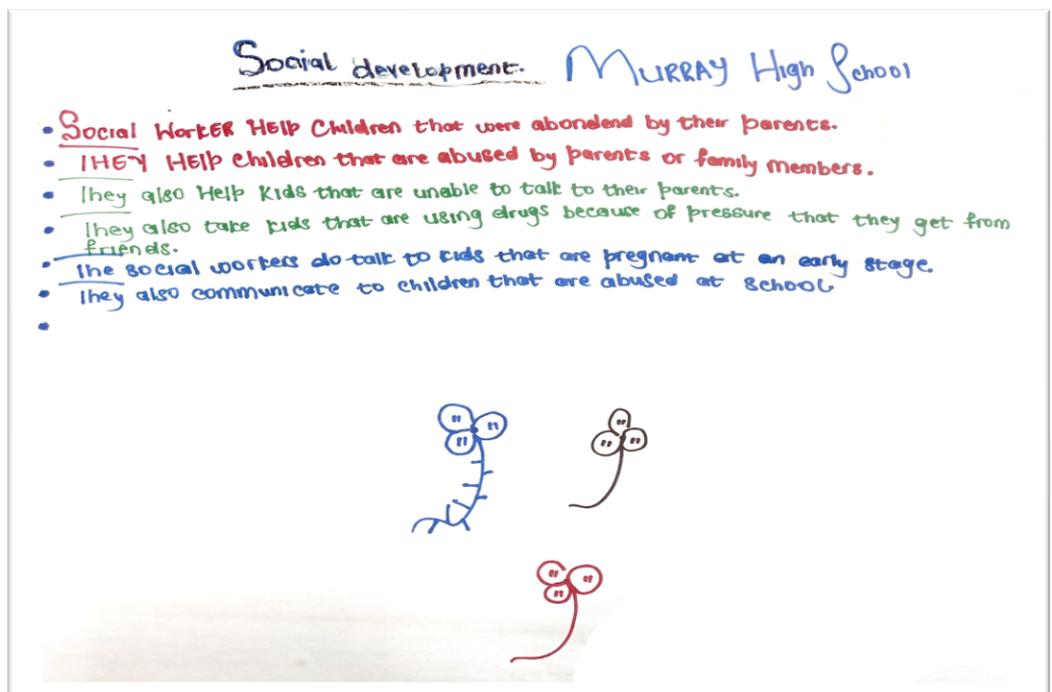
- Increase the number of classrooms so that more learners can be accommodated "build more classes at school so that we can attend every day in this COVID-19 pandemic".

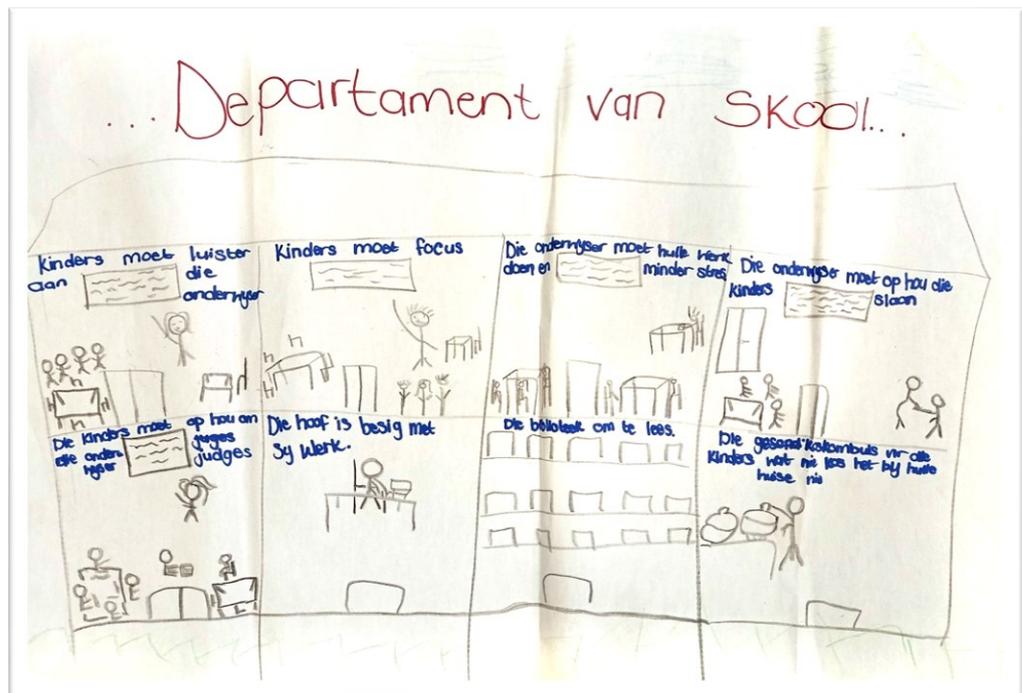
In addition to the WCED and school management's responsibilities, children were also quite clear that learners had responsibilities when it came to their behaviour and conduct.

This includes the need for children to focus in class (*Kinders moet focus*), listen to their teachers (*kinders moet luister na die onderwyser*) and treat their teachers with more respect ("*die kinders moet ophou aan die onderwyser judge*").



RIGHT: Children's Recommendations to the Western Cape Education Department





Department of Social Development

Most submissions concerning the Department of Social Development (DSD) centered around the topic of child protection. Here, learners provided a mix of recommendations for service delivery improvements as well as their understanding of the work that social workers should be responsible for. In terms of the latter, learners believe that social workers are key resources for children who are abused. Children said: "They help children that were abused by parents or family members"; "They also communicate to children that are abused at school", "Social workers help children that were abandoned by their parents."

Regarding their recommendations surrounding child protection, learners had mixed views about the types of interventions that should be prioritised by DSD. For example, some learners believe that children should be removed from abusive homes. They expressed: "parents who abuse children must be arrested. (ouers wat

kinders mishandel moet in hegtenis geneem word)."; Whereas, others believe in more preventative work being done, such as "They need to change the problem at home by helping to buy food, clothes etc." or "They can provide counselling for parents in order to improve their relationships with their children". Another group of children also believed that the provisioning of children's foster homes should be improved as a child protection measure. They noted: "build good and reliable foster homes for children. (bou goeie vertroubare weeshuise vir kinders).

Another popular topic of interest was that of mental health support for children, and the role that DSD should be playing in this regard. Here, learners believed that resources should be provided by DSD when children are unable to talk to their parents or if they do not have anyone else to turn to. Children articulated: "They [DSD must] also help kids that are unable to talk to their parents". They also said: "children have the

Learners believe that social workers are key resources for children who are abused.



right to freedom and always be able to talk with someone to share their problems" (*kinders het die reg om vryheid te he en altyd iemand te het om hulle probleme saam mee te deel*). Resources needed could refer to counselling support or awareness programmes. Learners also believed that DSD should educate parents on the topic of mental health and how to support their children in this regard. They requested: "our parents need more information about children's mental health." (*Ons kan ouers meer inlig oor kinders se mental health*).

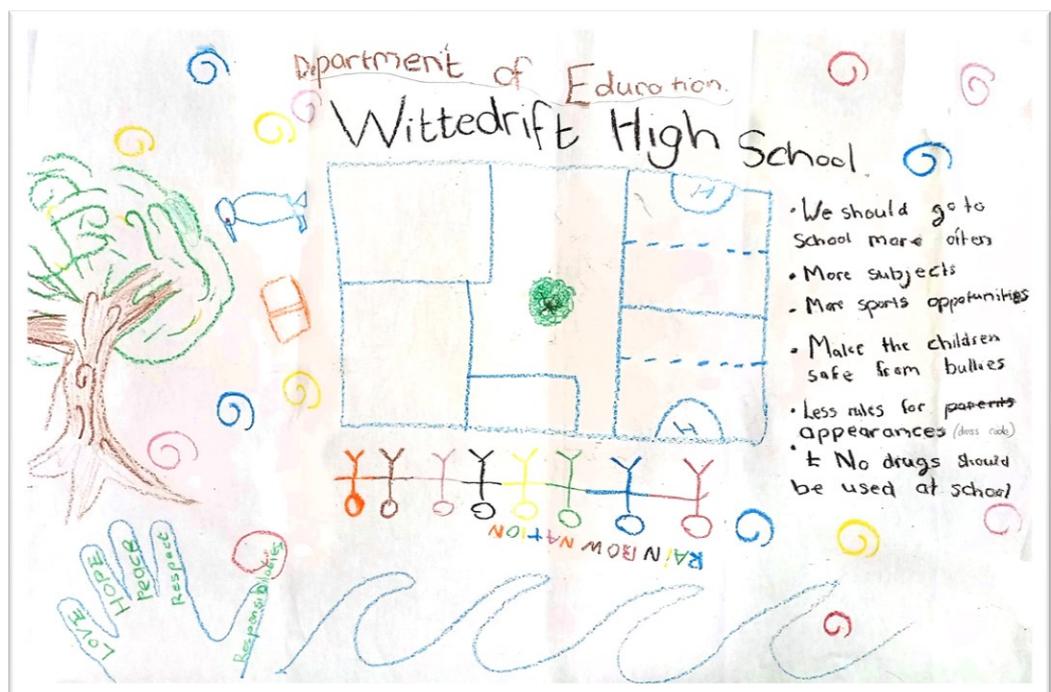
Children asked for more action to be taken against parents who abuse alcohol, such as placing them into rehabilitation programmes. They asked: "drunk parents must be sent for intervention to SANCA [rehabilitation programmes]. (*Dronk ouers weg stiek na SANCA*). In addition, support must be provided to children who abuse drugs — "they [must] also take care of kids that are using drugs because of pressure that they get from friends."

Children wanted government to intervene more speedily when parents are abusing substances – they identified this as the cause for many domestic problems. Children articulated that they found great value in the programmes that addressed substance abuse as many of their personal circumstances for removal from their parents may have involved substance abuse. The children acknowledged that substance abuse was rife even amongst children who were facing social or peer pressure. Accordingly, they too needed efficient intervention.

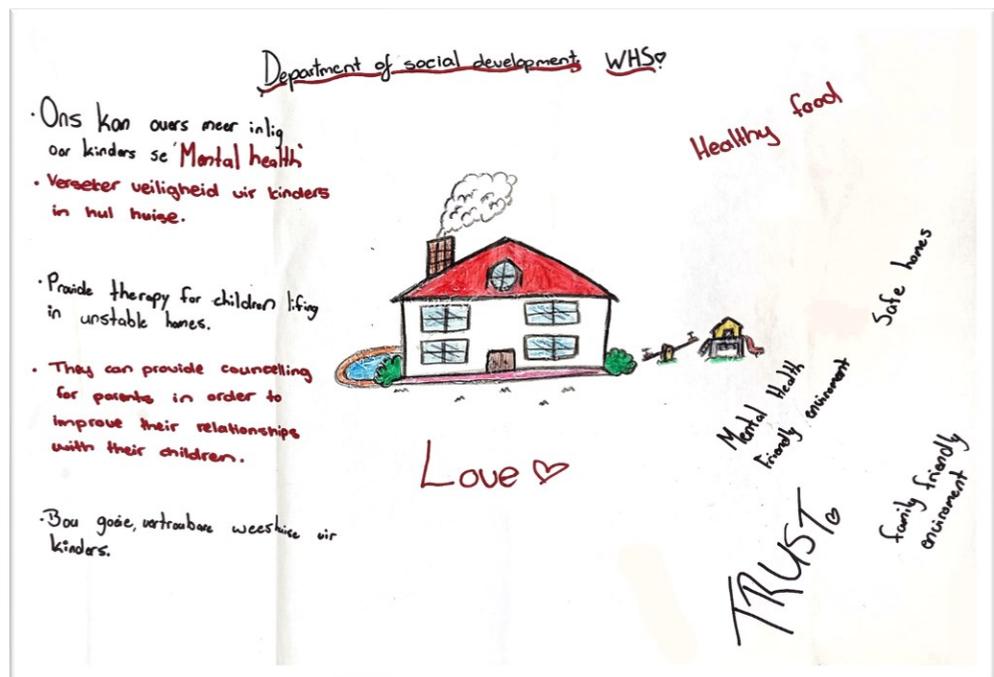
Other important topics that learners focused on included:

- **Care and provision of basic rights:** DSD should ensure that children have sustained access to basic necessities like food, water and shelter. Children requested: "correct care where you can get love, water and food." (*regte sorg te sit waar jy kan liefde kry en water en kos*). They asked for "better living conditions for children." (*Better woongebiede vir kinders*).

RIGHT: Children's Recommendations to the Western Cape Education Department



RIGHT: Poster 1 and 2: Children's recommendation to the Department of Social Development



- **Early pregnancy:** Social worker should act as a resource for children who become pregnant. They noted: "the social workers do talk to kids that are pregnant at an early age".
- **Resourcing the system:** More social workers should be employed by the Department. They articulated: "there needs to be more social workers in the department."

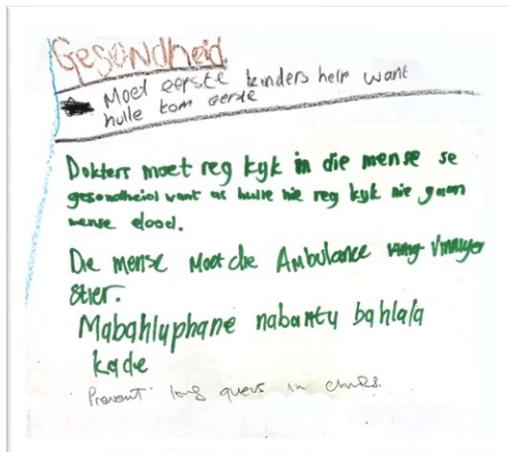
Children were concerned about the service standards in clinics and hospital as well as with ambulance services.

Department of Health

The submissions tendered for the Department of Health (DoH) focused on the state of healthcare provision, child and adolescent health care, and the governance of system. In terms of the state of health care provision, children were concerned about the service standards in clinics and hospital as well as with ambulance services. They noted that people become impatient with long waiting times as well as were put off by the attitude or services received by the health professionals. The resources always seem too few and too stretched for the target population. Other key issues include:

- **Long waiting times** was the most popular concern. Children noted: “services are slow to get medication fast”; “services must speed up to help all those waiting for a service” (*daar moet vinniger gemaak word vir all die mense wat wag daar vir twee ure*”; “Jy wag te laat om gehelp te word).
- Clinics seem to have **inadequate hygiene practices**: They say: “some clinics are dirty” (*Sommige klinieke is vuil*) and “clinics provide low quality food to patients” (*soms van die kos is nie goed voorbeg*).
- Clinics seem **understaffed**: They note there are “too few staff” (*te min personnel*) and “staff do not treat patients well” (*Die sisters is baie ongeskuk*).

Outside of the issues being faced by learners, they raised a number of interesting recommendations they would like considered by the Department of Health. In terms of child and adolescent health, learners think that the DoH should consider doing more outreach at schools; such as providing monthly check-ups for children at school — “monthly checkups for all children under 18 for free at school” and providing sexual and reproductive health education — “annual lessons should be given at

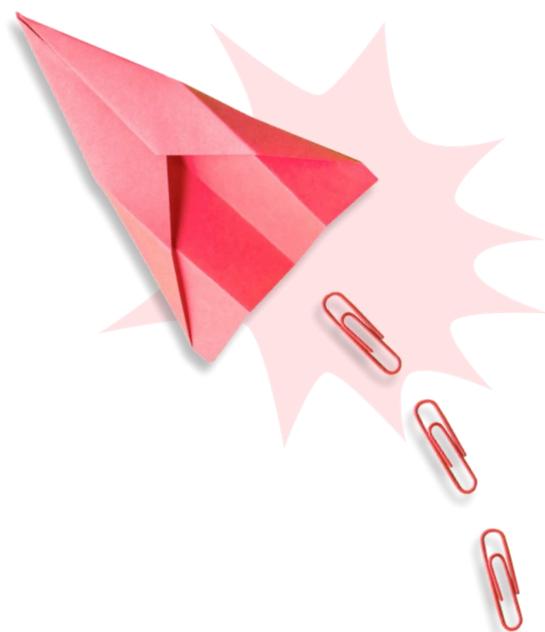


RIGHT: Recommendations for the Department of Health and Wellness from Murrays High, Plettenberg Bay (2021)





RIGHT: Children's recommendations for the Department of Health and Wellness



schools on proper condom use and safe sex". Governance recommendations included annual inspections; where the DoH monitors a clinic's compliance with norms and standards — "yearly inspections should be done in hospitals and clinics by the department of health to make sure they are abiding to the necessary level of operation". Another recommendation was focused on Emergency Services response times; suggesting that the DoH explore how to improve this.

Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport

Sport and culture activities were of great interest to children in the workshops conducted. They shared in detail the type of sport and the facilities available to them. In terms of recommendations, children provided the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport (DCAS) with a combination of inputs centered around sports provision, arts, and culture provision as well as resourcing issues.

When it comes to the impact of arts, culture, and sport; children have a firm belief in its ability to positively transform people and communities, which was unanimous across the service sites where children were engaged. Sport, for example, can assist in bringing together different parts of the community and help with strengthening cohesion: "A sport field is where people come to enjoy and interact with each other by playing games such as netball, soccer, rugby and many more. There can also be events held whereby different cultures come together to celebrate life and it helps us to get to know each other's cultural differences." Cultural activities were valued for their contribution to children's self-esteem. One child noted: "we tend to find happiness and healing because music heals us from within and we stay happy." Children also believed that more awareness must be created around the importance of the arts in the lives of children, particularly led by the DCAS. They said: "*the government needs to educate people/citizens that art is important too*".

Children see the value and importance of sport and culture and question the limited investments made in these aspects of life for promotion of wellness and social cohesion. There are, however, some barriers in the way of some children accessing sporting and/or cultural opportunities.

Some of these include:

- Lack of musical instruments.
- Lack of resources for sporting activities and limited numbers of sporting clubs in communities.
- Lack of sporting sponsorships, which results in low amounts of funding being channeled into community sporting initiatives.

Specific recommendations to DCAS focused on improving access to arts, culture, and specific sporting opportunities; learners suggested that DCAS consider the following:

- Supporting the development of community-based dance or music clubs — (*Daar moet dans clubs wees*), (*Daar moet music clubs wees*).
- Providing more sportsfields for children to play on and improving the safety of currently available sportsfields. They requested: "we really would like to have a cricket pitch for children to demonstrate their talents. (*Ons will graag n kriketbaan hê vir kinders om hulle talente to wys*). They added: "*there is a big river in the middle the field where some can get hurt there should be a gate built [around it] or [erect a] fence.*"

Another interesting discussion was held around the government's role in preventing young marriage from taking place. Learners explained that arranged marriages take place in their communities from a very young age. Since it is a cultural practice, the learners believed that DCAS should step in to educate their communities around rights-based approaches to marriage; taking cultural norms into account. They appealed: "Stop young marriage" and promote "having the right of choosing the man or woman of your dreams."



When it comes to the impact of arts, culture, and sport; children have a firm belief in its ability to positively transform people and communities, which was unanimous across the service sites where children were engaged.

SPORT

Daar moet dance clubs wees.
 Daar moet music clubs wees.
 Sifung ibala kholo ekhatywayo.
 Provision of soccer fields

Sport Kwamokithulo
 Ons wil gogog n cricket baan he vir kinders om hulke talente te wys...

RIGHT: Children's recommendations for the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport

CULTURE AND SPORTS

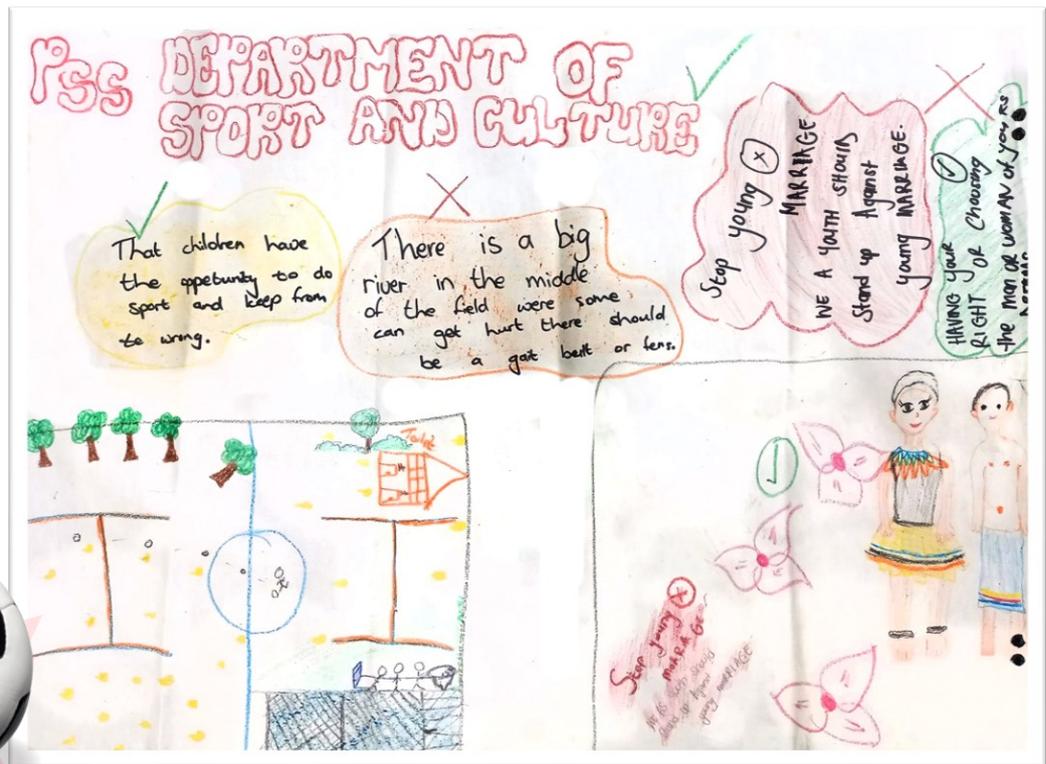
Wittedrift

In the different genres of music we listen to we tend to find happiness and healing because music heals us from within and we may happy.

A National field is whereby we come to challenge each other and get different sides of peoples and to get so challenge our weakness in Sport and Culture.

A sport field is where people enjoy and interact with each other by playing games such as Netball Soccer, Rugby and many more. There can also be events held whereby different cultures come together and celebrate life and it helps us to get to know each other's cultural differences.

- ## Department of Cultural Affairs & Sports!
- | Cultural/A&C | Sports |
|---|---|
| 1. Lack of instruments | 1. Provide kits for teams enough. |
| 2. Lack of Resources | 2. Not fields/the fields are not suitable for playing |
| 3. The government needs to educate people/citizens that art is important too! | 3. Lack of sponsorships |
| 4. NO CLUBS! | |



ANALYSIS OF RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNMENT FROM CHILDREN

Children need positive adults in their lives

Children expressed that they need parents, educators, health care professionals, social workers, and community development workers to act as positive role models and guides as well as trusted adults. They were able to identify and draw on a positive adult in their lives to inform key decisions in their lives.

Children know that parents are the primary duty bearers charged with realising their rights. Children report that they learn a lot of behaviour patterns from their household environment. So, when parents are positive influences in children's lives, this is a great protector against risks and builds resilience for adversity⁵. Conversely, when parents are

negative forces within their children's lives, it results in adverse childhood experiences which can be the source of trauma from which the child must heal.

In every community, children report continued use of corporal punishment in their homes and schools. Violence against children at schools robs them of dignity rights and violates their bodily integrity. Therefore, children need adults to mentor and guide them to make important decisions about their future, for example, with subject choices. This will not happen if schools are spaces of fear and intimidation.

There are frequent reports from children that healthcare professionals who are rude to community members. This thus creates a negative ethos of care that should be urgently addressed in the health care service. An individual will only trust their healing to someone who they

⁵ Ryan, D. P. J. (2001). Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory.

believe cares about their wellbeing⁶. Otherwise medication and advice will be treated with scepticism.

Children understand the value of social workers as a protective mechanism for children who find themselves in difficult situations in their homes. They also share that they know when social workers are invested in their wellbeing. So, social workers and community workers who are not committed to the positive development of their clients are not an asset to our care and support systems. These professionals work with emotionally vulnerable people and the utmost care is needed to build trust and a supportive environment for healing and growth.

Visionary and competent leaders

Children complain about ethos and attitudes of service staff pointing to a need for a change in organisational culture. Thus, evidence shows that leaders are a big contributing factor for the success of institutions⁷. When there are good leaders running institutions, the quality of service will improve. These leaders are also innovators who can think beyond the constraints of their environments with 'out-of-the-box' thinking and perspectives. They inspire others to do their best and create hope that we can attain our aspirations of excellent service provision.

Many children worry about the deprivations that characterises childhood. They point to the need for basic goods and services which are absent or insufficient as they grow up. Children often speak about hunger and homelessness as key concerns in their communities. So, when we get

the basics of service provision right, we can dare to dream of better outcomes in relation to wellbeing. Getting the basics right entails the provision of good inputs such as staffing, infrastructure and materials to achieve a good service standard. Management must hold public officials to account for a high level of service and provide them with all the necessary tools they need to do their job well.

The WCCC is concerned that outcome indicators are so much harder to track and even tougher to attain in our challenging environment of scarce resources and legacies of deprivation. Austerity measures which seem to disproportionately affect the financing social services, places further constraints on the system of service provision sites to operate optimally. The population whom we serve are more often than not vulnerable and at-risk because of legacies of the past and experiences of trauma. Bold leadership from political and administrative principals is needed to realise child rights.

Evidence shows that leaders are a big contributing factor for the success of institutions . When there are good leaders running institutions, the quality of service will improve.

RIGHT:
The Commissioner
with staff at
Kwanokuthula clinic

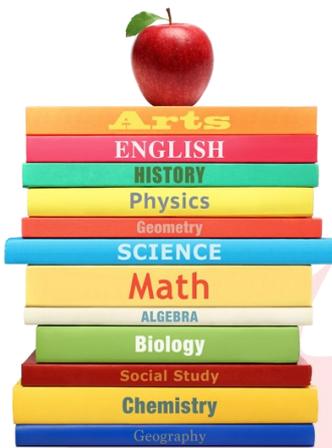


⁶ Mirzaei, M., Aspin, C., Essue, B., Jeon, Y. H., Dugdale, P., Usherwood, T., & Leeder, S. (2013). A patient-centred approach to health service delivery: improving health outcomes for people with chronic illness.

⁷ Muchiri, M. K., Cooksey, R. W., & Walumbwa, F. O. (2012). Transformational and social processes of leadership as predictors of organisational outcomes. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*.

Insights and recommendations to departments from adult stakeholders

It is common place for the WCCC to engage child rights duty bearers on her community visits. In this context, this include parents, educators, social workers, health care practitioners, social workers and NGO staff. The aim here is to understand the community's key issues from the perspective of these duty bearers, as well as to gather recommendations for government departments. This section will provide a discussion of these findings.



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The WCCC visited a broad range of schools across the Bitou region, which include a mix of primary and secondary schools, a special school and a school of skills.

Table 3: Schools visited

SCHOOLS	AREA / COMMUNITY
Phakamisani Primary School	Kwanokuthula
Crags Primary School	Crags
Olympia School of Skills	George
Carpe Diem	George
Murray High School	Kwanokuthula
Plettenbergbaai Secondary School	Plettenberg Bay
Wittedriff High School	Wittedriff

Table 3 above provides a list of schools we visited. While at these schools, the WCCC engaged the school management on key issues

affecting their school specifically and education more broadly in the region. Below are case studies which present the views of school leaders:

Case study on good school management and child participation:

The Crags Primary School

Most of the schools visited were impressive in their own ways. The standout school was **The Crags Primary School** for its **discipline** at the school made possible by a fully **inclusive** code of conduct process, a visionary leader and supportive school governing body (SGB) and fundraising team. Child participation is central at this school. They are key to developing a culture of learning and teaching in a disciplined environment.

The roleplayers describe their commitments as below:

"The Commissioner is impressed with the silence of the school, but the teachers are very well prepared that's why the children are working very hard. In every class there is a code of conduct and children, the learners, they develop their own code of conduct for the classroom. The classrooms are managed very well and me as a principal have a very good team with me which can help the school grow." (Principal, The Crags Primary)

"They are following the rules, their own rules. Because at the beginning of the year they make their own rules. So, if anything is happening, we just go to and say Rule number then they read that rule and they know they are doing something that is not right. So, they are just following their own rules." (Educator, The Crags Primary School)

"Our SGB is functional so they are also busy with the admissions policy and attendance policy and when we have posts they with the principal's help they appoint the best teachers for the school. As a principal I must

Teachers are typically recruited from the industry directly and they usually lack the teaching competencies. This results in poor quality delivery of the curriculum as well as high teacher turnover because they lack the confidence.



develop my teachers so they can apply for promotional posts.” (Principal, The Crags Primary)

“We’ve been going for 25 years now raising money to put extra teachers into the classes as the classes are so big, over 60 children in some of them which makes teaching impossible.” (Chairperson, Kids of Kurland Project)

“We need desperately to have the apprenticeship system brought back into education.” (Chairperson, Kids of Kurland Project)

Case study on the need for more schools of skills: Olympia School of Skills

In George, we visited two schools. The first one being Olympia Secondary School, which is a school of skills. As noted by the principal, there is a supply vs demand issue when it comes to schools of skills. There is a high demand for these schools in the region but little supply of schools to meet the demand. For example, out of the 320 applications received at Olympia in 2021, only 120 learners were accepted. To illustrate further, five of these applications were from the Crags Primary School, of which only one got accepted. When the children are not accepted at Olympia or other schools of skills, they go back to the mainstream where they often struggle to cope with academic demands.

In a conversation with the principal of Olympia, he mentioned that one of the systemic issues for technical schools is the lack of decently qualified teachers. Previously, there were dedicated colleges that trained these teachers – but now, there is a lack of training providers. Thus, teachers are typically recruited from the industry directly and they usually lack the teaching competencies. This results in poor quality delivery of the curriculum as well as high teacher turnover because they lack the confidence.

The request is for WCED to invest more into the pipeline of technical teachers. The principal also sketched the change in orientation from reform schools to schools of skills. Noting that reform schools seemed to have a stronger pipeline for technical teachers. This relates to the general ethos in society that does not place a premium on technical professions any longer.

Case study on promoting inclusive learning: Cape Diem Special School

The second school visited was Carpe Diem Special School, which can be described as a special school that caters to a complex mix of differently abled children. There are currently 381 learners at the school, aged from 3 to 18 years old. They include ECD as a cohort, and have a special ECD for deaf children. In terms of school going learners, they accommodate children with every type of special need, except those who are blind. Below is the profile of children accommodated:

- **SID:** Severely intellectually disabled children
- **ASD:** children with Autistic Spectrum Disorders
- **PID:** Profoundly intellectually disabled children
- **PD:** Physically disabled children

When asked about her advice to government regarding special needs education, the principal was interested to understand how white paper 6 on Special Education is being implemented in schools. Specifically, she asked that government seek to understand how inclusivity training is incorporated into teacher training programmes. She believes that there must be a strong emphasis on special needs identification, referral, and management thereof across the entire education system.

**Case study on whole child development:
Phakamisa Primary School**

In Kwanokhuthula, the Phakamisani Primary School principal, a recipient of the National Teaching Award, was **committed** to making a success of foundation phase learning. She believes that education must be approached from a holistic lens and account for whole-child development – this must include academic development, socio-emotional development, cultural develop and physical development. To support this vision, she places a strong emphasis on extra-curricular activities and arts and culture education. To this end, she does see a material need for additional resources for whole-child development to be sustained over time as she would like to introduce theatre as an innovative teaching practice:

“We need a theatre. Foundation phase learners they learn through play. From grade R to grade 3, and then they move with that. So, if we lay the correct foundation, nothing will go wrong up there.” (Principal, Phakamisani Primary)

The Principal also believes that educators need to be good role models for children:

“If you have teachers in an institution that know exactly what they are in the school for and do exactly what they are supposed to do, children copy them.” (Principal, Phakamisani Primary)

The WCCC was heartened to meet visionary and committed school leaders. We were not able to engage the children directly at some of these schools, namely The Craggs, Phakamisani and Olympia. So, we are cautiously optimistic as the children may have a different story to tell about their schools. The visits of the WCCC creates platforms for children, as well as service providers to speak out about their experiences of working with children. Insights from these officials can now be presented levels of government decision making.

Foundation phase learners they learn through play. From grade R to grade 3, and then they move with that. So, if we lay the correct foundation, nothing will go wrong up there.

RIGHT: Service providers in conversation with the WCCC.



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

We visited two community health centres, namely Kwanokuthula Clinic and Plett Clinic. The clinic manager at Kwanokhutula Clinic reported resource constraints for delivering services while taking us around the centre. This is a regular refrain from CHCs visited in the province thus far.

The Commissioner noted that patrons attending public facilities may not understand the systems well and have unrealistic expectations that seem to relate to comparing experiences with private care.



Case study on visionary leadership in the public service: Kwanokhutula Clinic

During the visit, it was evident how well kept the clinic was — possibly one of the cleanest and best organised clinics the WCCC has visited thus far. It was opened in 2011, which meant that it was 10 years old. Because of its management and condition, the clinic was awarded Silver Status in the Ideal Clinic Awards. During the walk through, the following was also observed:

- The atmosphere was very calm and relaxed. Patients did not seem overwhelmingly anxious or irate.
- There were no long queues. In fact, waiting rooms were quite small and minimally occupied.
- Every room had a specified purpose. The clinic is well-used.

The Clinic Manager demonstrated more **visionary leadership** going beyond the constraints of her physical infrastructure to deliver services:

“During our assessment of the community's needs I've discovered that the youth doesn't have a place. There's no youth centre or a space where they can come together safely.” (Sister-in-Charge, Kwanokhutula CHC)

This is the service orientation needed if health care is to be relevant and accepted in communities.

While at the CHC in Kwanokhutula, the team spoke to a number of clinic patrons about their experiences of the clinic.

Many reflected on their frustrations with long waiting times; which is a common experience in each clinic the WCCC has visited thus far. Even though an appointment system has been implemented, this does not seem to mitigate long waiting times, as two separate patrons put it:

- “My comments about the clinic is that the service here, I don't want to lie, is very poor. Cause they give you a 9am appointment and you know you have a 9am appointment so you get at 8h30 but at 9 am you are still waiting outside in the queue.”
- “Sometimes you can get here while in a rush or need to go to work when they had given you an appointment, but they hurry up to do in the manner they used to and sometimes you get here and they say it is full and you don't understand how is it full when they continue to take their own time to assist you.”

The Commissioner noted that patrons attending public facilities may not understand the systems well and have unrealistic expectations that seem to relate to comparing experiences with private care. The Commissioner thus understand that due to low amounts of resources available and the high demand for services, there will always be long waiting times at public facilities. However, the Department should not be dismissive of complaints from patrons, they must invest in systems improvement. For example, the comfort of patrons waiting in long queues outside can be improved via the provision of shaded seating areas.



Case study on the value of MOD programmes: Phakamisani Primary School

The schools at which the MOD programmes operate speak highly of the added benefits of the programme:

“You find out that those learners who are involved in the MOD sports and arts and culture, there is a big difference between them and the learners that are not partaking, and the attendance figures are better.” (Principal, Phakamisani Primary)

The MOD programme is also an employment opportunity for young people and community development practitioners interested to contribute to the development of children in their communities. One employee of MOD said:

- “I am very excited about the [MOD] programme. I am with the programme for 11 years now. Every day I see the children’s smiling faces, they are happy.” (*Ek is baie excited vir die program. Ek is al nou vir 11 jaar by die program. En om elke dag te sien die kinders gesiggies en te sien dat hulle glimlag en hulle is happy*). (MOD Programme Officer, Eden District)

Management in the region is also very committed to the programme implementation:

“You can see the lovely facilities that we have here [at Phakamisani Primary School]. After school we have the sport programme and the arts and culture programme. The kids love it! It’s very important to the kids. To have a healthy, balanced lifestyle. Our department’s motto or vision is to have all the people have a healthy and active lifestyle.” (Head, Garden Route: DCAS)

There are many committed individuals who are involved in this programme. Engagements with the programme team also highlighted their concern for the wellbeing of children in their homes.

The WCCC believes closer collaboration with the Department of Social Development is necessary to link children to social workers who are trained to support vulnerable children. They were advised not to intervene in children’s lives beyond the limits of the training they receive for the MOD programme. It is also very important for MOD programme employees to be thoroughly vetted and checked against the child protection and sexual offenders’ registers, at the very least have a police clearance certificate. This will provide further protections for the children in their care.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The WCCC engaged a range of professionals in the social services sector, which included local DSD social workers from Plettenberg Bay, CYCC management at Outenikwa, Bethesda and Masizame, and social work staff from social service organisations (SSOs) such as Badisa and Child Welfare. Professionals provided grass-roots insights into the core social issues affecting the Bitou region. A summary of these issues are presented in the text box below.

Case study on core social issues affecting Bitou

CHILD IN-MIGRATION

The in-migration of people from the Eastern Cape and bordering countries was discussed as a big problem in Bitou since they are on the boarder of the Eastern Cape. Social workers are thus dealing with a number of cases involving issues connected with children who migrate from other parts of the country or from outside of the country. Examples include:

- Difficulties in tracing the families of foreign children who are abandoned

It’s very important to the kids. To have a healthy, balanced lifestyle. Our department’s motto or vision is to have all the people have a healthy and active lifestyle.”



There is a need to understand the drivers and the programmes that can support young girls with sexual and reproductive health rights.

- Limited co-operation from home affairs when trying to assist foreign families with migration documents. Many families had to return to their home countries because of a lag in service delivery from home affairs.
- Some children are being rejected from schools because they do not have proper documentation, including cases at Phakamisani and Kranshoek Primary.

EARLY PREGNANCY

Early pregnancy is a huge concern in the area — there are an average of 10 pregnant children referred to DSD from the clinics in the region each month. There is also acknowledgement that this issue is connected to high rates of sexual abuse and rape in the area. Another issue tied to this is the fact that safe abortions are a lengthy process at the local clinics, which results in most of the children giving birth and not knowing what to do with the babies. There is a need to understand the drivers and the programmes that can support young girls with sexual and reproductive health rights.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Linked to the issue above, is the high rates of sexual abuse taking place in the area – 75 cases have been brought forward since the start of the year, and there are higher numbers of boys falling victim to this. Key problem areas are The Craggs, Kranshoek, Qolweni. The social workers believe that drug and alcohol abuse are the biggest drivers of this problem.

LACK OF SERVICES IN AND AROUND PLETTENBERG BAY

Some of the key services lacking include the availability of rehabilitation centres and schools of skills. In terms of rehabilitation centres, there are none in Bitou – the nearest ones available are in Worcester and Cape Town. Social workers also

attested to the lack of access to schools of skills in the area – there are currently no schools of skills in Plettenberg Bay; with Olypmia in George being the closest one. There was a school of skills that was run by a private company, who ran technical education programmes as well as ABET programmes. But they closed recently. The problem now is that special schools are required to absorb the learners who dropped out recently.

ISSUES WITH REUNIFICATION PROCESSES

There are high numbers of children who enter the alternative care system in Plettenberg Bay for a number of reasons – such as parental death, parents going to prison, parents unable or unwilling to care for children etc. The social workers described a number of issues when trying to reunify the child with their original family, which includes:

- Parents being unwilling to take the child back.
- Parents not showing any signs of improvement; which owes to a reluctance on their part.
- Many parents move on with their lives and no longer want the child.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONALS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- DSD should strive to inspire passion in social worker workforce. There must be stronger consequence management for social workers who transgress professional boundaries. Stronger supervision of junior staff and support for professional development.
- It is unequitable to concentrate resources in main towns only. The government must attempt to spread services more equally.
- More access to safe abortions and contraceptives is required. Nurses must also be trained to not

stigmatize children who need contraception or an abortion.

The Department of Justice must be lobbied to take a greater responsibility when it comes to family reunification.

The Commissioner noted parents and government play important roles as duty bearers to deliver on child rights. It is imperative that both duty bearers play their respective roles to realise children's rights. The Commissioner emphasised multi-stakeholder relationship building. For example, the Department of Social Development working with the Department of Education to enforce court judgements that prohibit undocumented children from being excluded from schooling.

The discussions with principals highlighted that children require access to more varied learning opportunities in the basic education sector.

ANALYSIS OF INSIGHTS GLEANED FROM ADULT STAKEHOLDERS

Children need a more varied sense of educational opportunity

The discussions with principals highlighted that children require access to more varied learning opportunities in the basic education sector. There is a clear need for technical and vocational learning streams, which can be demonstrated by application trends at Olympia High School; yet the supply outweighs the demand. There is a strong recognition that whole-child education is necessary to enrich the holistic development of children; yet basic resources to implement arts, culture and sports programmes are lacking in marginalized schools like Phakamisani Primary School.

Prevention programmes are few and far between

A recurring theme throughout the engagements with health, education and social service professionals is linked to scarcity within the

prevention programme space. As identified by the stakeholders themselves, alcohol and drug abuse are the key drivers of violence and abuse. Yet, there is no access to tertiary prevention interventions, such as rehabilitation programmes, in Bitou or George. After school programmes are another, well-established, prevention programme that supports positive child and youth development. If children attend after school programmes regularly and consistently; they will yield better education outcomes. This will mitigate their likelihood of engaging in high-risk behaviour. However, only one school in Bitou is reported to be supported with a MOD programme.

Scarcity, in this context, does not just refer to a low supply; but it also refers to the quality of programmes provided. By not providing young girls with consistent, hassle-free access to safe abortions, contraceptives or reproductive counselling; they will be less likely to seek it out, thus increasing the rate of early pregnancies. Similarly, if social workers are poorly supported by management; as raised by the CYCC manager, the quality of prevention work will continue to suffer.

*RIGHT:
The Commissioner
and staff at
Masizame CYCC.*



Conclusion

The Bitou CCRWs report is more expansive than previous reports due to the visits conducted with CYCCs and various models of educational institutions; in addition to engagements with children. It presents primary data from children throughout the report, more frequently than other reports; at the request of heads of departments for more detailed inputs from children. This is a positive step indicating that key decision makers want to hear the authentic voices and inputs of children in governance.

Similar themes emerge from this report about child safety, their dreams and worries as well as their recommendations to government. Children's insights presented in the report point to:

- Individualised attention to the needs, capabilities, and talents of each child.
- Positive adult role models who become trusted adults in children's lives.
- Adult duty bearers need to take seriously their responsibility towards children's rights.
- Affirming children as subjects and agents of change.
- Visionary and competent leadership which can come from children themselves.

Instead of repeating themes above, this report starts to propose points to ponder in relation to aligning services to a child rights approach. A child rights approach includes the promotion, protection, and realisation of children's right to be **protected** from harm, **provided** with services that enables their development and wellbeing as well as their **participation** in key decisions affecting their lives – the 3Ps of child rights. Therefore, duty bearers of child rights (parents and the government) need to achieve the perfect balance of

welfare and autonomy rights for children at each age and stage of their development. Acknowledging their evolving capacity as they grow and develop. It is not enough to only address one aspect of rights, neglecting the others. This would not be a balanced child rights orientation.

This report has crystallised key issues that remain gaps in the child rights orientation of the duty bearers. Key questions are posed to promote alignment of services to a child rights approach:

- How do we build adult systems of support on which children can rely?
- Are duty bearers of child rights doing enough to support them through stressful times and shield them from violence?
- Are duty bearers doing enough to enable children to live good lives free of worry and fear of violence and deprivation?
- What can be done to ensure that children access more safe, public spaces supervised by positive adults?
- How can Departments work together to strengthen the supply of prevention programmes in Bitou?
- How can the education system help to channel children better towards a life of value?
- How does one message hope and encourage agency amongst children in Bitou?

The WCCC was established as a resource to support key departments in government to align more closely to a child rights orientation. The Commissioner should use the legal powers and duties ascribed to the office to enable changes in the system of governance to benefit the needs, interests, and rights of children in the province. The CCRWs and the resultant reports and feedback mechanisms, such as this Bitou report, are expressions of the strategic intent of the office to support and enable change.

A child rights approach includes the promotion, protection, and realisation of children's right to be protected from harm, provided with services that enables their development and wellbeing as well as their participation in key decisions affecting their lives – the 3Ps of child rights

Appendix

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Recommendations for service delivery improvements

Submission	Category of submission	Theme	Description
Ons kan ouers meer inlig oor kinders se mental health	recommendation	mental health support	educate parents on this issue
Verseker veiligheid vir kinders in hul huise	recommendation	child protection	ensure that children live in safe homes
Provide therapy for children living in unstable homes	recommendation	mental health support	counsel children in unstable homes
They can provide counselling for parents in order to improve their relationships with their children	recommendation	Parenting programmes	build capacity for parents to strengthen relationships
Bou goeie vertroubare weeshuise vir kinders	recommendation	child protection	improve provisioning of children's homes
Dronk ouers weg stiek na SANCA	recommendation	substance abuse	Improve access to rehab programmes for parents who abuse alcohol
Regte sorg te sit waar jy kan liefde kry en water en kos	recommendation	basic needs provision	Access to water and food
gesonder kos pakkies	recommendation	basic needs provision	access to food
Better woongebiede vir kinders	recommendation	basic needs provision	Improve living environments
Verbetering van skole. Help kinders met beuse	recommendation		
Ouers wat kinders mishandel moet in hegtenis geneem word	Recommendation	child protection	remove children from abusive homes
Welseyn werkers kan ouers ouers help om werk te kry en te help skooling kry vir hul kinders	recommendation	Parenting programmes	Help unemployed parents find jobs
They need to see hwere the problem is before they take the children away from their homes	recommendation	Child protection	understanding source of the problem before removal
There need to be more social workers in the department	recommendation	Governance	More social worker employed
They need to change the problem at home by helping to buy food, clothes etc.	recommendation	child protection	Do more preventative work like provision of basic resources like food and clothes
Take away parents that beat up their children	recommendation	child protection	remove children from abusive homes



Children's comments of DSD's mandate



Submission	Category of submission	Theme	Description
kinders het die reg om vryheid te he en atyd iemand te het om hulle probleme saam mee tel deel	comment	mental health support	Ensure that children have access to forms support provision
Social workers help children that were abandoned by their parents	comment	child protection	Assist abandoned children
They help children that were abused by parents or family members	comment	child protection	Assist abused children
They also help kids that unable to talk to their parents	comment	mental health support	provide access to counselling
They also take care of kids that are using drugs because of pressure that they get from friends	comment	substance abuse	Help children that are struggling with drug abuse
The social workers do talk to kids that are pregnant at an early age	comment	child and teenage pregnancy	Support children pregnant at an early age
They also communicate to children that are abused at school	comment	child protection	help children that are abused at school

DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND SPORT

Children's coverage of key issues that the DCAS must note

Submission	Category of submission	Theme	Description
Lack of instruments	issue	resources provision	Don't have musical instruments
lack of resources	issue	resources provision	Too little resources for sporting activities
No clubs	issue	resources provision	Sporting clubs are not in the community
Not enough fields/the fields are not suitable for playing	issue	Sport provision	Lack of sporting facilities
lack of sponsorships	issue	resources provision	Lack of sponsors supporting sports

Children's recommendations for service delivery improvements

Submission	Category of submission	Theme	Description
Ons will graag n cricket baan he vir kinders om hulle talente te wys	recommendation	Sport provision	Need cricket fields in community
The government needs to educate people/citizens that art is important too	recommendation	Arts and culture provision	Advocate the significance of art
Daar moet dans clubs wees	recommendation	Arts and culture provision	Provide dance clubs
Daar moer music clubs wees	recommendation	Arts and culture provision	Provide music clubs
Provide more soccer fields	recommendation	resources provision	Provide soccer clubs

Children's inputs on the significance of sports, arts and culture in their lives

Submission	Category of submission	Theme	Description
A netball field is whereby we come to challenge each other and see different sides of people and get to challenge our weaknesses in sport and culture	comment	Sport provision	Impact of sport on development
In the different genres of music we listened to we tend to find happiness and healing because music heals us from within and we stay happy	comment	Arts and culture provision	Impact of music on wellbeing
A sport field is where people come to enjoy and interact with each other by playing games such as netball, soccer, rugby and many more. There can also be events held whereby different cultures come together to celebrate life and it helps us to get to know each others cultural differences	comment	Sport provision	Impact of sport on social relationships and community dynamics

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Children's coverage of key issues that the DoH must note

Submission	Category of submission	Theme	Description
Sommige klinieke is wuil	issue	State of health care services	Clinics seem to be unhygienic
Nie genoeg bedens nie	issue	Resource provision	not enough beds at clinics
Soms van die kos is nie goed voorbeeg	issue	State of health care services	Poor quality of food
Bale riassities	issue	State of health care services	
Jy wag te laat om gehelp te word	issue	State of health care services	Long waiting times
Die sisters is baie ongesuk	issue	Healthcare workers	Rude staff
Te min personeel	issue	Healthcare workers	Too little human resources
Gee min aandag aan mense	issue	State of health care services	Little attention paid to people
Hulle gee soms die verkeerde reseptate	issue	State of health care services	Wrongs results tend to be given to patients
Verkeede Medikasie	issue	State of health care services	Wrong medication tends to be given to patients
Services are slow to get medication fast	issue	State of health care services	Long waiting times
Scientists must improve their skills because their medication does not work /help sometimes. Eg. people are doing family planning and are given pills sometimes those pills are not working	issue	State of health care services	Inadequacy of medication

Children's recommendations for service delivery improvements

Submission	Category of submission	Theme	Description
Monthly check ups for all children under 18 for free at school (all schools should be involved)	recommendation	child health provision	Ways to bring health services to children at school
Taxs should be taken from communities to help fund children's medical fees	recommendation	child health provision	Ways to fund children's health services
Yearly inspections should be done in hospitals and clinics by the department of health to make sure they are abiding to the necessary necessary level of operation	recommendation	Governance and management	Regularly monitor clinics to ensure they're compliant with clinical norms and standards
Annual lessons should be given at schools on proper condom use and safe sex	recommendation	Sex education	Provision of proper sex education for children at school
Die mense moet die ambulance vinniger stier	recommendation	BMS	Improve EMS response times
Groter klinieke	recommendation	Resource provision	Need bigger clinics
Daar moet vinniger gemaak word vir all die mense wat wag daar vir twee ure	recommendation	State of health care services	Long waiting times
mense moet gehelp word wat sieker is	recommendation	Governance and management	Must better triage patients
Daar moet n hospital gebou word in Kwane	recommendation	Resource provision	Build a hospital in Kwanekhutula
ambulances are coming slowly and we want them to come in time	recommendation	BMS	Improve EMS response times
Nurses must have a way to speak with patience, they must change their attitudes and they must treat people equally	recommendation	Governance and management	Rude staff



WESTERN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Children's recommendations for service delivery improvement

Submission	Category of submission	Theme	Description
We should go to school more often	Recommendation	Learning during COVID	Increase school going days and times
More subjects	Recommendation	Curriculum and extra mural provision	Access to more subjects
More sports opportunities	Recommendation	Curriculum and extra mural provision	Access to more extra mural activities
Make the children safe from bullies	Recommendation	Safety	Address school based bullying
Less rules for appearances (dress code)	Recommendation	School management	Schools should be more lenient with regards to dress code
Gee meer aandag vir kinders se vak keuses	Recommendation	Guidance	Guide learners better in choosing subjects
Kinders moet luster aan die onderwyser	Recommendation	Learner behaviour and discipline	Children should listen to teachers
Kinders moet focus	Recommendation	Learner behaviour and discipline	Children should pay attention in class
Die kinders moet ophou aan die onderwyser judge	Recommendation	Learner behaviour and discipline	Learner should not disrespect educators
Die onderwyser moet hulle werk doen en minder stress	Recommendation	Teacher conduct	Teachers should not focus on their work
Die onderwysers moet ophou die kinders slaan	Recommendation	Teacher conduct	Corporal punishment should no longer be present at schools
The department of education can improve by adding more few days to attend school	Recommendation	Learning during COVID	Learners should be given more opportunities to attend school during COVID
Is to build more classes at school so that we can attend everyday in this COVID-19 pandemic	Recommendation	Learning during COVID	More class should be available in order to accommodate greater numbers of learners in schools
Is to help those who are slow in learning, to get extra classes after school	Recommendation	Learner support	Support struggling learners with extra curricula support



**Commissioner
for Children**
OF THE WESTERN CAPE

**#littlevoicesMUSTcount
#kleinstemmetjiesMOETsaakmaak
#amazwiamancinciMAKAVAKALE**