



Prince Albert Municipality

COMMUNITY CHILD RIGHTS WORKSHOPS REPORT
JANUARY 2023



**Commissioner
for Children**
OF THE WESTERN CAPE

**#littlevoicesMUSTcount
#kleinstemmetjiesMOETsaakmaak
#amazwiamancinciMAKAVAKALE**

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Executive Summary

The Prince Albert Municipality Community Child Rights Workshops (CCRWs) was the fifth initiative of its kind by the Western Cape Commissioner for Children (WCCC).

The Prince Albert Municipality Community Child Rights Workshops (CCRWs) was the fifth initiative of its kind by the Western Cape Commissioner for Children (WCCC), after completion of similar visits to Matzikama, Bergrivier, Hessequa and Bitou municipalities. Three (3) members of the WCCC team travelled over of 1 540km between 2 and 6 November 2021 to the communities of Prince Albert, Prince Albert Road, Klaarstroom, Seekoegat, Leeu-Gamka and Merweville to conduct workshops with children in two primary schools and three high schools. We also visited a clinic, two child protection agencies, one Mass Opportunity Development (MOD) Programme at a primary school and Prince Albert Community Trust (PACT).

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 a 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 the 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 challenges with living in remote communities. As communities are far apart, the children's experiences of safety or danger depends on the character of their community. In many communities, children reported on the dangers related to hotspots, for example, drug houses. Sometimes schools, churches and libraries are considered safe spaces, however it depended on whether there were positive adults there. In children's dreams, they expressed their eagerness to contribute to societal wellbeing starting with their own happiness and the wellbeing of their families today and in the future. Notably, some children worry about the role negative parents play in children's lives. They want the scourge of alcohol and drugs to be addressed. Government is requested to support children who are experiencing abuse and neglect by parents. Unfortunately, once again we noted concerns by children and parents about health care workers and educators not treating people with dignity.

Adult service providers speak out about the dearth of services in rural areas. For example, children need to travel far from home if they are placed in state care. There is a call to retain children in communities for longer, even if they display behavioural challenges. There is a clear call from service providers that parent involvement in the lives of their children is critical to their wellbeing and an important protective factor against risk. Resources need to prioritise support to parents.

In conclusion, as an enabler for change in families and households, government needs to prioritise prevention and early intervention. The WCCC will start requesting Departments to note their budgetary commitments to certain policies, programmes, and practices.

Introduction

The Western Cape Commissioner for Children visited the Prince Albert Municipality between 2 and 6 November 2021, engaging with adult service providers and children in schools. As per the guidance of the Department of Health, the WCCC did not convene meetings with parents to comply with COVID precautions, the Commissioner conducted informal discussions with parents in this municipality at their places of work. For ease of access, the Commissioner also conducted workshops with children in Merweville, however these findings will be included in the Beaufort West report as Merweville forms part of that municipality.

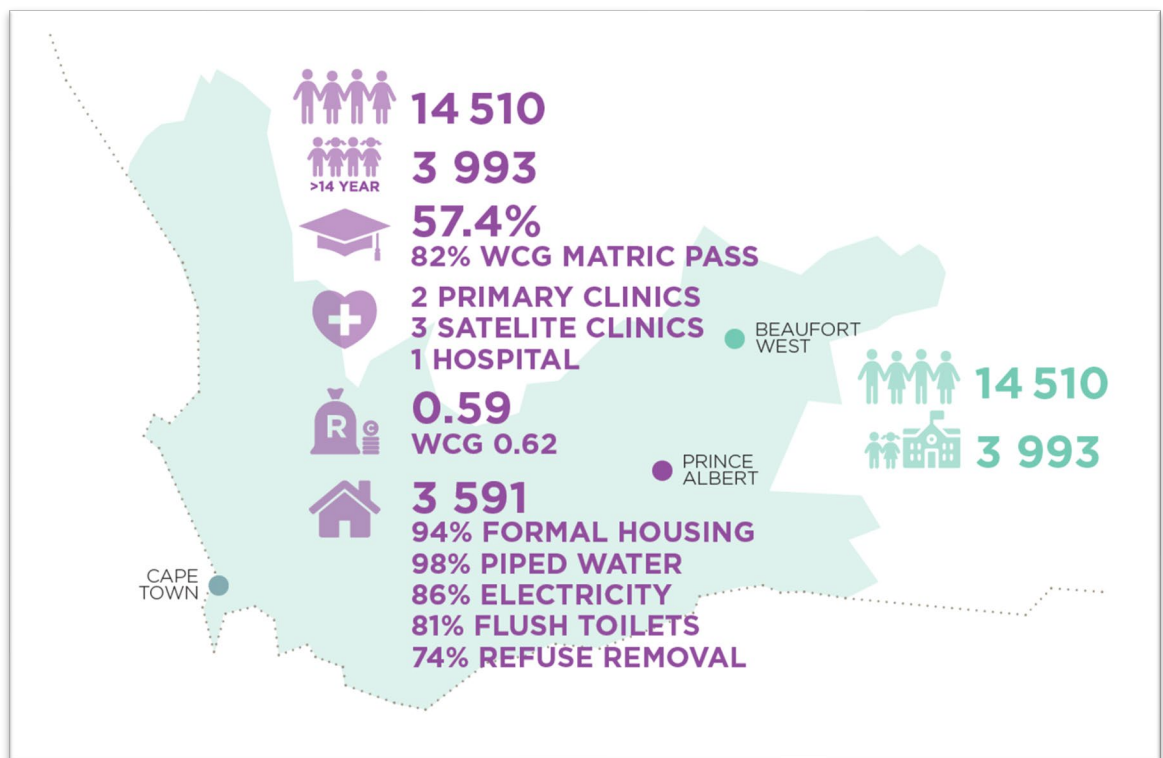
As of 2020, Prince Albert has a population of 14 510 people, which is the second most populous municipality in the Central Karoo – the most populous municipality being Beaufort West, with a population of 51 074 people.

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 a granular level so that government

departments may 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 municipality that the WCCC visited, which help frame the context of the communities visited.

DEMOGRAPHICS¹

As of 2020, Prince Albert has a population of 14 510 people, which is the second most populous municipality in the Central Karoo – the most populous municipality being Beaufort West, with a population of 51 074 people. In terms of the child population, the most recent figures show that 3 993 children under the age of 14 reside in the municipality, which is almost a quarter of the population. It is unclear how many 15–17-year-olds reside in the area due to the manner in which StatsSA reports on data.



¹ Western Cape Government (2020). Socioeconomic profile: Prince Albert 2020.

The five no-fee schools in the municipality provides insight into the socio-economic context of the households residing in the municipality, which consists of parents who are mostly unable to afford school fees.



EDUCATION²

There are five schools in the municipality; all of which are no-fee schools. This provides insight into the socio-economic context of the households residing in the municipality, which consists of parents who are mostly unable to afford school fees. As of 2019, there are approximately 2 146 children enrolled in all schools and most learners are concentrated in the Beaufort West region, as better schooling opportunities exist.

In terms of education outcomes, Prince Albert has a matric pass rate of 57,4% (2019); which is significantly lower than the provincial pass rate of 82% in 2019. Even more alarming is the steep decline in matric pass rates, which dropped from 89,7% in 2017 to 57,4% in 2019. The drop-in matric pass rates may be partly explained by the increase in matric drop-out rates, which stood at 50% in 2019.

HEALTHCARE PROVISION³

In terms of healthcare facilities, there are two Primary Healthcare Clinics (PHCs) in the area; as well as three satellite/mobile clinics and a district hospital.

POVERTY⁴

Prince Albert is reported to have the lowest GDP per capita in the Central Karoo District, which stands at R24 000 per year. In terms of inequality, the Gini coefficient reveals that income inequality is notably lower than the provincial average, which is 0.59 for Prince Albert and 0.62 for the Western Cape.

BASIC SERVICE DELIVERY⁵

With a total of 3 591 households in Prince Albert, there are 94% of them that have access to formal housing, which is the lowest in the Central Karoo (i.e. 97%). When it comes to basic service access, 98% of households have access to piped water, 86% of households have access to electricity, 81% of households have flush toilets and 74% of households report refuse removal at least once a week.

Key insights from visits around Prince Albert

The **Central Karoo District** is characterised by great distances between communities. The main town of Prince Albert contained all the modern conveniences of franchised shops and niche small businesses as well as government service offices. Prince Albert was our base for this visit, and we travelled approximately 70 km daily in one direction to reach the adjacent communities.

Our goal is to visit most of the communities within the municipal boundaries. We visited the **nearby communities** of Klaarstroom, Seekoegat, Leeu-Gamka and Merweville (geographically closer to Prince Albert than its municipal centre, Beaufort West). Merweville inputs will be reported on in the Beaufort West Municipality. Seekoegat was different from the other communities — embedded in the farm areas, far removed from any modern conveniences.

We encountered many committed service providers affiliated to the departments of Education, Social Development, Health as well as

² Ibid

³ Ibid

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Ibid

Cultural Affairs and Sport. Some of these individuals had returned to serve near the communities from which they originated, after achieving their academic and professional qualifications. They played a multiplicity of roles to give effect to the realisation of child rights.

Method of engagement with children

This visit to the Prince Albert Municipality was scheduled as soon

recommendations to mandated government departments. At PACT, the workshop activities were adapted to accommodate the range of ages of the children attending the workshop. The focus of the workshop was the community safety mapping activity. Children were divided into age groups and each age group was provided with a drawing task. For example, the youngest group of pre-school age were asked to draw the people in the community. The next age group of children were asked to draw the homes. Only the most senior group,

TABLE 1: WCCC Prince Albert schedule

DATE	INSTITUTION	TOWN
2/11/21	DSD Prince Albert Clinic BADISA	Prince Albert
3/11/21	George Fredericks Primary School Merweville Primary School Zwartberg High School	Merweville and Prince Albert
4/11/21	Leeu-Gamka Primary School Prince Albert College DCAS Mod Centre Prince Albert Community Trust (PACT)	Leeu-Gamka and Prince Albert
5/11/21	Zwartberg High RCL Klaarstroom Primary Seekoegat VGK Primary	Prince Albert and Klaarstroom
6/11/21	Prince Albert Road Community George Fredericks Primary School	Prince Albert Road and Merweville

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. The WCCC travelled to Prince Albert between 2 and 6 November 2021 after completing the Community Child Rights Workshops in Bitou from 18 – 23 October 2021.

The standard activities were implemented in the workshops with children at seven (7) schools which included community safety mapping, dreams and worries sharing, and making

consisting of high school learners, were asked to complete an entire community safety map. Other workshop adaptations included conducting child rights consultation workshops focussing on the topic of Representative Council of Learners (RCL). These consultations were conducted at Zwartberg High School as well as Leeu-Gamka primary school, which includes a Grade 8 and 9 cohort. The findings of the RCL workshops will be published in a separate topical report.

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

COMMUNITY / AREA	NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN CCRWS
Zwartberg High School	15
Klaarstroom Primary School	28
Seekoegat Primary School	16
Leeu-Gamka Primary School	28
Albert College	9

The WCCC team engaged parents on an ad-hoc basis at their workplaces. Further formal meetings were conducted with service providers in the child protection system, at the clinic and at the MOD programme. The aim of these meetings was to understand the context of communities, social determinants of disease, service challenges and cooperation amongst stakeholders. Adult service providers are also provided with an opportunity to make recommendations to the management of government departments.

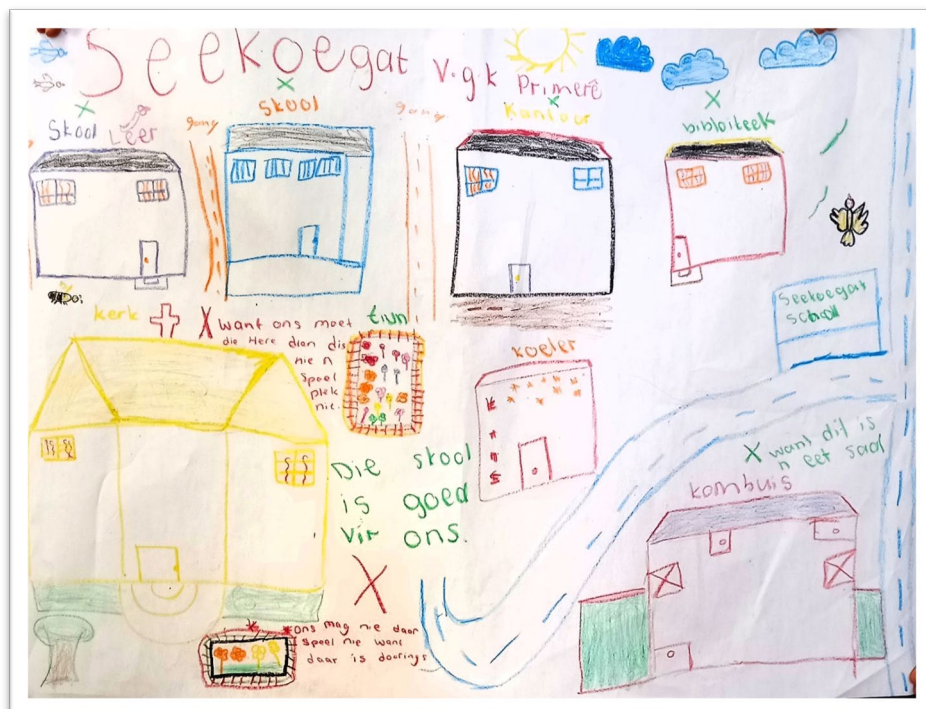
Discussion of Workshop Findings

ACTIVITY 1: COMMUNITY SAFETY MAPPING

Community safety mapping is an important tool for the Commissioner for Children to affirm children's knowledge of their own communities, build trust and gain insight into their worldview. Depending on their age, children either draw elements of, or an entire map of their community, to depict places of danger and safety. They provide reasons for their assessment of safe and dangerous



Community Safety Maps



Community Safety Maps



spaces. This information is invaluable when service providers focusing on children's safety would like to improve communities for the enhanced wellbeing of children. The children at the POP centre completed parts of the safety map according to their ages. For example, the younger participants drew and commented on the households, whereas the older group, drew a complete safety map. Their input about the town of Prince Albert is

combined with input from learners from two schools in the area. The section below presents examples of community safety maps and discussing themes that emerge from children's views of their communities.

Dangerous places

SEEKOEKAT

In Seekoekat, dangerous places included the river and some areas where the children play. Children said the danger of the river is: "Our feet

can get stuck, and we can drown." (Ons voete kan daar vas sit, Ons kan verdrink). The play areas are dangerous due to the rough terrain, they note: "We may not play there because there are thorns." (Ons mag nie daar speel nie want daar is dorings). The children's natural environment poses threats to their safety.

LEEU-GAMKA

Children are aware of dangerous places such as drug dens where alcohol and drugs are sold — (dwelmuise en smokkelhuise). They point out that there is a particularly dangerous place in "Kiewiet street". The drug dens endanger lives, they say: "people come to fight and then somebody can die" (mense kom baklei en dan kan hulle miskien doodgaan). Children report that the bar next to the bakery is where "Children drink alcohol, parents are drunk and there is fighting." (Kinders gebruik alkohol, baklei, drink alkohol 'ouers is dronk'). Places where drugs and alcohol are sold poses a risk to children's safety.

Children must also navigate places that are good and bad. For example, the shop is a good place because "people buy food" (mense koop kos). However, it is also a bad and risky place as "gangsters rob children" (gangsters rop die kinders).

PRINCE ALBERT

Some spaces in Prince Albert are deemed dangerous for children. The drug dens are dangerous because people "buy marijuana" (koop dagga). According to some reports from the children "Sollie's Inn and Silver city" is synonymous for "fighting, drugs and alcohol abuse (bakleiere, dwelms, drank)." They add: "underaged children drink and smoke at the blink hokke" (kinders onderouderdom drink en rook by die blink hokke)." The rugby field is deemed unsafe as children "get

hurt" (kry seer). Streets are also treacherous for children to walk in, as there are "inappropriate people, cat calling and [you can be] followed." Safety is compromised by substance abuse and people with negative behaviours on the streets.

KLAARSTROOM

Dangerous places are related to substance abuse. The children dislike the bar because "children should not drink" (kinders kan nie drink nie). The shop is reported as both a good and unsafe place due to the risk of robbery, they say: "dangerous because some people rob other people" (gevaar want mense kan ander mense roof). Streets are unsafe due to the risk of car accidents, they say: "you can just cross the road then a car can bump you (jy kan net die pad oorsteek, dan stamp 'n kar jou)." Dangers abound when adults with negative behaviours threaten the wellbeing of children.

Safe places

SEEKOEKAT

The children identified safe service sites. They depicted the school as safe because "we can learn and there are places to play and a dining room." (Ons kan leer, kan speel, dit is 'n eetsaal).

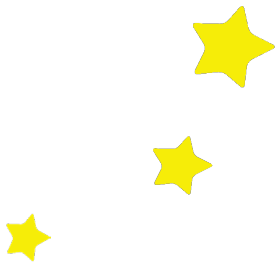
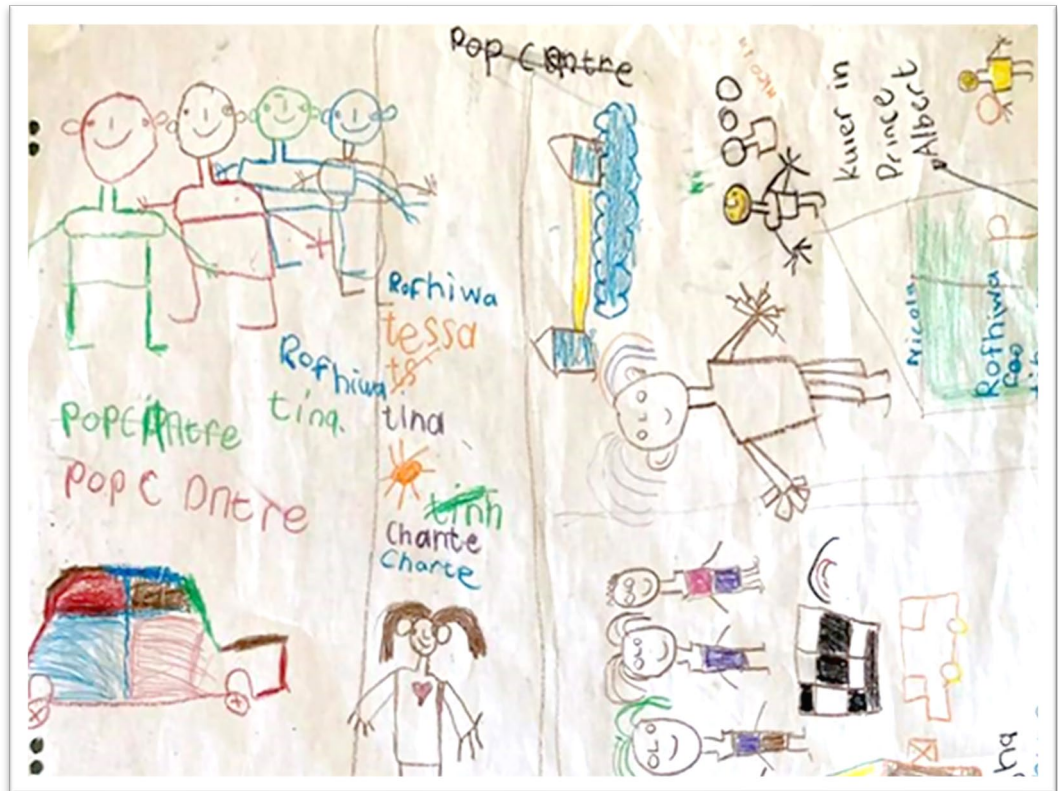
LEEU-GAMKA

Service centres play a positive role in childrens' lives. The school is a positive place because they "learn many things, get attention, it is a source of self-esteem (leer baie dinge, kry aandag, baie dinge on jouself trots te bou)." The library "helps children to read (help kinders lees)." The E-Centre is a place to "get information (gaan haal inligting af)." "If you are sick, you can visit the clinic (as jy siek is kan jy die kliniek besoek.)" There is also a bakery, Wi-Fi hotspot, church and soup kitchen which are positive spaces in the community. The



Dangers abound when adults with negative behaviours threaten the wellbeing of children.

Poster by children at the POP Centre



children say the soup kitchen “shares food with people in need (deel kos met mense wat dit nodig het).

PRINCE ALBERT

The POP centre is a very safe and positive place in Prince Albert. The younger children drew happy faces and were particularly impressed that the Commissioner for Children came to visit the POP centre. They wrote our names everywhere on their posters. Older children report on the POP centre saying: “activities are presented to keep the children off the streets (aktwiteite word gedoen om die kinders van die strate te hou.)”. Other safe places were the hospital, clinic, shop, and the church. The POP centre is a place where children report feeling most safe in this community.

KLAARSTROOM

There are many safe places for children in the community. The children consider the following places to be safe: “Community Centre [where] people do their work and host concerts, school [where] children can learn, police station

[where] you can report a crime, church [for] praying, shop to buy food to eat, E-Centre as it is safe to do research, and library [where librarians] are very friendly” (gemeenskap saal – mense doen werk en konsert kan hou, skool – die kinders kan leer, police – is goed om iemand aan te kla, kerk – veilig bid, en winkel – goed vir kos wat mense eet, E-Centre – om ondersoek te gaan doen [en] biblioteek – hulle is baie vriendlik).

ANALYSIS OF COMMUNITY SAFETY

It is clear from children's worries across all communities that social ills dominate their lived realities. Reports of drug use, alcohol abuse, inappropriate relationships between children and adults (often their parents), and violence; are common fears that are expressed. Whereas farm locations, such as Seekoegat, had risks based on their natural environment, while other remote communities such as leeu-Gamka and Klaarstroom were affected by social ills such as alcohol and drug

abuse. Positive and safe places were service sites, especially where children believed there were good and helpful adults. The POP centre in Prince Albert received glowing reviews from children in this community and surrounding communities.

ACTIVITY 2: DREAMS AND WORRIES

Dreams and worries sharing was the second standard activity in our workshop. All information was shared anonymously on cards, only denoting the school or community of origin, to later organise the data. At this stage, children are expected to share a personal dream for the future. However, they are cautioned to note only a general worry relating to children in their community. They are advised that if they would like to share a personal worry, they should contact the Commissioner via WhatsApp; her contact number is shared during each workshop. When personal worries are received, referrals are made to a social worker to manage.

Dreams

The school in Seekoegat was far removed from children's homes and families. They lived in a hostel at school most of the time and only managed to return home with long vacation times, as even weekend visits to families were unaffordable. The children at this school, mostly of primary school age, spoke about missing their families. One child noted: "I dream about my mommy. I dream about sweets. I dream about my brother. I dream about my sister" (Ek droom van my ma. Ek droom van lekkers. Ek droom van my pa. Ek droom van my boeta. Ek droom van my suster.) The longing to be at home with family was evident in most submissions. Children also dreamt about completing their education to take up a profession as a doctor,

veterinarian, or educator. A unique expression of a dream was to be a pigeon farmer, they said: In my dreams I want to become a pigeon farmer, but I am still learning about that. I love animals, I love all types of animals" (In my droom wil ek 'n duifeboer word. Maar ek leer nog baie daarvan ek is baie lief vir diere, ek is ook baie lief vir ander diere.) Children's dreams centred on their families and their future.

The children in Klaarstroom lived in a remote community, approximately 60 km from the town of Prince Albert, with only a few children travelling to school from surrounding farms. Career aspirations of the 28 children who participated in the workshop included becoming a soccer celebrity, educator, law enforcement official, a doctor or nurse. Different to others, one child was determined to become the Children's Commissioner and another expressed dreams of owning his own truck company. They prized the value of education. Children understood that a professional occupation would supply the resources to afford a house, a car, or trips to Cape Town. WCCC concurred with the principal of the school that many children in the workshop experienced great difficulty in expressing themselves in writing. They also would not accept help from us to write their dreams. One child wrote in an unintelligible submission: (Die bom van my fvan my mama my papa fak my kom ek en die onk fk on slook my papa en slook my papa en slook ma dit van my slook seep my en ma my bom onk on kom sny papa en slook die moe die kom en ma my ge kon.). The principal believed their struggles could be due to foetal alcohol syndrome or learning disabilities. He mentioned that it is hard for children from this community to get placed at a special or technical school where they may be able to reach their potential.

Children also dreamt about completing their education to take up a profession as a doctor, veterinarian, or educator.

LEEU-GAMKA PRIMERE SKOOL

- * Ek wil 'n brandweer veld wees eendag.
- * Ek droom ook om 'n private dame te wees wat mense hulle goed met my deel.
- * Ek droom ook om kinders te help met hulle probleme.
- * Ek droom ook om 'n private persoon te hê by die kliniek.

Zwart berg haar skool.

my grootste drome. Is dat ek baie graag oor die jaar in matrox wees. En oor 5 jaar sien ek my self in 'n baie goeie werk en dat ek die gemeenskap van prins Albert sal help my verbeter.

Community my grootste droom is om 'n groot skool te maak vir die kinders wat die kaens van hulle toekoms weggegee het.

Leeu-Gamka Primere skool

my persoonlike droom is om van my eus dorp in better plek te maak. hier moet meer dinge gebeur wat die regering moet verstaan om politiek meer uit gesluit word want in leeu-Gamka gaan als oor politiek als hoekom hier sate min dinge gebeur.

Klaarstroom

Ek wil eendag my eie baas wees soos 'n toekompinie of veiltarma.

Seekoegat

- Ek droom van my ma.
- Ek droom van my ma.
- Ek droom van my ma.
- Ek droom van my broeta.
- Ek droom van my suster.
- Ek droom van my kleinkind.

Leeu-Gamka primere

- * Ek wil 'n onderwyser word.
- * Ek wil 'n lewensmaat.
- * Ek wil eendag 'n goeie en gesonde lewens het.
- * Ek wil vir my ma lekker uitstroom.
- * Ek wil eendag 'n goeie ma vir my kinders is.

My Dream:

Socialism. A society in which services are ~~are~~ from government are guaranteed & not hoped for.

I dream of a classless society.

Albert college

To have a perfect body and to not feel left out because of my past and to just be happy, without anyone having a problem with me.

Seekoegat In my droom wil ek 'n skryfster word. Maar ek lees nog baie daar aan van ek is baie lief vir diere ek is ook baie lief vir ander diere.

Prince Albert College

To find peace with myself and with who I am.

Leeu-Gamka primere skool

my persoonlike droom is dat almal die skool eendag sal klaar maak. om iets van hul lewens te maak.

Examples of children's dreams in Prince Albert



Many children in this community referred to the need for psychologists, social workers, and youth centres.

Leeu-Gamka Primary school was also located in a remote community. The 28 children who participated in the workshop were in Grades 8 and 9 and thus older than the participating children in Klaarstroom. Children expressed the dream to be educators, firefighters, law enforcement professionals and doctors, typical of other places. They understood that having a career was only one facet of the future and many yearned to build families and live well. Many children in this community referred to the need for psychologists, social workers, and youth centres. One child wanted a youth programme in the model of the POP Centre in Prince Albert. They said: My personal dream is that we can have a POP centre for children to engage in activities" (My persoonlike droom is dat hier 'n POP sentrum moet gebou word sodat kinders aktiwiteite daar kan doen.) The children understand the need for proactive social and health-seeking behaviours.

Fifteen (15) children from Zwartberg High School participated in the workshop from the town of Prince Albert. Most children noted that they have dreams of working in service careers (such as doctors, social workers, educators). They want to improve the circumstances of their family and make Prince Albert a better place. The dream of one child captures their aspiration to improve lives, they expressed: "I want to have a good job to sustain me. I want to be very happy in the future. I want to help children and provide them with the things they need. I want to be a good person in my community, and I also want to be famous, be on TV and other things. I want to make donations to clinics and children in foster care." (Ek wil 'n goeie werk hê om my aan die lewe te hou. Ek wil baie gelukkig wees in my toekoms. Ek wil so graag kinders help met goedere wat hulle mee sukkel en nie

kan doen nie. Ek wil 'n goeie mens wees vir my gemeenskap en wil ook baie beroemd wees soos bv. op tv wees en nog ander dinge. Ek wil vir klinieke geld skenk en vir pleeg kinders.) Spreading happiness is important to some children. Another child wants to promote happiness through photography. They articulated they wanted: "to be a photographer! I smile more when I am behind a camera. I will capture nature, take pictures of the world I see around me, then perhaps I can inspire others to follow their dreams" (Om 'n fotograaf te word! Net die feit dat ek meer smile as ek agter 'n kamera is! Net die feit om meer van dit te leer sal 'n groot eer wees. Ek sal regtig die natuur, die wêreld wil af neem rondom my want miskien, net miskien, kan ek ander inspireer om hulle drome ook te volg.). Children see themselves as agents for change and having the ability to inspire and make others happy.

Most of the 9 children who attended the workshop from Prince Albert College, a private educational institution, come from a higher social economic background than most of the children we engage with in most other workshops. Their parents own businesses, and they live in comfortable homes. One child spoke about their class aspirations saying: "I want to be wealthy (not rich)." However, especially the girls in the group, displayed anxiety in relation to the narrative of being unsafe in their communities due to living in an unequal society. They seemed to appreciate the chance to be challenged by their peers about their experiences of privilege. One boy noted he wants: "A society in which services from government are guaranteed and not hoped for. I dream of a classless society." One child also reflected some challenges with self-esteem. The girl said: "To have a perfect body and to not feel left out because of my past and just

be happy, without anyone having a problem with me." Whereas in other communities, children may not have the support to reach their professional goals. The children at this school mostly have educated, professional parents who can guide and support their journey. Their dreams are of becoming a 'medical scientist', 'physiotherapist' or 'fashion designer'. Privilege and class were reflected on and acknowledged by most children in this group.

SUMMARY OF DREAMS

Happiness, health, and wellness are very important for children when they express their dreams for the future. Many see their professional aspirations as contributions to societal aims. Sometimes children's dreams and worries seem to be conflated. They are concerned for the wellbeing of their families, now and in the future; and the state of the communities in which they want to live.

Worries

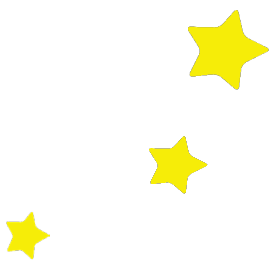
In Seekoegat, children complain about the many environmental dangers and risks to their safety. One of the most frequent reports is that rivers and dams are dangerous as children can drown. Many children also report that parents are not always protectors but can sometimes be perpetrators of violence and hurt. One child reported: "The children get hurt. The mother hurts the children. The father hurts the children, hits them" (Die kinders kry seer. Die ma maak die kinders seer. Die pa maak die seuns seer, slaan.) One of the children articulated that children must be respected in the same way as adults are respected. They expressed: "Adults must listen to small children. Small children must respect adults. The adults must also respect the small children. Adults should not argue in front of children" (Groot mense moet luister na klein

kindertjies. Klein kinders moet respek het vir groot mense. Die groot mense moet ook vir die klein kinders respek. Groot mense moet nie voor kinders skel nie.) Children's rights to protection and dignity are not being respected and children are speaking out about these violations.

In Klaarstroom, there were further reports of violations of children's rights. Parents are implicated in leading their children astray. A child noted: "Adult parents permit their children to drink alcohol and smoke [cigarettes or drugs] and some encourage their children to beat up on other children." (Die groot ouers laat toe laat hulle kinders drink en rook en bety steuk hulle kinders op om ander kinders te slaan.) Children also report that playing in the streets can be dangerous due to car accidents, especially on the main road, but also because there is fighting in the streets. There are no safe places to play. The playpark is also dangerous. A child notes: "In the park it is not safe as children push you on the swings until you fall from the swings and get hurt" (In die parkie is dit ook nie veilig nie want daar kom kinders en dan stoot daar n kind die ander een dan val die kind van die swing af dan kry daai kind seer.) Children report anti-social behaviours are being taught to them by their own parents and children are also not good at playing well together, someone always gets hurt.

In Leeu-Gamka, the influence of taverns that sell drugs and alcohol to underaged children are a grave concern. One child reported: "There are lots of drug houses where underaged learners hang out. In Leeu-Gamka youth are taken away from us by these drug houses. Many children's futures end in Leeu-Gamka. Many are uneducated. Many have lots of worries that they do not talk about, and this leads to suicide." (Hier is baie drug huise waar

Happiness, health, and wellness are very important for children when they express their dreams for the future.



onder ouderdom leerders uithang. In Leeu-Gamka word jong mense se jonkeid van hulle weg geneem as gevolg van die drug huise. Baie kinders se toekoms eindig in Leeu-Gamka. Baie is ontgeleer. Baie het dinge waaroor hulle nie praat nie en dit lei na selfmoord toe.). Children's motivation to continue with schooling is threatened by the pervasiveness of drug use in the community. They worry that children will drop out of school early, especially because they need to travel out of their community to complete the senior phase of schooling from Grade 10. The effect of drug use on schooling is a primary concern in Leeu-Gamka.

In the Prince Albert school, Zwartberg High, the children report a vicious cycle of abuse and neglect. A child articulated: "Children do not have a place to live. Parents abuse their children because they are drunk or use drugs. Children also have children while they are still at school, or they are forced to leave school." (Kinders wat nie blyplek het om te woon nie. Ouers wat die kinders abuse as gevolg van die drank wat hulle drink of dwelms wat hulle gebruik. Kinders wat ook kinders kry maar hulle is op skool of hulle het die skool gelos.) Negative role-modelling from parents and neglect can lead to children becoming vulnerable, making poor life choices and repeating the cycle of poverty and abuse. Another issue related to violence is the prevalence of bullying at school, but children feel as if they cannot talk about it. One child expressed: "Children do not want to talk to adults when they are being bullied." (Kinders wil nie saam groot mense praat nie as hulle geboelie word.) Other children at that school note that educators do not listen and try to understand the source of learner's negative behavior and the principal insults some children. The school culture needs to be one of mutual respect and understanding of

the home and schooling experiences that some children experience.

The children from Prince Albert College have different worries, some worry about the less fortunate while others have self-esteem concerns. A very cynical participant noted: "Upper class white children don't worry. Wealth is inherent or hereditary. Classism is a big part of Prince Albert. One sub-section of children is concerned with getting by [each] day, the other (more privileged) sub-section is concerned about the latest iPhone release to satiate their capitalist needs." This is quite a jaded view, but we did observe that the other children were less opinionated than this. They had worries about social acceptance and self-esteem that is prevalent amongst children everywhere. One girl expressed her worry as: "Body image. Studying. What other people think of you." Across communities, children are worried about these personal issues. For some, these levels of worries are complicated also by worries about the ravages of poverty and violence – self-medicated with alcohol and drug use and abuse.

SUMMARY OF WORRIES

Personal safety, child abuse, the ravages of alcohol and drugs as well as self-esteem challenges were reported as worries by the children in Prince Albert municipality. Most concerning is that parents are implicated in inducting their children into negative behaviours, like the use of alcohol and drugs. Very similar to other municipalities, children internalise the responsibility for these worries and want to make other children's lives better.



"Children do not have a place to live. Parents abuse their children because they are drunk or use drugs. Children also have children while they are still at school, or they are forced to leave school."

Seekoekies

die kinders kry baie seer.
Ous kry baie bang. Ous is baie bang vir slung.



Seekoekies

die kinders kry seer
die kinders se ma lyl
Die kinders ra en die ma kry nie hulle nie
Die kinders rak weg en die ma kry nie hulle nie
Die kinders hardloop by die hulle uit hulle uit

Leeu-Gamka Primêre Skool

- * Hier in Leeu-gamka bekommerd ek my oor die jongmense wat so leue agter uit gaan.
- * Bekommerd oor die steel loopbaan van die kinders.
- * Kinders wat om swaar kry saam met hulle ouers.
- * Bekommerd oor die jongmense wat nie werk kry nie.

Leeu-Gamka Primêre

In Leeu-Gamka het ons kinders baie bekommerde omdat sommige kinders las skool op 5/6 En ons kinders moet ons steel loop baan 16/1000.
Ek wil hê ons almal moet almal wil 'n goeie lewe hê.

Prince Albert College

- Body Image - What other people think of you
- Studying

Albet college.

Insecurities.

Kids Worries:

Rich Upper class white children don't worry. Wealth is inheritant & hereditary.

Classism is a big part of Prince Albert.

One sub-section of children are concerned with getting by the day, the other (more privileged) sub-section is concerned about the latest iPhone release to satiate their capitalist needs.

Hoërskool Zwartdoring

1. Oor ouers wat alkohol drink.
2. Kinders wat dwelms gebruik.
3. Kinders word mishandel.

Prince Albert College

Judgement / comments

Hoërskool Zwartberg

- Oor ouers wat mishandel word deur ouers
- Kinders se geld wat gaan vir wyn.
- Dwelms wat gebruik word deur ouers en dan word kinders uit op die steel gesit.

Examples of the worries children have in Prince Albert

ANALYSIS OF CHILDREN'S DREAMS AND WORRIES

Cycle of violence, neglect and negative role modelling

Neglect is evidenced through children's accounts of bad parenting, negative role modelling and substance abuse. Here, children report that some parents binge drink and abuse drugs in their company. This often results in parents neglecting their responsibilities as a child's primary duty bearer, such as feeding them, clothing them, and providing adequate forms of shelter and safety.

The most worrying trend is that parents are reported to encourage children to drink, smoke cigarettes, and perpetrate violence against other children. This type of parenting can have negative impacts on a child's development, particularly their physical health and socio-emotional skills as adults.

Children assume adult responsibilities

Children are concerned about the welfare of other children in their community. They witness children being led astray (even by their own parents). So, they want to make things right and give other children inspiration, happiness and hope for a better future.

In their childhood, they are already preoccupied by how they can use their future success to help children live better. This is an unfair burden to place on children. It means the duty bearers of children's rights – parents and government – are not doing their jobs well. It is especially sad to hear, time and time again, that some parents are the main violators of their children's rights.

Exposing children to adverse childhood experiences can have a lasting negative impact on their development, wellbeing and even their opportunities such as education

and earning potential. Children who are exposed to violence are more likely to become victims or perpetrators of abuse in future relationships. Thus, it is important to put more emphasis on promoting and realising children's rights to create the building blocks for a healthy society.

Unique challenges of remote communities

Children in remote communities face unique and additional challenges due to the distance. The town of Prince Albert is approximately 393 km from the City of Cape Town. Then each of the communities in this municipality is at least 70 km from the town of Prince Albert with nothing but farmland as surroundings. Their location creates challenges for service delivery. Children at schools, for example, are not easily able to access remedial services for learning disabilities.

Children must also trade one right for another. Some children need to leave their families for long periods of time to access education. Children leave their families at a young age and do not frequently see them, as transporting children from home to school is very costly for the family. Children in this circumstance appear to depend on older children for emotional support and solace. They are visibly clingy, and the older children reported having to carry them around. Bearing in mind that these are all primary school children. This is an unfair responsibility.

Developmental backlogs were easy to note in some children in these remote contexts. Thus, it may be very difficult for some children in these communities to meet their current needs and will take urgent intervention to enable them all to reach their full potential.

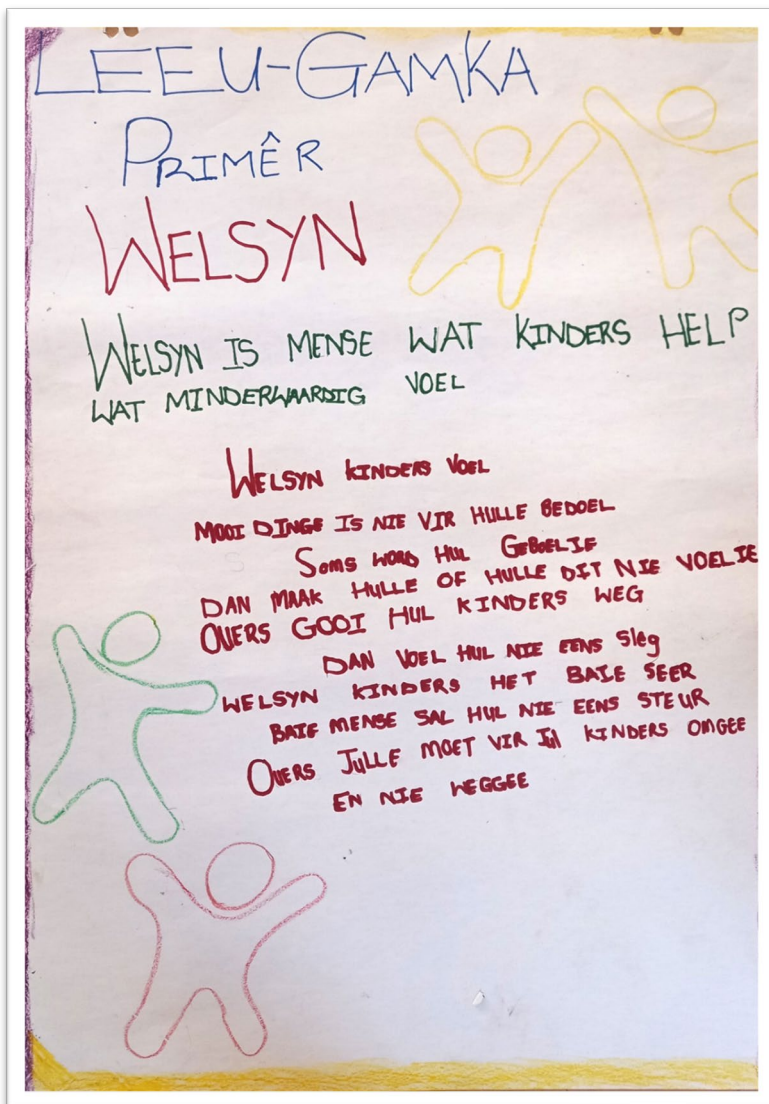
Children are concerned about the welfare of other children in their community. They witness children being led astray (even by their own parents).

ACTIVITY 3: RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNMENT

Children were requested to make recommendations to government for service improvements. Recommendations focus on the four (4) mandate departments of the Commissioner i.e. Departments of Social Development, Health, Education as well as Cultural Affairs and Sport. For the DoH and DSD, the recommendations are presented according to common themes. This gives the Departments an overview of the key issues at community-level, which is appropriate since DSD and DOH programmes and interventions are community-based. Whereas for



A poem by children
at Leeu-Gamka
Primary

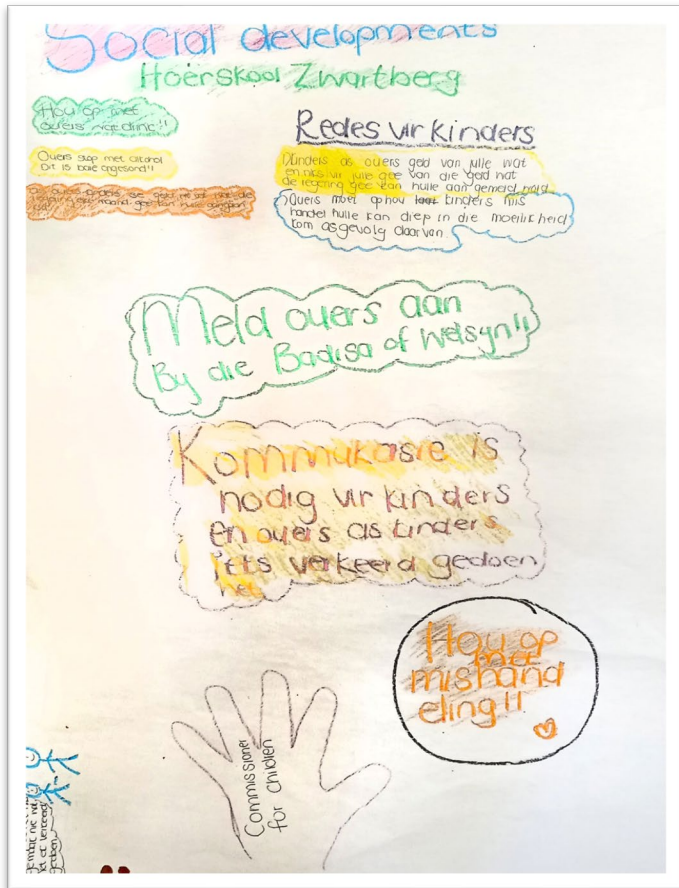


WCED and DCAS, the recommendations are presented at school-level. This owes to the nature of WCED and DCAS interventions, which are site-specific.

A high-level analysis of these recommendations is discussed below and a detailed table of children's submissions to the WCCC are provided in Appendix 1.

Department of Social Development (DSD)

Through their submissions, the children from Prince Albert illustrated some of the key problems occurring in their communities. There seems to be a clear issue with the ways in which caregivers treat children, which can be noted from reports of abuse and neglect. They say: "Parents must stop abusing children because they can get into deep trouble for this." (Ouers moet ophou kinder mishandel hulle kan diep in die moeilikheid kom as gevolg daarvan") Furthermore, they note: "Parents throw their children away and they do not even feel bad about it." (Ouers gooi hulle kinders weg dan voel hulle nie eens sleg). Children report multiple ways in which social grant funds are being misused by caregivers. A child states: If parents take [social grant funds] from their children and children get no benefit from this money, the parents can be reported" (Kinders as ouers geld van hulle vat en niks vir hulle gee kan hulle aan gemeld word). In addition to the issues occurring amongst caregivers, learners also note some experiences of children who are supported by the state. A child opines: Children in state care feel as if beautiful things are not meant for them." (Welsyn kinders voel mooi dinge is nie vir hulle bedoel). They also add: "Children in state care deal with a lot of pain." (Welsyn kinders het baie seer). Thus, children have lots of empathy with others and they believe that children supported



Posters by learners at Zwartberg High.

by state care do not see value in themselves.

It is no surprise that the recommendations for DSD intervention are linked to caregiver behaviours and the support of children who require welfare services. There was strong advocacy for DSD to transform children's lives, particularly those who live on the street. A child noted: "[The state] should place children in care if

they live on the streets." (Deur vir kinders in sorg te plaas wat op strate woon). Two key themes of intervention linked to caregivers included:

- Reducing alcohol abuse amongst caregivers. A child shared: "Parents should stop drinking it is very unhealthy!" (Hou op met ouers wat drink!"; "Ouers stop met alkohol dit is baie ongesond!!!"), and;
- Reducing child maltreatment and providing support to caregivers who lack the capacity to care for children. One child advised: "Report parents to the [child protection services]; stop abuse in our community / country!" (Meld ouers aan by die Badisa of welsyn; Hou op [met] mishandeling in ons gemeenskap/land)

The recommendations provided above reflect children's understanding of the DSD's mandate. Children believe that DSD is meant to help people who feel inferior. They say: "Social Development helps people who feel inferior, supports families, assists people who do not have homes, and transforms communities." (Welsyn help mense wat minderwaardig voel; help families; help mense wat nie huise het nie; bring verandering in gemeenskappe). Children thus view DSD from a welfare and prevention



perspective, particularly their responsibility to support people and communities who are struggling to cope with life's ordeals and a mandate to transform communities.

Department of Health

Children predominantly reflected on the quality of Primary Health Care (PHC) services and their community's access to some PHC services. The management of service sites and the conduct of healthcare workers were raised as concerns.

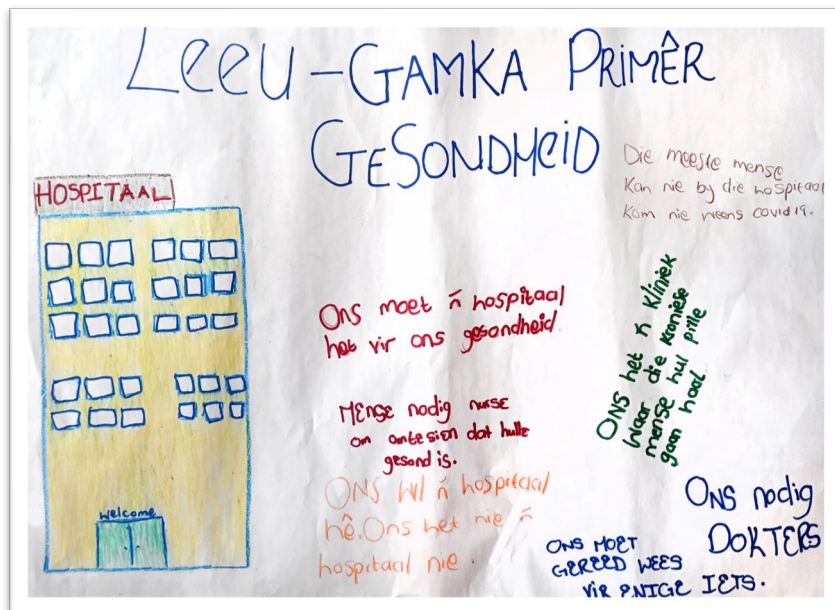
Commenting on PHC management, children note some challenges such as long waiting times, appointments

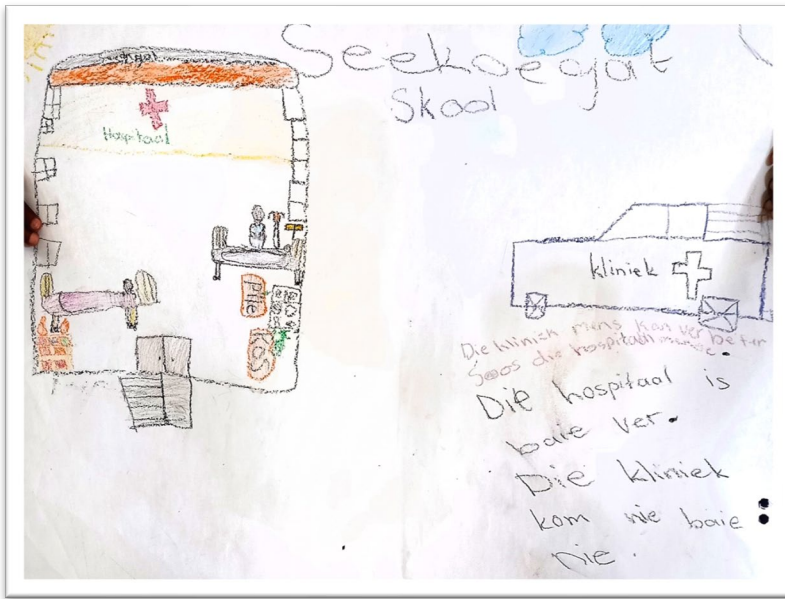
Poster by learners at Leeu-Gamka

not being honoured, and not being able to wait inside the clinic during inclement weather. They say: "We must wait very long at the clinic; people do not get helped despite having appointments; people cannot sit inside the clinic, and it is unsafe because if they bring their child then then you must stand in the wind with your child." (Ons moet baie lank by die kilniek wag; mense word nie gehelp as hulle hul afspraak maak het nie; [en] mense kannie binne die kliniek sit nie en dit is onveilig want as die kind daar is moet jy met jou kind in die wind sit"). Children made appeals for clinics to be kept clean. They also called for appropriate medicine, saying: "The nurse does not give people the correct pills." (Die verpleegster gee mense nie die regte pille nie). The concerns are typical of clinics in the Western Cape.

The conduct of health care workers is a common concern in many communities. Children report: "The clinic staff does not want to help the people." (Die kliniek mense will nie die mense help nie). Children become cynical about the reasons why health service providers are helpful only some of the time. They opine: "The doctor and nurse are very helpful when it is the end of the month, and they must get their salary." (Dokter en verpleegster is baie behelpsaam waneer dit die ent van die maand is waneer hulle moet py"). One child noted: "I want people who work at the hospital to treat patients with respect and to not talk to them like they want [disrespectfully]." ("Ek wil he dat die mense wat by die hospitaal werk, die pasiente respek moet behandel en nie moet praat met julle soos hulle wil nie"). There was a strong outcry for clinical staff to improve their conduct and treat people with respect.

Limited access to PHC services was a clear and popular concern amongst the children of Prince Albert. They



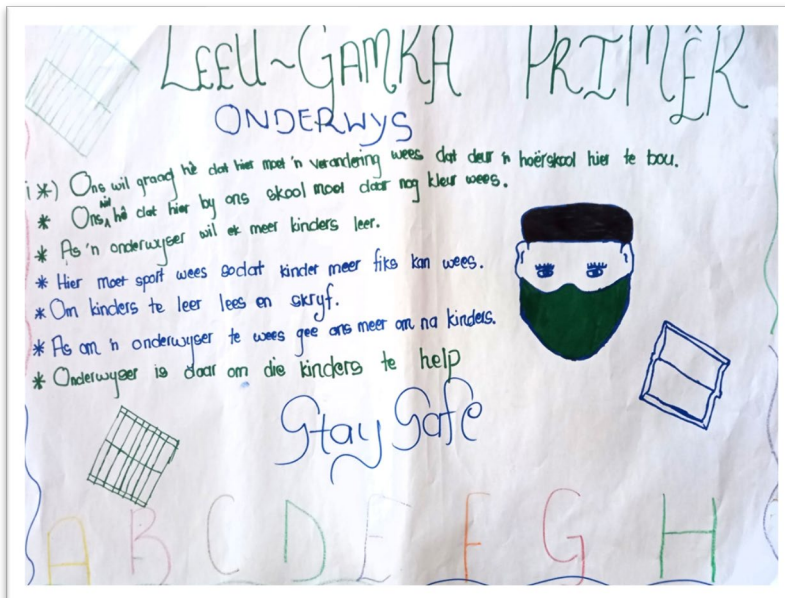


note that: “no family planning services exist in the community”, “the hospital is very far from where we stay”, and “the [mobile] clinic does not visit often enough.” (Ons het nie family plannings nie, die hospitaal is baie ver, die kliniek kom nie baie nie). There were clear requests for more hospitals, nurses, and doctors. They said: “We want a hospital. We do not have a hospital; people need nurses to care for them so they can get better; [and] we need doctors. (Ons wil ‘n hospitaal he, ons het nie ‘n hospital nie; mense nodig nurse om omtiesien dat hulle gesond is; ons nodig dokters). Children also advise that more health service outreach programmes should be implemented, where doctors and nurses conduct home visits.

Western Cape Education Department

The submissions for the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) provided insights into a child's experience of the schooling system as well as recommendations for improving various elements of the system itself. Based on their illustrations, children from Prince Albert seem to have a largely positive learning experience at school. They say: “We are happy at school”, “children have their own tables and schools to get education”, “class time is good”, and “the state cares for us with food so we can eat at school.” (Ons is baie gelukkig by die skool; kinders het hulle eie tafels en skole om daar te leer; klas is goed;[en] die staat sorg vir ons vir die voedsel sodat ons kan eet hier by die skool). These children shared positive sentiments about schooling.

There were, however, some requests that highlight negative teacher conduct, such as teachers being overly critical. The children reflect: “Stop criticising other children!”, “Educators should stop belittling children”, “Stop placing children at a



disadvantage" (Ophou om ander kinders te kritiseer!, onderwysers moet ophou om kinders af te kraak, hou op om kinders te [be]nadeel). Educators can undermine the self-esteem of children by the manner in which they communicate.

WCED and DCAS: School-based Sport

When it comes to sports, learners are encouraged to participate in sports. Children express: "The educators make sure we participate in sport." (Die onderwysers maak seker dat ons aan sport aktiwiteit deel neem). In order to participate in sport, they require more sports and recreation options to be made available to them. They declared: "The school must present more sport opportunities so that the children can stay busy during weekends." (Die skool moet meer sport aktiwiteit aanbied sodat die kinders naweke kan besig bly). They also encourage the promotion of physical fitness, saying: "There must be sport here so that children can be fit". (Hier moet sport wees sodat kinders meer fiks kan wees). Children understand the importance and value of participating in sport.

When it came to sports, learners were primarily focused on illustrating the

character of sport and recreation at their schools and in their communities, as well as submitting requests for certain types of sports to be introduced. This section is structured according to the nature of sport at each school, as well as the needs expressed per school. Schools include Leeu-Gamka Primary, Seekoegat Primary, Klaarstrom Primary, Zwartberg High School.

LEEUGAMKA PRIMARY SCHOOL

The learners of Leeu-Gamka mentioned that their school does not have many sport offerings, except for basketball. There seems to be a big interest in soccer and rugby, which is commonly shared by boys and girls. They say both "boys and girls can play soccer", and boys and girls can play rugby, but we need these sports." (Seuns and meisies kan sokker speel, en "seuns en meisies kan dit [rugby] speel, maar [ons] nodig die sport). Their main request was for a physical sporting and recreation environment to be provided. They requested: "We would need [sport infrastructure such as] a netball court, soccer field and a swimming pool in our community because it is our heart's desire and people and children really want to enjoy themselves." (Ons wil baie graag dit - i.e. netball veld, swembad, sokkerveld - he in ons omgewing want dit is wat ons harte begeer, en baie mense of kinders will hulle graag geniet). Sport infrastructure is sorely needed.

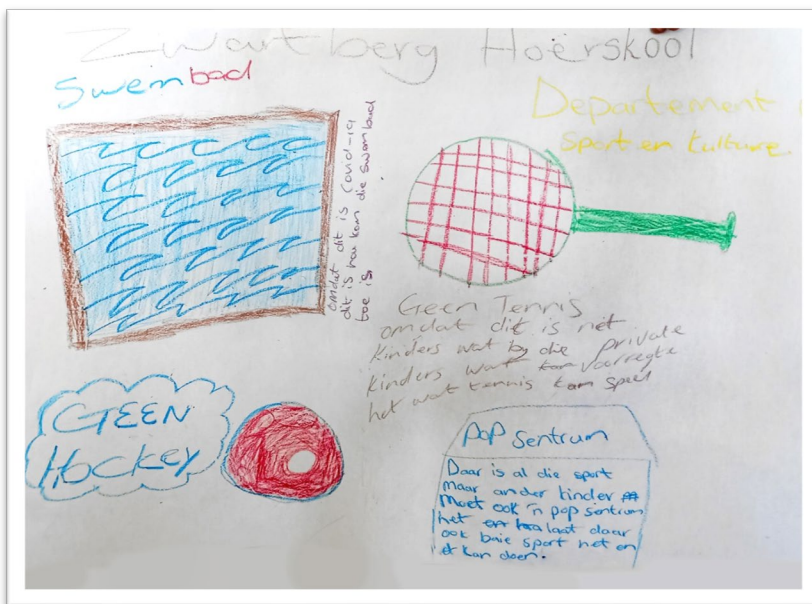
SEEKOEKAT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Learners from Seekoegat Primary School illustrated their desire for an athletics track, soccer and rugby field, swimming pool, as well as table tennis facilities. They also want no gender restrictions around boys and girls playing sports together, particularly in soccer (Meisies and seuns speel sokker saam). When the Commissioner visited the school, it was clear that no recreational

"The school must present more sport opportunities so that the children can stay busy during weekends."

Children's poster at Seekoegat Primary





Poster by learners at Zwartberg High

private kinders wat vooregte het wat tennis kan speel). Learners at Zwartberg also appealed for a local community centre with sport offerings, they plea: "There are all kinds of sport, but children need a POP centre so that there can be access to sport." (Daar is all die sport maar ander kinders moet ook n pop centrum het laat daar ook baie sport het en kan doen".) There is clearly a divide in access to sporting opportunities along socio-economic lines.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNMENT

Government is requested to support children who are experiencing abuse and neglect by parents and make sure children who are in state care are treated well. In health care, resource constraints which affect the efficacy of service delivery is a repetitive theme. Unfortunately, once again we noted concerns about health care workers not treating patients with dignity. Negative conduct was also noted amongst educators in some communities. Some children reported the positives of being able to be happy at school, having the basic resources and receiving a meal at school. Sport at school and in communities is considered by children to be a very good way to prevent social problems and empower children.

INSIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO DEPARTMENTS FROM ADULT STAKEHOLDERS

Parent involvement

Service providers share that prevention work starts within the homes. One social worker said: "I think where change needs to start is within the family, within the home. Children need role models. Children

facilities existed at all. Learners are thus aspirational in their request to the Department.

KLAARSTROOM PRIMARY

At Klaarstroom, children requested netball games and an athletics track, they said: "We want to play netball more often, we want [an] athletics track." (Ons will meer netball speel, en ons will 'n atletiek baan he). Learners also mentioned an issue around numbers, in that there are too few learners to play sports and more people need to be encouraged to play sporting activities, they pleaded: "We are too few to play sport, we need more participants." (Ons kort meer mense om sport te speel, en ons moet meer mense kry want ons is min mense). As this is a small community, there is less infrastructure and too few sport enthusiasts.

ZWARTBERG HIGH SCHOOL

Learners at Zwartberg focused on the fact that no tennis or hockey exists at their school. Specifically, that children who play tennis typically have private access to tennis; it is not provided communally. They report: "No tennis, because it is only privileged children who can afford private coaching who can play tennis." (Geen tennis omdat dit is net kinders wat by die

Government is requested to support children who are experiencing abuse and neglect by parents and make sure children who are in state care are treated well.

need sober parents. Because if a child does not have that, they don't flourish. They don't flourish academic[ally], socially, culturally, nowhere. So, if the parents stand up and be parents like we had in our days, it will make the difference, a greater impact on that child's life, to be a better person in their future, because our children are the future." Parenting support is identified as a key intervention point for enhancing the character of childhood.

"I would love to have families more involved, parents more involved in the activities of our MOD centres and all other programmes the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport have."

There is also a call for parent involvement in programmes developed by the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport. A MOD centre worker says: "I would love to have families more involved, parents more involved in the activities of our MOD centres and all other programmes the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport have." The link between parents and programming seems to need more attention.

Parenting training is needed in communities. An educator opines: "What we need in our communities is

education of parents, as our parents are very young in recent times." (Wat ons ook nodig het in ons gemeenskappe is baie opvoeding van ouers omdat ons ouers baie jonk is dees dae.) Younger parents need more support to better enable them to support their children more effectively.

Lack of services in this region

The dearth of service sites was identified as a big challenge. A social worker shared: "We don't have any CYCCs in the Central Karoo. The distance between Central Karoo towns, and I'm not just talking about Prince Albert, I'm talking now [about] the whole area. The distance between the towns and the Central Karoo towards other CYCCs [in] George [or] Cape Town, is vast. The relationship between the parent and the child is broken, because our parents just can't get to the family day or to the engagements or to groups to attend because of the distance, because of financial commitments. So, I think if we can somehow get some of the resources

The Commissioner with the MOD Team at Prince Albert Primary





WCCC and learners at Zwartberg High

that can just attend to our children. I'm not in favour [of] sending children away to CYCCs because I have this belief you will sometimes send the youth away then they are worse off than staying at home. So, I believe that we as professional people, we need to see how the longer you can have that child in the community, the better it is." The lack of CYCCs in the Central Karoo is very concerning, it also affects family reunification processes when the children are placed in CYCCs far from their families.

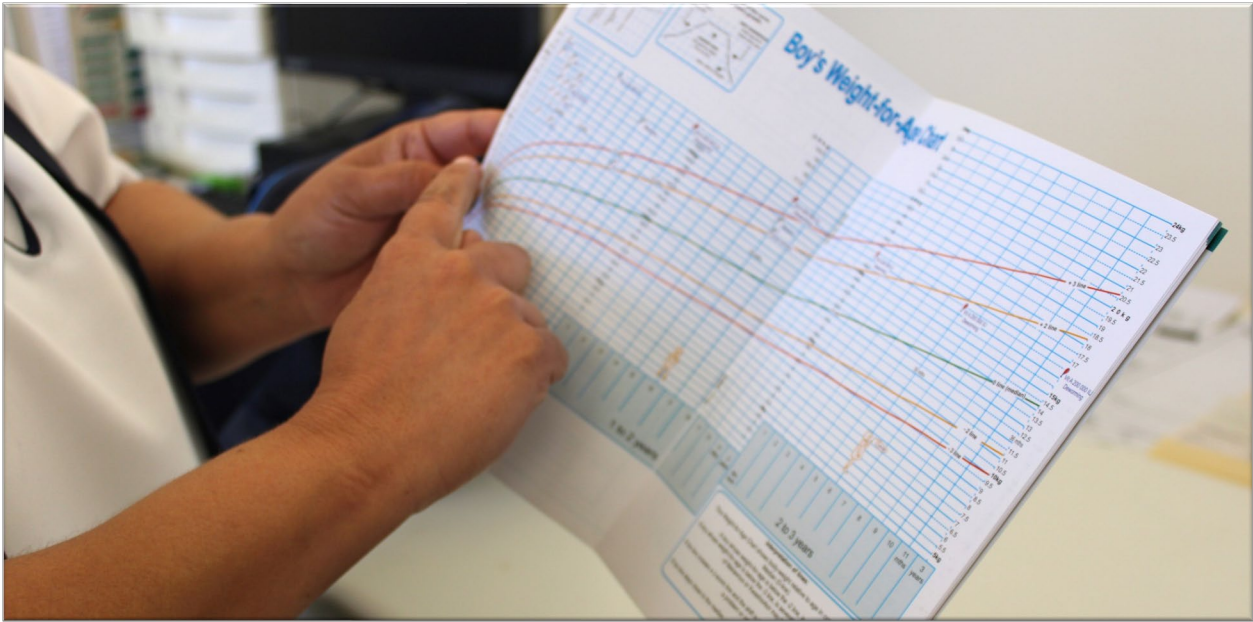
Children are struggling in mainstream schools. A social worker requests: "Special needs classes [are needed] because we are sitting with so many children who have special needs, but they can't be accommodated in mainstream schools. From the ages of 7 up that the education system [could] perhaps look into creating one class where, not age specific, but where they can accommodate those children until the ages where they can go into special needs or school of skills." Children who struggle

with mainstream schooling should have the option to go to special needs schools or schools of skills.

Prevention and early intervention

Child protection needs to be everyone's responsibility. A social worker opines: "Something very close to my heart is the eye on the child programme that we really introduce that again and the concept of mentoring children. Women are always driving these programmes. What I want to see is more men driving them. That we have mentors such as men in the community coming up and mentoring young boys. I think that is where we are really lacking, because you can't learn how to be a father if you don't have that father figure. So, that is something that I would really like us to focus on." The gendered nature of care is problematic, fathers must be encouraged to be role models of care.

A coordinated approach amongst departments could benefit children



Sister explaining the growth chart

“I believe it is good for the Commissioner for Children to visit our area. It can impact children as they can discover themselves and visualise what they want to do in the future.”

at risk. A social worker says: “Different departments [should] develop policies and systems that make it mandatory for certain processes to be activated relating to unacceptable behaviour that is being displayed by children. In other words, if a child is at school after interventions of a certain period at school by the teachers with a referral to the school’s social worker, Social Development has to be activated so that immediately a multidisciplinary team is formulated to draw up some kind of development plan for a child that will minimise us losing children to behavioural challenges.” Children must be supported when they signal, they are in need of an intervention. This must aim to address the source of behavioural challenges to avoid escalation.

Child rights awareness can be beneficial. An educator shares their views: “I am involved at George Fredericks Primary School. I believe it is good for the Commissioner for Children to visit our area. It can impact children as they can discover themselves and visualise what they want to do in the future. It is important that they learn about their rights and the responsibilities that [go] along with that.” (Ek is betrokke by George Fredericks Primere Skool. En dit is vir

my goed dat die Kommissaris van Children of van kinder regte die gebiede besoek. Dit kan baie beteken vir ons kinders om hulle self te ontdek en ook hulle te help visualiseer wat hulle wil doen en wil word in die toekoms. En dit is ook belangrik dat hulle moet leer wat hulle regte is, hoe om verantwoordlikheide te neem bo op die regte wat hulle toegeken word of geniet.) Child rights education must go along with education of responsibilities according to some adults.

Health service delivery

Health services in rural areas are particularly constrained. A parent shares: “I am originally from Leeu Gamka. Last year at that clinic, an old uncle died there. These servies are very poor in our community.” (Ek is oorspronklik van Leeu Gamka. Verlede jaar by Leeu-Gamka kliniek was daar 'n ouerige oom en hy was siek gewees en hy het afgesterf en Leeu-Gamka se dienste is verskriklik swak in ons se gemeenskap.) Services provision is so poor in Leeu-Gamka that people die at the clinic.

The waiting periods at public health centres are long. A parent says: “I am originally from Prince Albert. Early last year (2020) my son was very sick, and I waited at Prince Albert Clinic until

11:00 before I consulted a private doctor and was helped in three minutes. I am so thankful. I want to recommend that we must improve the Prince Albert Clinic, especially the staff working there. There is a manner they must be taught about how to work with patients [with dignity]. “Ek is oorspronklik van Prince Albert Road, eintlik van Prince Albert. Ek wil net se ek was vroeg in verlede jaar met my seuntjie by Prince Albert kliniek. Gewag tot 11 uur en my kind was baie siek. En ek het maar besluit ek gaan na die privaat dokter en binne twee of drie minute was ek gehelp en ek is baie dankbaar daarvoor. Maar ek wil net 'n voorstelling maak asseblief om Prince Albert kliniek om in 'n goeie toestand te bring veral die personeel lede wat daar werk. Daar is net 'n manier oor hoe hulle geleer moet word om hoe om met pasiente te werk.) The dignity rights of patients are not being upheld by health staff.



The Commissioner and mothers from Prince Albert Road Community

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS BY ADULTS

Adult service providers bear out what children note in relation to the need for parent support. Prevention and early intervention work is needed at family level. Children should also be given opportunities to build their own skills and talents. In these remote communities it is best to keep children in their communities rather than place them in places of care and protection far away from their families. This makes reunification difficult. There is a dearth of services. The basic services provided by education and health are resource constrained. However, this does not excuse the lack of respect from some service providers.





WCCC and learners at Prince Albert College

ANALYSIS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

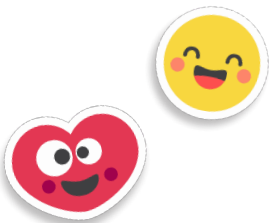
Support to caregivers to transform communities

In this municipality, children speak out about the abuse, maltreatment, and neglect by the parents. After a meeting with the DSD team, we were escorted by the staff to our next appointment at a school. On route, DSD staff needed to help a woman who was lying in the middle of the road, incapable of finding her way home – she seemed inebriated. This was very sad for us to see. The children and service providers had all shared this reality with us. We worried about the children in her family and the shame they could feel. The incident was witnessed by many community members. It is not an isolated occurrence. At the school, the DCAS staff member shared more horrific family abuse stories that reduced her to tears. Therefore, it is not surprising that there is a cry from the children to transform their community.

Prevention strategies are needed to create good role models and empowerment programmes to build options and opportunity for the children in this community. The POP centres are a beacon of hope here. Others from surrounding communities envy the children in Prince Albert, where the POP centre is located. They want POP centres in their communities too. These are the models of violence prevention and empowerment that need to be supported by government to turn the tide on child abuse, addiction, and violence.

Service delivery to the poor is challenged by resource constraints

Long waiting times, few staff, limited medication... this is a story we hear almost everywhere we go. Government departments explain resource constraints by referring to the limited fiscal allocations received. Demand outweighs supply. As the fiscal envelope decreases, will we see even less allocations to these important social services? Are we





We need to face the realities faced by most of the people in this country. We need to do better by them.

satisfied with what we are providing for those most in need? Or should we fight harder for budget reallocations and proper prioritisation. The rate of corruption in our country is also grave cause for concern. Every time public money goes into the pocket of a criminal, it does not reach the people in our country who need it most. Those who are barely surviving and depending on support from the state to lift them out of illness, marginalisation, and poverty. We need to face the realities faced by most of the people in this country. We need to do better by them.

The dignity rights challenge

The people using public services for social welfare, education, health, and sport are the members of society that need a capable state most. They also deserve a caring state. They deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. Too often we hear complaints about the negative ethos of care demonstrated by the frontline staff in the social sector. These services are overburdened and there are many reasons to be frustrated and disheartened as a state employee in the social sector. However, more needs to be invested in the wellness of our frontline workers – to care for the carer. So that they can care for others with compassion and humility. The poorest in our country do not deserve poor service delivery and disrespectful services providers who trample their rights to dignity. Let us build a more caring society by placing emphasis on mental health and wellness of state employees, so that we can truly build a care and support network for those who need it most.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The Prince Albert Municipality Community Child Rights Workshop report is the first of two in this district, with a focus on Beaufort West Municipality, to follow. Prince Albert town anchors the surrounding communities of Prince Albert Road, Leeu-Gamka, Klaarstroom, Seekoegat (with Merweville, in proximity but, administratively part of Beaufort West). The Commissioner for Children and two of her officers conducted this series of Community Child Rights workshops, driving at least 70km out of Prince Albert daily. The team reflected on the remoteness of the communities embedded in well-developed farming areas nestled in the Swartberg mountain range, this was the context of this municipality.

The experience of violence, neglect and maltreatment was a common theme running throughout this report. A new theme articulated in the current report is the need to prioritise prevention and early interventions on families — parents need support to create child wellbeing. When parents (as the primary duty bearers to fulfil child rights) fail; then government must step in to address child rights issues. We know, for example, that a vast array of family strengthening programmes are implemented by the DSD to support parents; but we do not know their effectiveness or the extent to which family strengthening initiatives are resourced and implemented in other social sector departments. A key output of this report will be to map the spread of family strengthening initiatives taking place in Prince Albert across the relevant social sector Departments.

In the context of violence prevention, family strengthening is a key primary prevention mechanism. Sports and recreation are other important tools

to prevent children from becoming victims and perpetrators of violence. However, as evidenced by many of submissions and recommendations, there is a serious lack of sports and recreation facilities across the communities of Prince Albert Municipality. Thus, another key output of this report will be to understand the spread of sports and recreation, as well as the Department's to resource the area.

Unless government addresses its own culpability for child rights violations, we will not achieve the fulfilment of child rights. Government must address the matter of its agents (educators and nurses) who are repeatedly reported to violate dignity

rights. Central to this culpability is the need to strengthen the referral system within and between Departments responsible for child protection – which is a responsibility of all four social sector Departments. Then as an enabler for change in families and households, government needs to prioritise prevention and early intervention. We may need to start tracking whether the commitment of resources towards this aim is increasing, even if incremental, or whether most of the resources still goes towards response in the childcare system and upholding the status quo in education and health. To do this, the Commissioner will start requesting Departments to note their budgetary commitments to certain policies, programmes, and practices. There needs to be political will at the highest level for the systems to change and shift the dial on the fulfilment of children's welfare and autonomy rights.



Appendix 1

DOH SUBMISSION	CATEGORY OF SUBMISSION	THEME	DESCRIPTION
Die kliniek mense kan verbeterere soos die hopsitaal mense	recommendation	Health worker Conduct	Clinic staff must improve to the standard of hospital staff.
Hulle moet by mense omloop om hulle gesond to hou	recommendation	PHC Outreach	Need to visit people to ensure that they are healthy
Die mense moet die kliniek skoon hou	recommendation	PHC management	Keep the clinic clean
Daar moet regte medikasi voorgeskryf word vir die pasiente	recommendation	PHC management	People need to get the correct medical prescriptions
Mense moet regte voedsel kry by die hospitaal	recommendation	PHC management	People need to be served proper food in hospital
Ek wil he dat die mense by die hospitaale goue gehelp word	recommendation	PHC management	I would like people to be helped quicker at the hospitals
Ek wil he dat die mense wat by die hospitaal werk, die pasiente respek moet behandel en nie moet praat met julle soos hulle wil nie	recommendation	Health worker Conduct	People who work at the hospital must respect patients and not treat them however they want to
Om die regte medikasie to gee aan die mense	recommendation	PHC management	People must get the right medication

WCED SUBMISSION	CATEGORY OF SUBMISSION	THEME	DESCRIPTION
One wil graag he dat heir moet n verandering wees dat deur n hoërskool hier te bou	recommendation	Access to Resources	Need a new high school built
Ons will he dat hier by ons skool moet daar nog kleur wees	recommendation	Diversity	There must more diversity at the school
As n onderwyser ek wil meer kinders leer	recommendation	Teaching approaches	Improving access to learning opportunities
Hier moet sport wees sodat kinder meer fiks kan wees	recommendation	Access to Sport and Recreation	More sporting opportunities needed so that children can become more fit
Om kinders te leer lees an skryf	recommendation	Teaching approaches	Teach children reading and writing
As om n onderwysyer te wees geer ons meer om na kinders	comment	Teaching approaches	Teachers care about children more
onderwysers is daar om die kinders te help	comment	Teaching approaches	Teachers are there to help children

WCED SUBMISSION	CATEGORY OF SUBMISSION	THEME	DESCRIPTION
Klas is goed	comment	State of school	Class is good
Kinders het hulle eie tafels en skole om daar te leer	comment	State of school	Children have their own desks
Ophou om ander kinders te kritisier	recommendation	Teacher Conduct	Stop criticising children
Onderwyser moet ophou an kinders af te kraak	recommendation	Teacher Conduct	Stop breaking children down
Stop onreg verdigheid	recommendation	Teacher Conduct	Stop breaking children's dignity
Be a good teacher for all	recommendation	Teacher Conduct	Teachers must be good to everyone they teach
Help ander kinder wat sukkel	recommendation	Teaching approaches	Help children that struggle
hou op an kinder te nadeel	recommendation	Teaching approaches	Stop disadvantaging other learners
Die skool moet meer sport aktiwiteit aanbied sodat die kinders naweke kan besig bly	recommendation	Access to Sport and Recreation	Provide more access to sport so that learners can have activities over the weekend
Ons is baie gelukkig by die skool	comment	State of school	Children are lucky at their school (Merweville)
Die staat sorg vir ons vir die voedsel sodat ons kan eet hier by die skool	comment	State of school	We are taken care of by the state because they feed us
Die onderwysers maak seker dat ons an sport aktiwiteit deel neem	comment	Access to Sport and Recreation	Teachers make sure that we have access to sporting opportunities

DSD SUBMISSION	CATEGORY OF SUBMISSION	THEME	DESCRIPTION
Ouers julle moet vir julle kinders omgee nie wegee	request/recommendation	Community transformation	Parents must care about their children and not give them up
help die mense ASB	request/recommendation	plea for help	Please help the people
help ons kinders	request/recommendation	plea for help	Help our children
help ASB	request/recommendation	plea for help	Please help the people
help mense wat nie water he nie	request/recommendation	lack of basic needs	Help people who don't have water
help ons asseblief	request/recommendation	plea for help	Help us please
help arm mense	request/recommendation	plea for help	Help poor people

DSD SUBMISSION	CATEGORY OF SUBMISSION	THEME	DESCRIPTION
Hou op met ouers wat drink!	request/recommendation	Community transformation	Stop parents who drink
Ouers stop met alcohol dit is baie ongesond!!!	request/recommendation	Community transformation	Parents must stop drinking because it's very unhealthy
Redes vir kinders:	Request/recommendation	Plea for help	Save the children
Meld ouers aan by die badisa of welsyn	request/recommendation	Community transformation	Take problematic parents to Badisa or DSD
Hou up mishandeling	request/recommendation	plea for help	Stop abuse
verbeter kinder mishandeling in ons gemeenskap/land	request/recommendation	plea for help	Sort out the issue of child abuse in our community
Gee vir kinders n goeie/beter lewe	request/recommendation	plea for help	give children a better life
Duer vir kinders in sorg te plaas vat op strate woon	request/recommendation	plea for help	Take care of children living on the street
Welsyn kinders voel mooi dinge is nie vir hulle bedoel. Soms word hul geboelie dan maak hulle of hulle dit nie voelie. Ouers gooi hul kinders weg dan voel hul nie eens sleg. Welsyn kinders het baie seer, baie mens sal hul nie eens steur. Ouers julle moet vir jul kinders omgee en nie weggee.	request	Plea for help	Take care of children in welfare

DCAS SUBMISSION	CATEGORY OF SUBMISSION	THEME	DESCRIPTION
Die skool het nie regtig baie sport nie. Die sport is basketball en is baie skaars. Ons skool het dit nodig (L-G)	issue	Sport offering	Our school does not have proper sport. There is just basketball but we don't play it that often. Our school needs it
Seuns and meisies kan sokker speel (L-G)	comment	Nature of sport at school	Boys and girl can play soccer
Suens and meisies kan dit (rugby) speel maars nodig die sport (L-G)	comment	Nature of sport at school	Boys and girls can play rugby but our school needs the sport
Ons will baie graag dit (i.e. netball veld, swembad, sokkerveld) he in ons ongewing want dit is wat ons harte begeer, en baie mense of kinders will hulle graag geniet	request/recommendation	Sport request	We need a netball field, soccer field and swimming pool. It's what our heart desires, and we know that everyone will enjoy it

DCAS SUBMISSION	CATEGORY OF SUBMISSION	THEME	DESCRIPTION
Die skool het nie regtig tennis nie. Suens en meisies can tennis spiel (L-G)	issue	Nature of sport at school	Boys and girls can play tennis but our school does not offer it
At seekoegat they have facilities for athletics, table tennis, rugby, soccer, netball		Sport offering	We have resources for athletics, table tennis, rugby, soccer and netball
Meisies and seuns spiel sokker saam (seekoegat)	comment	Nature of sport at school	Boys and girls play soccer together
Meisie spiel goed netball (seekoegat)	comment	Nature of sport at school	Girls play good netball
Ons will meer netball spiel (klaarstrom)	request/recommendation	Sport request	We want to play more netball
Ons will n atletiek baan he (klaarstrom)	request/recommendation	Sport request	We want an athletics rink
Ons kort meer mense om sport te spiel (klaarstrom)	issue	Nature of sport at school	We need to get more people to play sport
Ons moet meer mense kry want ons is min mense (klaarstrom)	issue	Nature of sport at school	We need more people to play sport because we are too few
Omdat dit is COVID-19 dit is hoekom die wembad toe is (zwartberg)	comment	Sport offering	The swimming pools are closed because of COVID-19
Geen tennis omdat dit is net kinders wat by die private kinders wat vooregte het wat tennis kan speel (zwartberg)	issue	Sport offering	We have no tennis, only children with private access to tennis can play
Daar is all die sport maar ander kinder(s) moet ook n pop centrum het laat daar ook baie sport het en kan doen (zwartberg)	request/recommendation	Sport request	The pop centrum must also include sport in their offering
Geen hockey (zwartberg)	issue	Sport offering	No hockey



**Commissioner
for Children**
OF THE WESTERN CAPE

**#littlevoicesMUSTcount
#kleinstemmetjiesMOETsaakmaak
#amazwiamancinciMAKAVAKALE**