

01 AUGUST 2019

Focus on iThemba

Project Joy - A reason to smile

Focus on iThemba (RF) NPC is an accredited non-profit, public benefit (18A) organisation - a place of Hope
www.focusonithemba.org +27 (0) 31 710 1800



www.focusonithemba.org

FOCUS ON ITHEMBA, ITHEMBA CAMPUS
JACOB HOUSE, 111 NGWELE ROAD, HILLCREST
KWAZULU-NATAL, SOUTH AFRICA

COMPANY REGISTRATION NO: 2003/009035/08
NON-PROFIT ORGANISATION NO: 035-958-NPO
PUBLIC BENEFIT ORGANISATION (PBO) NO. 930003051



FOCUS ON ITHEMBA ECD PROGRAMME

Early Childhood Development (ECD) is everyone's business. Focus on iThemba works alongside ten Pre-Schools in the Valley of 1000 Hills and Molweni areas.

- The model aims to upgrade existing Pre-Schools to become legal and sustainable businesses.
- The children receive quality ECD care enabling them to thrive at later Foundation Phase Schooling.
- The Principals and teachers receive support, training and mentorship.

The model is holistic in nature with its core strength being our ECD Monitor who spreads her time across the various schools and at our Focus on iThemba offices. Her role is vital as she provides support and motivation and ensures that the training is being implemented correctly. The ten Pre-Schools we are currently in partnership with are: Embo Child Educare Centre; Swelihle Pre-School; Sizakancane Pre-School; Siyajabula Pre-School; **Entokozweni Pre-School (Project Joy)**; S'thandokuhle Pre-School; Smiley Kids Pre-School; Siyabaphephisa Pre-School (Project Bright); Leth'usizo Pre-School and Mba'lenhle Pre-School.

We partner with excellent, respected organisations to achieve our goals:
ECD TEACHER TRAINING - NELRU
MANAGEMENT TRAINING - Ikhono Business Solutions
NUTRITION - Joint Aid Management (JAM)
EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT - GROW with EduCare Centres and the Unlimited Child

BELOW IS A SUMMARY OF THE COURSES THE PROJECT JOY TEACHERS HAVE BENEFITTED FROM (up to 2019):

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Orientation Course: | Bonisiwe Gwala Noxolo Mdina |
| Basic Educare Course: | Sbusisiwe Precious Gwala |
| Business Management Course: | Bonisiwe Gwala |
| First Aid Level 1 Course: | Bonisiwe Gwala |
| Baby/Toddlers Story Telling Course: | Bongiwe Magobolo |
| NQF Level 4: | Bonisiwe Gwala |



A REASON TO SMILE

The space in which NPOs operate is challenging as there are often no easy, straight-forward solutions. If there were simple paths to follow there wouldn't be such an immense need! There is undeniable evidence that the first five years of a child's life is crucial to brain development. In order to secure a solid foundation for future learning and growth, it is vitally important that children receive the necessary care, stimulation and nutrition during these first years. While we need to be looking at Early Childhood Development (ECD) through the lens of socio-economic prosperity and the recognised results it has for the stability of a Country, ECD is also about the protection and promotion of children's rights. There are countless children in the communities on our doorstep whose rights are sadly being compromised due to insufficient ECD.

Project Joy is a case study worth celebrating and a story that brings smiles. A journey walked with many stakeholders, beneficiaries and partners, warrants the documenting of its learnings and wisdom. This is a story of remarkable collaboration and positive growth, combined with incredible benefits for the Principal, teachers, children and the community. This is Project Joy: A Reason To Smile.

THE NEED AND THE CATALYST

"I can't put in words how I am feeling...I am just so excited. The children will benefit so much from this. They were so excited about the bright classroom container colours when they arrived last week and of course they cannot wait to finally have a jungle gym! God Bless all of the partners in this project."

- Mrs Bonisiwe Gwala, Principal and owner.

Focus on iThemba and Entokozweni Pre-School, meaning 'abundance of joy' in isiZulu, have been collaborating since 2016 as one of the partnering Pre-Schools. Principal Bonisiwe Gwala, who has a passion for children and a woman who understands the importance of education, started the school in a church building, located on her property. The school's facilities weren't conducive to learning and were cramped, dark, had poor ventilation and the teachers had to pack up the school every Friday so the church could function over the weekends.

The momentum for this structural upgrade was the wish of the anchor partners who were involved in Project Bright to collaborate on the transformation of another of Focus on iThemba's partnering Pre-Schools.

Communication and transparency were key in the project. The team were purposeful about involving community leaders, the municipality & neighbours to ensure smooth project management. The key donors in the project were instrumental in spreading the word and connecting us to other partners in their network.

Through months of hard work and partnering with an incredible 34 donors and partners, Boniswe's dream came to fruition with the opening of an exceptional ECD centre on the 1 August 2019.



24 August 2018



04 September 2018



18 February 2019



PARTNERS AND GROWTH

Lead Architects, who also designed the improvements for Project Bright, agreed to partner with us again on this incredible upgrade project. The unique, cheerful space utilizes eight insulated shipping containers, three for classrooms, one for toilets, one for a kitchen and another for an office and storage facility. For the first time, the children benefit from flushing toilets, floor coverings that promote hygiene and a fun learning environment, as well as a much-needed jungle gym. The school caters for babies and children up to five years.

The project reached completion thanks to the generosity of (listed in alphabetical order): Belgotex floors; Bidvest SACD; Bo's Plant & Tool Hire; Container World; Cotswold Leisure Centre & Estate; Cotswold Management Association; Cretemix; Dezzo Roofing; Fry's Metal; Gifford Duminy, GMA Foundation; GROW with EduCare Centres; Jocelyn van der Walt; John Clarkson (Land Surveyor); Jojo Tanks; Kerry Ingredients; Key Group; Kloof Round Table; Megan Harker; Mike and Pippa Hankinson; Nicole Singh; Northside Electrical; Lead Architects; Luke Bailes; Sarah and William Hennessy; Sear's Electrical; Spar Group; Selwyn Green; The Colliers Group; The Spur Group; The Zoe Carss Trust; Wallenius Wilhelmsen Solutions; 6 Bar Developments.

In addition, staff members from Kerry Ingredients, as part of their Mandela Day Initiative, donated their time to the painting of tyres and planting of indigenous vegetation to make this a welcoming, 'green friendly' space for all.

GROW with EduCare Centres partnered with Entokozweni to share their expertise in providing quality ECD knowledge, resources and equipment. Focus on iThemba and GROW have a long-standing relationship and we are grateful to them for supporting Project Joy and a few of our other Pre-Schools.

The remarkable transformation in Bonisiwe's school is reflected in the table below:

| HAVE THE CHILDREN PREVIOUSLY HAD ACCESS TO: | 2008 - June 2019 | July 2019 |
|---|------------------|-----------|
| Flushing Toilets | No | Yes |
| Classrooms for each age group | No | Yes |
| Principals office | No | Yes |
| Sick bay | No | Yes |
| Outdoor play equipment | No | Yes |
| School kitchen | No | Yes |
| Store room | No | Yes |
| Fencing around Pre-School | No | Yes |
| Compliant to DSD | No | Yes |
| Adequate space & ventilation | No | Yes |



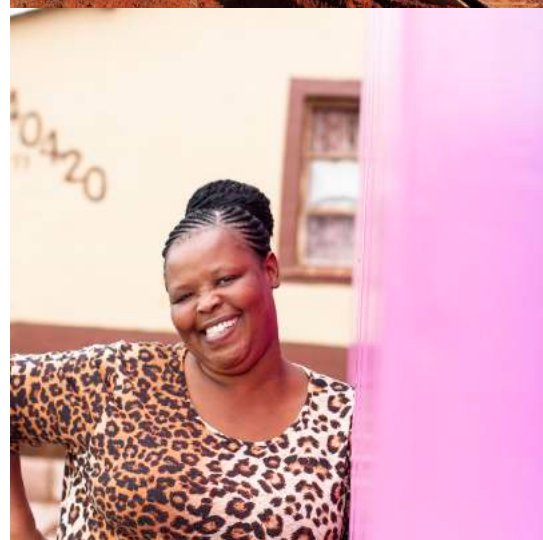
04 April 2019



04 April 2019



26 April 2019



PROJECT LEARNINGS

Through facilitating the transformation of Project Bright, the team have learnt and improved the following in Project Joy:

- Included additional budget for Project Management
- Made sure that we allocated budget for unexpected costs
- Installed and merged two 6m containers as classroom spaces
- The containers for the bathroom and kitchen were installed with Rhino Line flooring.
- Implemented water run-off measures on the containers so as to prevent water from collecting under the bottom of them.

While we were careful to meet the above for Project Joy, there were a few learnings that we observed which need to be noted as considerations for future projects:

- Perform and administer the soil testing BEFORE architectural plans are drawn up.
- Include additional budget for the cost of making the entrance to the school a welcoming and friendly space.

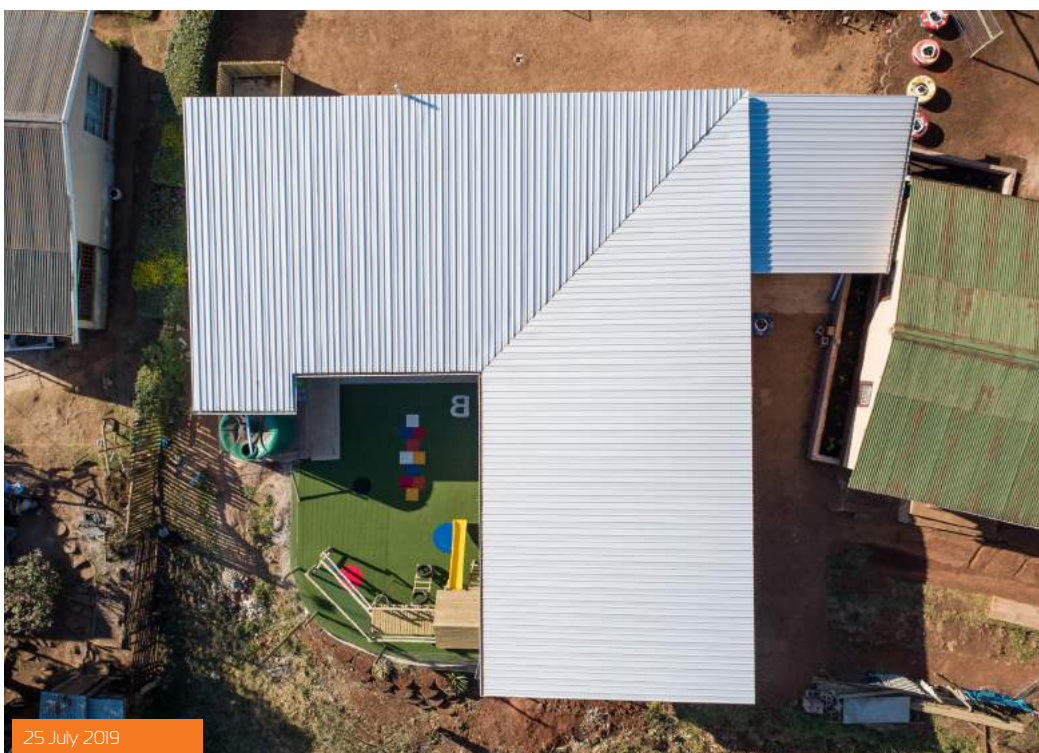
Focus on iThemba is encouraging Bonisiwe to budget for future improvements and maintenance going forward to ensure sustainability.

The highlight for Project Joy has been the phenomenal collaboration of partners, donors and friends, but also the strengthening of relationships with previous suppliers and contractors who partnered with us on Project Bright. The success of the project was largely dependant on all the contractors working well together and communicating properly and efficiently.



PARENT:

I praise God for this new school! Already I can see a difference in my child because she comes home very happy and tells me everything she learnt at school. I know that the quality of education at Entokozweni is good because my child's English is improving and she is recognising shapes and colours. I am hopeful because all the children can now learn in separate classrooms - this will make a big difference. I know that when I drop my little girl off in the morning, I am making her future better.



25 July 2019



AN INTERVIEW WITH BONISIWE

1. What have been the most noticeable changes for you in your new space/school?

A brand new school that is welcoming, learning friendly and creates a space for children and teachers to flourish!

2. How do your boys and girls feel about their new school?

They are very excited and cannot wait to start learning in their new school.

3. Have you noticed increased motivation amongst your teachers?

Definitely. I can see their confidence levels have increased and they are excited to have the opportunity to plan the layout of their classrooms for the first time.

4. What areas in the school do the children enjoy the most?

The jungle gym and beautiful play area!

5. What are your aspirations for your school in the next 4 years?

To be recognised by my community as a centre of excellence in the ECD space. To be in a place where parents consider my school as their first choice.

6. How has your curriculum changed?

We have just recently started our partnership with GROW so when the new curriculum is introduced, I am expecting improvement, growth and fluency in English.

7. What has Focus on iThemba's role been in the process over the last 3 years?

Focus on iThemba has done so much for us that I do not know where to even start! There are no words to express my gratitude but without them I do not know where we would be as a school. They gave us hope when we needed it the most. God bless them!

8. Explain your previous school in comparison to what your school looks like now.

They are worlds apart, you cannot compare. I am happy that now we do not have the disruption of packing up every Friday and the classrooms can stay as they are. We have flushing toilets for the children and teachers, and the children can enjoy the freedom of playing outside!

9. What are your thoughts on GROW?

GROW has helped me to think BIG, to recognise my potential to lead and think like a business woman. They have taught me to get into the habit of budgeting properly and managing my books.

10. What would you say to potential donors considering investing in a project like this?

There are so many deserving schools in our community that can benefit from your kindness. I pray that God blesses you so you can bless others and invest in the future of our country.

Together
we are
Stronger



Project Joy

10 REASONS TO SMILE

#RippleEffect

1

The Pre-School has capacity for 50 Children who can absorb quality age-appropriate education in an ECD centre of excellence

2

1 Principal & 3 teachers have attended various accredited teacher training & business management courses

3

The Pre-School can enjoy the pleasure of having access to their own kitchen, store room, sick bay and office within a safely secured fence around the property

4

34 donors and partners had the opportunity to invest in a life-changing project

5

Entokozweni Pre-School now receives a 'compliant' status with the Department of Social Development and can start the registration process

6

Each year more children will benefit

7

The children's gross motor skills will better develop with access to outdoor play equipment

8

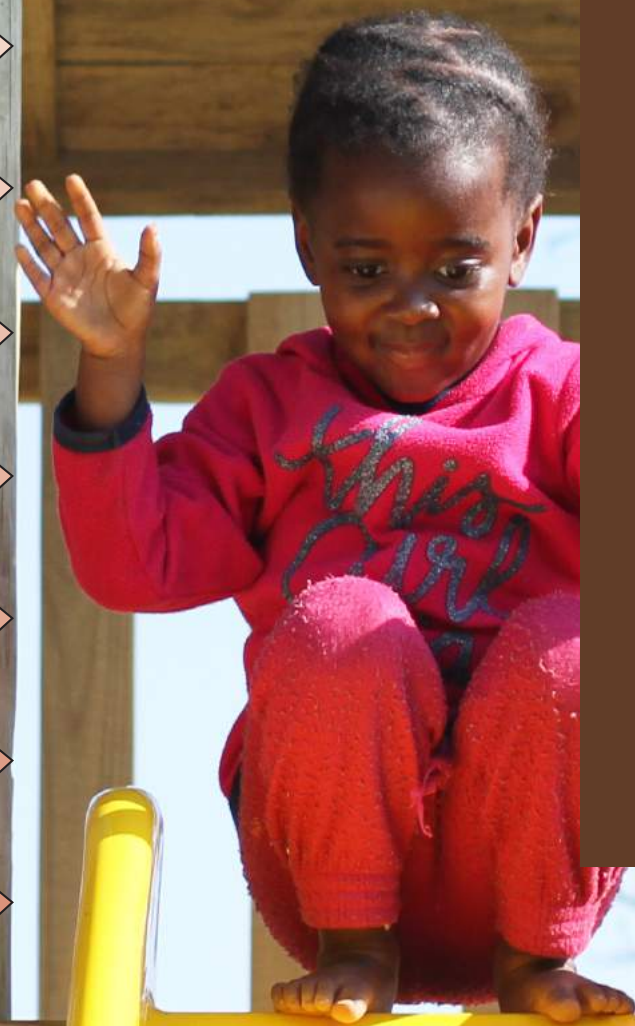
A ripple effect allows these children a better chance of success in their future schooling

9

The school is a beautiful splash of bright colour and a beacon of hope in the community

10

Focus on iThemba has the opportunity to facilitate further change through future upgrade projects.



PARTNER FEEDBACK

For the Belgotex Foundation, this enterprising ability of the Principal is the fundamental driver of our Early Childhood Development (ECD) investment approach. Bonisiwe's business needs to be financially sustainable, uphold good governance and fair labour practices in order to be sustainable.

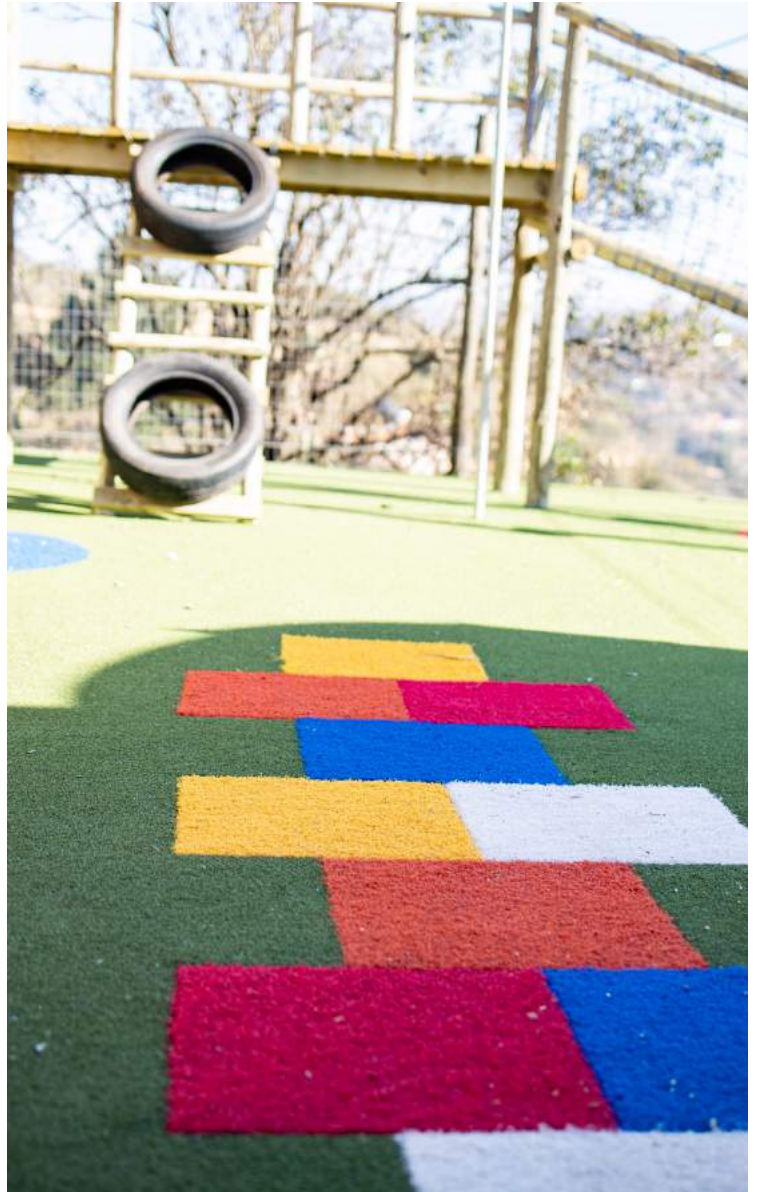
Focus on iThemba and GROW with Educare Centres are key to delivering on this objective. Inclusion is a key pillar of our ECD investments and for this component we rely on the Shonaquip-Uhambo social enterprise to equip caregivers and parents with the knowledge and tools required to include children with varying abilities in all learning and play activities. Shonaquip also provides the specialist devices and clinical services to children with physical disabilities.

Food Security has become a significant part of the Belgotex Foundation's holistic ECD investment approach. We strive for zero stunting as well as enabling income generation through small scale farming operations at the ECD and with parents of attending children.

Lastly, Belgotex floorcoverings are fit for purpose to enable hygienic, inclusive and fun learning environments. We are so proud of the beautiful floors in the classrooms and the playground.

BRONWEN BAINBRIDGE

**General Manager of the Belgotex Foundation
Belgotex Floorcoverings (Pty) Ltd**



PRESS, WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA



HOME DONATE WHAT WE DO WHO WE ARE STORIES CONTACT US BBEE BENEFITS

Project Joy Unfolds

It was a jubilant day for Bonisiwe Gwala, Principal of Entokozweni Pre-School, on 19 February as after months of fundraising and planning the much-needed upgrade of her Pre-School commenced.

"This has been a project of incredible faith and collaboration," explained Tayla-Anne Goss, Focus on iThemba's Donor Relations Manager. "We would like to acknowledge our 29 forward-thinking partners for investing in this very worthy school. Special thanks are extended to our top 7 donors: Bidvest SACD, Container World, Karry Ingredients, Belgotex, Cotswold Downs Estate, GROW with EduCare and Wallenius Wilhelmsen Solutions. Warm thanks are also extended to the local heroes of hope who have contributed their time, wisdom and skills. The impact of these improvements will be immeasurable for the current pupils and for all the children who will follow," said Goss.

Lead Architects designed the improvements for the Pre-School which is located just five minutes from the iThemba Campus. The design includes using six bright insulated shipping containers, three for classrooms, one for a kitchen, one for an office and one for toilets. For the first time the children will benefit from flushing toilets, floor coverings that promote hygiene, accessibility and a fun learning environment, sand pit and a much-needed jungle gym.



HOME DONATE WHAT WE DO WHO WE ARE STORIES CONTACT US BBEE BENEFITS

Project Joy Metamorphosis

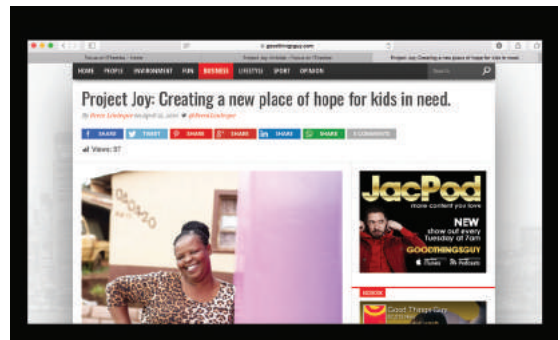
"I can't put in words how I am feeling...I am just so excited," explained Mrs Bonisiwe Gwala, Principal and Owner of Entokozweni Pre-School as she stands in the courtyard of her new dream school. "The children will benefit so much from this. They were so excited about the bright classroom container colours when they arrived last week and of course they cannot wait to finally have a jungle gym! God Bless all of the partners in this project."

On 4 April, partners who are aligned in the Project Joy classroom drive connected for a breakfast on the iThemba Campus in Hillcrest and then a site visit. The Pre-School, which is located just a few minutes from the iThemba Campus, is currently undergoing an incredible life-changing metamorphosis with the opening date set for May.

"It has been a two-year project involving many key individuals and careful planning. Ultimately the parents, children, neighboring community and our incredible 30 partners are the heart and glue of our Project Joy story," explained Tayla-Anne Goss, Team Leader at Focus on iThemba. "Investing in Early Childhood Development (ECD) and therefore brain development is the foundation for economic prosperity. We continue to see the overwhelming positive effects of elevated ECD in the ten Pre-Schools we partner with. Through this



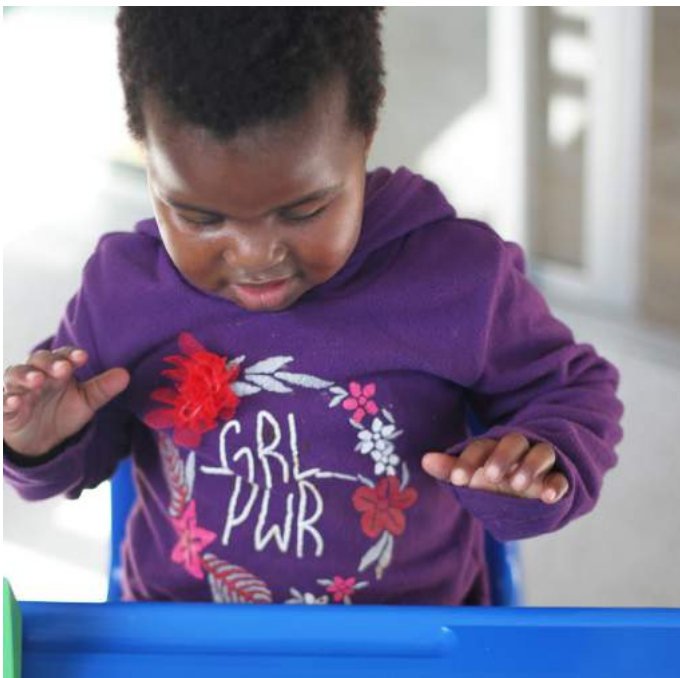
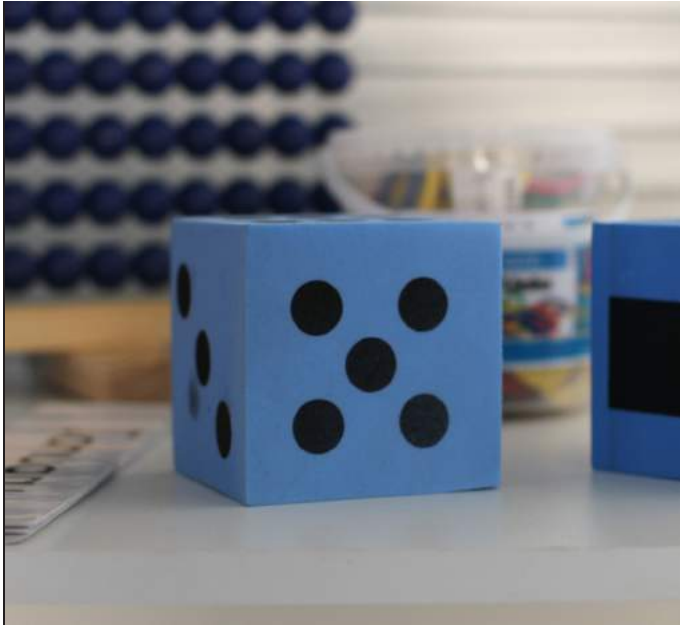
Golf day fund-raiser brings abundant joy



#Gallery



#Gallery



*Credit: Special thanks to *Halfpint Photography and Film* and *Freshshoots Photography* for the professional photos contained in this document.



www.focusonithemba.org

Growing Hearts & Minds



Talk to us:

Tayla-Anne Goss, Team Leader

Tel: +27 (0) 31 710 1800 072 434 5519

iThemba Campus, Jacob House,

111 Ngwele Road, Hillcrest, 3610, South Africa

www.focusonithemba.org info@focusonithemba.org
www.facebook.com/focusonithemba www.instagram.com/focusonithemba