

Family Outreach Programme

Barcelona, Gugulethu

Meet Ms Nontembiso Leve, CECD's Family Outreach Worker



Nontembiso works as a Family Outreach Worker with vulnerable young children and their caregivers in an informal settlement called Barcelona in Gugulethu.

The Context of Barcelona, Gugulethu

The resilient community in which Nontembiso works faces many challenges. Barcelona was previously a discontinued landfill site, which was cleared by the founders of the community in 1990. The nature of the soil makes provision of permanent services and structures difficult and also causes the community to be prone to disasters such as flooding and fires. According to a 2016 study by the Western Cape Government, the population size of Barcelona is 6456 people, with an extremely high population density.

The community experiences severe economic hardship, with 93% of residents earning less than R3500 per month, and 25% of residents receiving no income at all. Furthermore, 65% of the women in Barcelona are unemployed. The community has limited access to basic resources: the number of toilets per person is 1:23; and the number of taps per person is 1:115.

Within the community, there are roughly 2000 children under 18 years (34% of the community), many of who, due to financial constraints, do not have access to formal early childhood development (ECD) centre programmes. Research shows that early, appropriate, and quality ECD

interventions for children at risk can reverse the effects of deprivation and vulnerability and make it possible for children to grow and develop to their full potential.

Nontembiso works with some of these vulnerable, young children providing them with an opportunity to reach their full potential. Without the support of Nontembiso and the Family Outreach Programme which she provides, these children are at a severe disadvantage that has life-long implications for their future.

Nontembiso and the Family Outreach Programme



The Family Outreach Programme is a successful programme developed by the Centre for Early Childhood Development (CECD) which focuses on empowering families and improving childcare in the home environment – which is recognised as the primary place of learning for young children, with parents being the first teachers. 70% of children in South Africa are not in any form of ECD provision. Nontembiso identifies and recruits families who need her support by going door-to-door in the Barcelona community.

Nontembiso provides parents with a package of services including weekly home-visits, parent education workshops on important childcare topics, and much-needed food parcels. She also supports parents to set up informal playgroups for young children in the community. The aim is to provide children with the head-start they need to succeed in formal schooling and later in life.

During the home-visits, Nontembiso works with caregivers, usually single mothers, instilling the importance of ECD for young children and empowering caregivers to become active teachers. She imparts wisdom, shares knowledge and skills, role-models activities parents can conduct with their children, and builds the capacity of parents who have untapped power to change the trajectory of their child's life. By equipping parents as the first teachers of their young children, these children receive the basic literacy, numeracy and life skills they require, despite not attending an ECD centre, and are less likely to struggle, fail or drop out of school.

Nontembiso is passionate about making a change in the community, starting with Barcelona's most vulnerable residents. She is hard-working, compassionate, big-hearted, and provides love, education and care to all the children and caregivers with whom she works.



About the Centre for Early Childhood Development

The Centre for Early Childhood Development believes in developing a society that puts young children first. This is pursued through a range of programmes that work to increase the capacity of individuals, organisations and communities. We provide training, resources and support in the field of early childhood development, with the aim to improve the quality of early education and care to all of South Africa's children. We are a non-profit organisation, started in July 1994 and we are based in Cape Town, providing our ECD programmes across South Africa and into the African context.

CECD is registered as a:

- Non-profit company (registration number: 1994/005082/08)
- Non-profit organisation (006-173 NPO)
- Public benefit organisation (PBO number: 930001898)
- ECD training provider accredited by the ETDP-SETA (accreditation number: ETDP-0155)

