

*Nowatchman Siqwayi*



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# Securing a Bright Future: Nowatchman Siqwayi

Participant: Family Outreach Programme – Melrose Place

Nowatchman sits in her small kitchen that would fit four adults standing shoulder to shoulder; a small green bench lines one side of the kitchen, and a curtain separates the kitchen from the bedroom.

The little house with its yellow walls is located in Melrose Place.

Despite the woman's sparse living conditions, Nowatchman's gait is gracious, almost regal. She takes her seat. Her thin, gentle face is lined and furrowed and her eyes are distant. Her thoughts are far away, interrupted every now and again by our questions of her life.

Nowatchman doesn't speak a word of English, but CECD Family Outreach Worker, Nomava Stefane, sitting to her left, translates in Xhosa.

Nowatchman seems preoccupied.

Her eyes well up with tears.

Her thoughts are on her trip to the Eastern Cape last year. It is exactly a year since her son's funeral which was held there.



It's not clear how her son passed away, and in a bid to break her reverie we question her about her grandchildren Mbali and Mihle.

Nowatchman takes care of her granddaughters while her daughter, Nosizwe is at work.

The most rewarding part of being a grandmother, she says, is passing on her life lessons.

"To secure their futures they need to know what is right and what is wrong. Obedience is key, but they must also cultivate a desire to learn and love school," she says.

In a bid to educate her grandchildren and to better prepare them for primary school, Nowatchman enrolled in CECD's Family Outreach Programme in 2009.

Once a week, Nomava visited Nowatchman's house and supported her in teaching her grandchildren to learn shapes, colours and numbers.

Helping her grandchildren learn is very important to Nowatchman, who has watched her own daughter work hard to make it through the ranks as a policewoman.

"I am very proud of my daughter," she says.

"If my grandchildren are educated then they can get a job; without it they can't. Maybe one day they will grow up to be just like their mother."