



Annual Report

2020–2021



The Seven Passes Initiative
RURAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

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Breaking down the barriers of social distancing

A good old bear-hug is one of the ways humans use to show support, give comfort, or greet each other. Social interaction is part and parcel of our human nature. We love getting together with friends to enjoy a meal, or just pop in for a quick visit. When there’s a death or a birth in the family, we flock together to console or celebrate.

All of a sudden, a big, red sign popped up, saying, “No more!” A previously unused term entered our collective vocabulary... Social Distancing.

While the limitations on our social behaviour are beneficial to our physical health and well-being during the pandemic, there is a down side.

Studies are being conducted worldwide to determine the impact that the unprecedented scale of social distancing may have on our emotional and mental state. Some suggest that it may lead to a higher prevalence of anxiety, depression, anger, loneliness, feelings of frustration, and boredom.

In our community, we have already been dealing with these challenges pre-Covid, so we had to find ways to navigate the slippery slope of this unknown terrain.

Here are a few strategies that we find helpful to break down the barriers of social distancing.

Listen with Intent: We may not realise it, but all of us do some lip-reading, even if we have perfect hearing. When we wear masks, we can’t see the lips of the person talking to us, or see their full facial expressions. This can easily lead to miscommunication.

What to do: We have been learning about active and reflective listening. We are working hard to listen with intent. Make eye-contact and listen closely when the other person is talking. You may even find

that you are hearing more than before, because you are concentrating harder, and are less distracted by external factors.

Find alternatives to Console or Celebrate: Visiting someone in person to celebrate the birth of a baby or a birthday, or to comfort them during a time of mourning, is a natural thing to do. How can we still show that we care?

What to do: Arrange a drive-by ceremony and drop off care packages in front of the house. Include a hand-written note. People take great comfort from reading these messages when they are alone and have time to absorb the words. Volunteers have blessed us with beautifully knitted blankets, jackets, shoes, beanies, and soft toys that we deliver to every new-born baby in our community.

Check in Regularly: People who must self-isolate, or are in quarantine, are more likely to experience mental or emotional trauma. They often feel disconnected, fearful and lonely.

What to do: Not every person in our community has access to technology for video calls. Set up a dedicated group of neighbours, family, and friends who can check on the isolated person on a daily basis. Take turns to call or message, if possible. We were touched by so many supporters, locally and from overseas, who encouraged us with messages and donations.

Remember that your small gesture can go a long way in breaking down the barriers of social distancing.

Thank you for everything you have done to support our work. We are deeply grateful. We invite you to read about the progress we have made in our amazing community over the past twelve months.

“I have learned that there is more power in a good strong hug than in a thousand meaningful words.”

– Ann Hood, American Novelist



Executive summary

The Seven Passes Initiative is a non-governmental organisation, based in the community of Touwsranten, 30km east of George in South Africa's Western Cape Province, with NPO Registration number 065 133 NPO. This annual report provides an overview of our activities in the 2020/2021 year.

The Seven Passes Initiative was established with its primary aim the reduction of violence in the communities in and around Touwsranten. In working to achieve this goal, our strategies initially included:

- academic support to all school-going children in the community
- work and further learning opportunities for young people

As our understanding of the unique needs of the children, young people and parents in this community increase, we are able to adapt and expand our services which now also include:

- Safe, nurturing and stimulating afterschool care and holiday programmes for children
- Balanced meals for children attending the afterschool centre
- A life-skills programme for all children aged 5 – 18
- A special programme for all school-aged children on Fridays to stimulate play and creativity
- Support for parents through four positive parenting programmes
- The establishment of an employment-based programme, focusing on the prevention of family violence. This includes the prevention of intimate gender violence and parenting violence.

In March 2020, many of our afterschool activities were temporarily halted in order to adhere to lockdown regulations. We were able to resume our services on 1 September 2020. We work with a smaller group of children on a daily basis, as they mostly attend the afterschool sessions every second day when they go to school.

We have extended our services to neighbouring areas such as Kleinkrantz, Wilderness Heights and Lancewood.

Some of our staff have received training to equip them to present specialised programmes to other organisations. You will read more about this in the report.

We continue to prioritise staff development and training in areas such as:

- Communication skills
- Conflict management
- Afterschool Basic Practitioner training
- Dealing with children with difficult behaviour
- Empowering people through choices
- Leadership
- Protective behaviours

Intensive attention is given to the young people involved in the Youth Development Programme. An individual report is compiled in respect of personality, work interests, and abilities.

Our collaboration with other like-minded organisations remains a valuable tool to expand our ability to make a difference in the community and surrounding areas. We form part of the NGO forum of George and have established partnerships with organisations on a national level through the SAPPIN network.

School holidays bring a much-needed break for learners and educators, but, it increases the risk of children becoming involved in negative or dangerous behaviour. To minimise this risk, we facilitate holiday programmes, even though it has been challenging during the different lockdown levels.

As the strain on the funding environment is increasing, we are thankful for the continued support we receive from our local and international donors, as well as from the Departments of Social Development and Community Safety.

A special word of appreciation goes to The World Childhood Foundation. We will be eternally thankful that they have partnered with us for six wonderful years.

It is with humble gratitude that we thank all the role-players who enable us to continue providing our essential services to Touwsranten and beyond.



Queen Silvia of Sweden from The World Childhood Foundation

Uitvoerende opsomming

Die Seven Passes Initiative is 'n nie-regeringsorganisasie, gevestig in die gemeenskap van Touwsranten, 30km oos van George in Suid Afrika se Wes-Kaap Provinsie, met NPO Registrasienommer 065 133 NPO. Hierdie jaarverslag bied 'n oorsig van ons aktiwiteite gedurende die 2020/2021 jaar.

Die Seven Passes Initiative is gestig met die primêre doel om die vlakke van geweld in die gemeenskappe in en om Touwsranten te verminder. Om hierdie doel te bereik, het ons aanvanklik op die volgende strategieë gefokus:

- Akademiese bystand aan alle skoolgaande kinders in die gemeenskap
- Werk- en opleidingsgeleenthede vir jongmense

Ons dienste het uitgebrei namate ons die unieke behoeftes van die kinders, jongmense en ouers in die gemeenskap beter verstaan het, en sluit nou ook die volgende in:

- Veilige, koesterende en stimulerende naskoolsorg en vakansieprogramme vir kinders
- Gebalanseerde maaltye vir kinders wat die naskool-sentrum bywoon
- 'n Lewensvaardigheidsprogram vir alle kinders tussen die ouderdomme van 5 en 18
- 'n Spesiale program vir alle skoolgaande kinders op Vrydae om spel en kreatiwiteit te stimuleer
- Bystand aan ouers deur middel van vier positiewe ouerskapsprogramme
- Die vestiging van 'n werksgebaseerde program wat op die voorkoming van familiegeweld fokus. Dit sluit die voorkoming van intieme geslagsgeweld asook geweld teenoor kinders in.

In 2020, moes ons noodgedwonge die naskoolprogram se aktiwiteite tydelik staak om te voldoen aan die inperkingsregulasies. Ons kon hierdie werksaamhede op 1 September 2020 hervat. Ons ontvang 'n kleiner groep kinders op 'n daaglikse basis, aangesien die kinders meestal die naskool bywoon wanneer hulle elke tweede dag skool toe gaan.

Ons dienste het uitgebrei na aangrensende gebiede soos Kleinkrantz, Wildernis Hoogte en Lancewood.

Sommige van ons personeel het opleiding ontvang om gespesialiseerde programme aan ander organisasies te kan aanbied. U sal meer hieroor lees in die verslag.



Ons gaan steeds voort met die opleiding en ontwikkeling van personeel in areas soos:

- Kommunikasievaardighede
- Konflikhantering
- Naskool Basiese Praktisynsopleiding
- Hantering van kinders met moeilike gedrag
- Bemagtiging van mense deur keuses
- Leierskap
- "Protective Behaviours" Opleiding

Intensiewe aandag word gegee aan die jongmense wat by die Jeugontwikkelingsprogram betrokke is. 'n Individuele verslag oor persoonlikheid, werksbelangstelling en vermoëns word saamgestel.

Ons samewerking met ander eensgesinde organisasies en instellings bly vir ons 'n waardevolle hulpmiddel om 'n verskil in die gemeenskap en omliggende gebiede te maak. Ons is deel van die NRO forum van George en het ook vennootskappe gesluit met nasionale organisasies deur ons verbintenis met die SAPPIN netwerk.

Skoolvakansies bied 'n broodnodige blaaskans vir onderwysers en kinders. Dit is ongelukkig ook 'n tyd van verhoogde risiko, omdat kinders en jongmense wat sonder toesig is, by gevaarlike bedrywighede betrokke kan raak. Om hierdie risiko te verlaag, bied ons vakansieprogramme aan, alhoewel dit met vele uitdagings gepaard gaan tydens die verskillende inperkingsfasies.

Te midde van die toenemende druk op die befondsingsomgewing, is ons dankbaar vir die volgehoue ondersteuning van ons internasionale en plaaslike donateurs, asook die Departement van Maatskaplike Ontwikkeling en Departement van Gemeenskapsveiligheid.

'n Spesiale woord van dank word gerig aan die World Childhood Foundation. Ons sal vir altyd innig dankbaar wees vir ses wonderlike jare se ondersteuning.

Met groot dankbaarheid in ons harte bedank ons al die rolspelers wat ons in staat stel om te kan aanhou om noodsaaklike dienste te lewer in ons gemeenskap.

Message from our chairperson

As chairperson of a successful, loving, value-driven organisation, it is my privilege to thank everyone for their selfless contribution to the activities of The Seven Passes Initiative. This includes the director, volunteers, education staff, kitchen staff, mentors, parenting staff, and facilitators of our various programmes.

Despite the complex challenges of the 2020/2021 year, we have managed to continue our work in the community. We are thankful for the growth, evident in the many success stories of children and parents. We have also been able to appoint new facilitators who are using their energy and fresh ideas to help us develop opportunities for our leaders of the future.

One of our main goals for the 2020/2021 year, was the improvement of the quality of our services. We have made changes to the organogram of the organisation in order to present a well-defined structure of communication lines and management

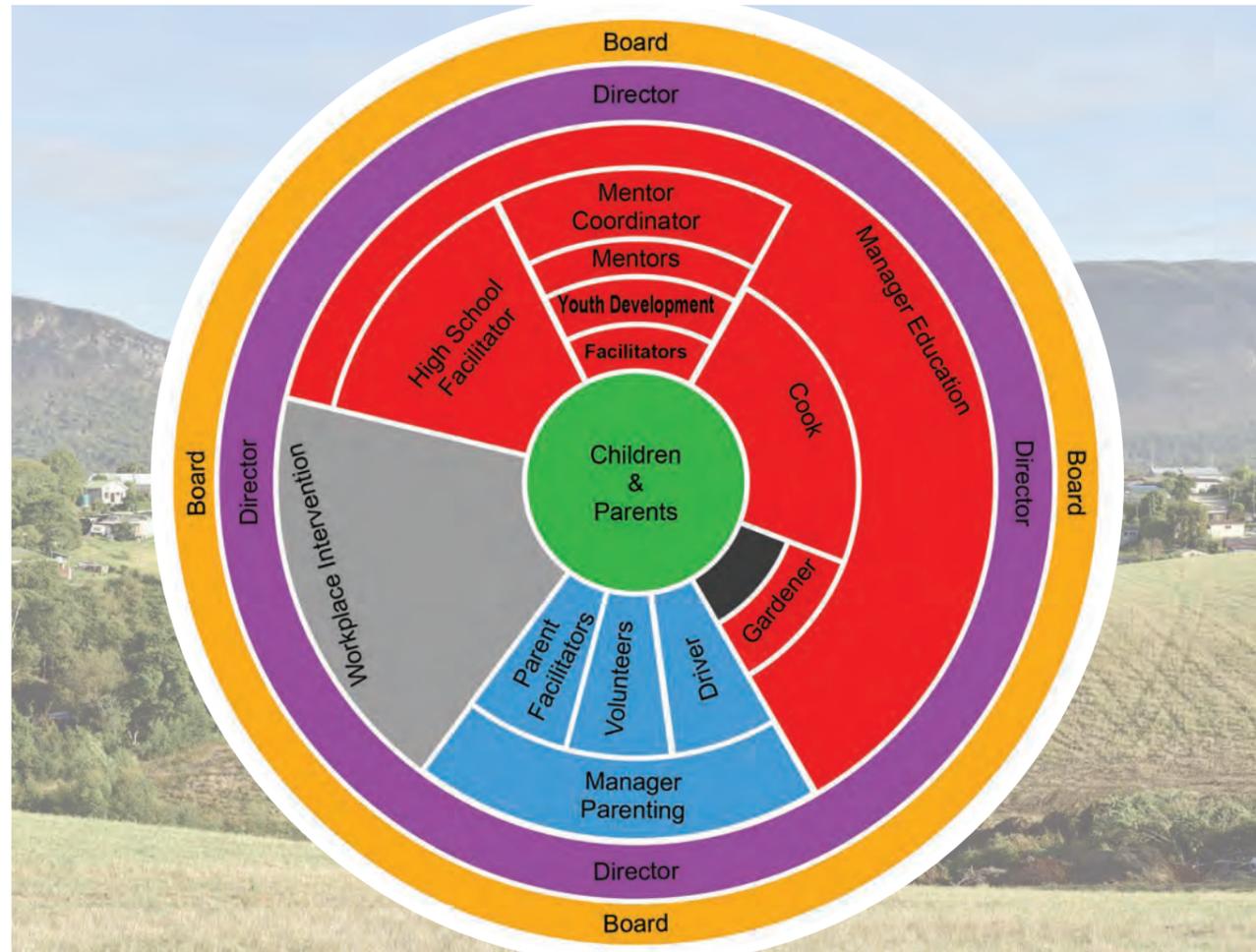
positions. Our organisation is based on democratic principles, and this is clearly visible in the new structural chart. The value of equality is highlighted herein.

We have also upgraded the induction process of new facilitators. More attention is given to our values, and how those values drive the policies of the organisation. Our policies are the cornerstones of all interaction with our clients. We are currently in the process of capturing these updated policies in book format, which we trust will be available next year.



On behalf of the Seven Passes Initiative, I express my sincere gratitude to every volunteer and sponsor. Thank you for making a difference in our community. Above all, we thank you for trusting us with your donations and your time. Your support is crucial to help us fulfil our purpose.

Naizel Buys, Chairperson



Director's report

The need to fulfil the vision of the Seven Passes Initiative, was magnified in recent months – a safe country in which all people, children and adults, are able to realise their potential and overcome poverty and inequality.

In our previous annual report, we have provided details of how the pandemic was impacting our activities and our community. This devastating trend has continued taking a toll on many of our children and adults. It increased inequality and will have far-reaching effects on levels of poverty in the years to come.

However, nothing is ever only negative, unless we choose to ignore the opportunities for growth. We have discovered strengths and positive outcomes – even in these difficult times. It is inspirational to see how our people have developed as passionate transformers, tackling each day with vigour. They are committed to finding creative solutions for every challenge they encounter. We enthusiastically applied ourselves and worked on a deeper level to address the effects of the trauma.

My deepest thanks go to:

- dedicated staff, who go the extra mile,
- knowledgeable board members, who guide us through difficult times,
- inspirational volunteers, who are offering their time and expertise, and
- everyone who jumps in to show support by accepting extra challenges.

You have donated, prepared meals, funded projects, offered support and acknowledged our work in various ways. We cannot do it without you.



In this report, you will read about the important work that we have done during 2020/2021. Work with a lasting impact.

This quote by Barbara de Angelis inspires me...

We don't develop courage by being happy every day. We develop it by surviving difficult times and challenging adversity.

Wilmi Dippenaar, Director

Seven Passes Initiative staff 2021



Farewell to a legend – Cedrick Buys

We have suffered an immeasurable loss in December 2020 when Cedrick Buys passed away due to Covid-19.

Cedrick was the founding staff member of the Seven Passes Initiative. In fact, for the first two years, he was the only staff member of the organisation. He contributed his time, energy and passion to the community of Hoekwil/Touwsranten and to ensuring the safety and success of the children. Cedrick was instrumental in the realisation of the organisation that we are today. He was a father, a husband and a grandfather. We will always remember that infectious laugh and his patience, kindness and

love for children. Cedrick's legacy will live forever in the Family Worship Ministries, and in the way he served the communities of Touwsranten and Kleinkrantz.

This touching poem was written by Chantal Damons to honour Cedrick's legacy.

For Cedrick

*Your life was a blessing
Your memory a treasure
You are loved beyond words
And missed beyond measure.*

*The lessons of kindness and love you taught me
The good things in life you've helped me to see
Linger as lasting gifts that comfort and will sustain
Until I journey to the peaceful shore
And see you again.*

*We think about you always
We think about you still
You have never been forgotten
And you never will
We hold you close within our hearts
And there you will remain
Until one day when we meet again.*



Soup kitchen – A caring community outreach

When the shocking announcement was made on 23 March 2020 that a national lockdown will come into effect on the 27th, the implications for vulnerable communities were cause for concern.

The Hoekwil Ratepayers Executive contacted the director of the Seven Passes Initiative to see how we could get involved to ensure that no one went hungry.

In a collaborative effort between the local VGK and Dutch Reformed church, Seven Passes, and ourselves, we managed to run soup kitchens, five days a week, with the Hoekwil Ratepayers Executive making up two of those days.

It was a heart-warming experience to see how a community came together during a crisis. Some donated money and food, others jumped in to help with the peeling and

chopping of vegetables, cooking soups, and serving or doing deliveries. We participated in this project for a total of sixteen weeks. The experience has given us a renewed respect for the work that the team at the Seven Passes does on a daily basis. The responsibility on their shoulders is enormous.

Thank you to the Seven Passes staff, the Board, and to the director, Wilmi Dippenaar, for the work you do and for inspiring us to be involved.

*Laurell Pelsler
Hoekwil Rate Payers' Association Representative*



Afterschool, life skills and education programmes

Despite ongoing challenges brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic, we have been able to carry on with most of our activities. We are continuing to shift and change as we learn more about the best ways to keep our staff and children safe.

In this section of the annual report, we provide details of our programme objectives and success stories.

The afterschool programme is freely available to the children of Touwsranten and Hoekwil. It runs every day from Monday to Friday.



Our focus is to support our children in the four developmental pillars as directed by the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport – life skills, academics, sports, and art.

We provide the children with a balanced meal, homework support, a life skills programme, and, on Fridays, an afternoon of sport, play and creativity.

Our daily programmes are based on the principles taught in our parenting programmes. By reinforcing the work that parents and their children do, children get the opportunity to practice talking about their emotions and build self-confidence during the afterschool sessions.

We continue to use supervision as an integral and important component of our programmes. This process strengthens our education and parenting programmes.

Our children surprise and inspire us by showing us the true meaning of resilience, guts, and determination. Some of them have overcome grave obstacles. We are thankful for their progress and salute all our staff for their dedication and hard work.



SHUNTEL OELF – Mentor's coordinator

Shuntel's focus as mentor coordinator is on managing four mentors who each work with three education facilitators. She believes that her success is largely due to her ability to communicate effectively with her team.

"I offer support and listen to my team members when they need to talk. We have a positive relationship. I am a big believer in cooperation and teamwork and that's exactly what I experience every day."

Shuntel has been working for the Seven Passes Initiative for the past eight years and has been on an exciting journey.

"I've always wanted to work with children. It comes naturally to me. I started out as an education facilitator in one of the EPWP positions. Initially, I was assisting the teachers in class during school time and creating programmes in the afternoons to address the children's needs holistically."

Shuntel had the opportunity to grow both professionally and personally. Currently she holds the position of mentor coordinator. But, with the new position, came many new responsibilities.



"I have always been the kind of person who takes my work seriously. I am well-organised and thrive on a routine. I want to be in control of a situation, plan ahead and stick to my plan. Because I'm very detail-orientated and accuracy plays a big role in my life, I know I come across as a perfectionist."

Shuntel's personality analysis confirms her self-assessment. As a mediator, she is adaptable – a trait that is indispensable in these uncertain times. She manages to maintain high standards due to her ability to communicate effectively and deal constructively with conflict. Always the solution provider, vs. the problem identifier, she is a leader of note.

Shuntel says she never expected to get so many growth opportunities when she joined the Seven Passes team. She encourages anyone who has a dream to work hard, to be determined and above all, to be self-disciplined.



Afterschool programme

ALZAANDRY DE JAGER – No more tears

Five-year old Alzaandry goes to crèche, but joins the other Grade R learners at the afterschool sessions. Alzaandry, also known as Noenie, has an IsiXhosa name, Siyamanga, as her father is IsiXhosa.



Alzaandry's mother is an Education Facilitator at the Seven Passes. She lives with her mother, grandmother, two uncles and 1-year old brother. During the day, Granny takes care of her younger brother. Her facilitator has known Alzaandry since birth, as they live in the same street. She reports that Alzaandry used to be a shy, withdrawn child who only talked to people she knew well.

Alzaandry, was reluctant to attend afterschool at first. Now, when her grandmother drops her off, there's no more crying. She has adapted very quickly, is no longer shy, and spontaneously talks to the other children. She enjoys taking part in all the activities and is keen to learn. Her transformation has been an inspiration to all.

AN EAGER BEAVER – Growing in confidence

When this little boy* initially joined the afterschool group, he was very shy. As he became familiar with the daily routine, his confidence grew. It was heart-warming to see him gradually come out of his shell. Before Grade R, he didn't have many friends. At the afterschool centre, he soon started making new friends, and now he really enjoys playing with them.

He is very smart and participates actively in class. He has learned to control his emotions and is making great progress. His facilitator reports that she is extremely proud of him because he is so eager to learn. He will even ask her for extra things to do. According to his family, he gives a daily account of everything he does at the afterschool sessions as soon as he gets home.

* Names are withheld when the children are protected by the State.

Grade 1

MARQWIN PIETERSEN – A ray of sunshine

Seven-year old Marqwin is a Grade 1 learner at Touwsrante Primary School. He lives with his grandparents and his mother. He started attending afterschool when he was in Grade R.



Marqwin, better known by his friends as Billie, is a very friendly and well-mannered boy. This energetic little boy is a facilitator's dream. He is enthusiastic about all the group activities, doesn't mind sharing, and always pays attention. He is not shy to ask for help and to give help where needed. Marqwin regularly attends afterschool and it's always a joy to see his smiling face at the Seven Passes.

Grade 2

SHANAYLIN BUYS – A leader in the making

Shanaylin, better known as Naylee, is a beautiful 8-year-old girl, currently in Grade 2 at Touwsrante Primary. She is quiet, kind, caring, and helpful.



Shanaylin attended our holiday programmes during her kindergarten years and then joined the afterschool programme fulltime since she was in grade R.

Her facilitator, Nasche Windwaai, says Shanaylin is already displaying good leadership qualities and enjoys helping her classmates with their homework. Shanaylin is the daughter of Naizel Buys, one of the first learners who attended the Seven Passes afterschool services. Today, Naizel is a Grade 5 teacher, and the chairperson of our board. When Shanaylin and her friends play together, she always takes on the role of the teacher – and she is very good at it! It looks like she is bound to follow in her mother's footsteps! Building leaders for the future!

MIA FISHER – Practicing her teaching skills

Mia is a Grade 2 learner at Touwsrante Primary. The friendly 8-year old is described by her facilitator as caring, helpful, and very intelligent. She says Mia's enthusiasm is inspirational.

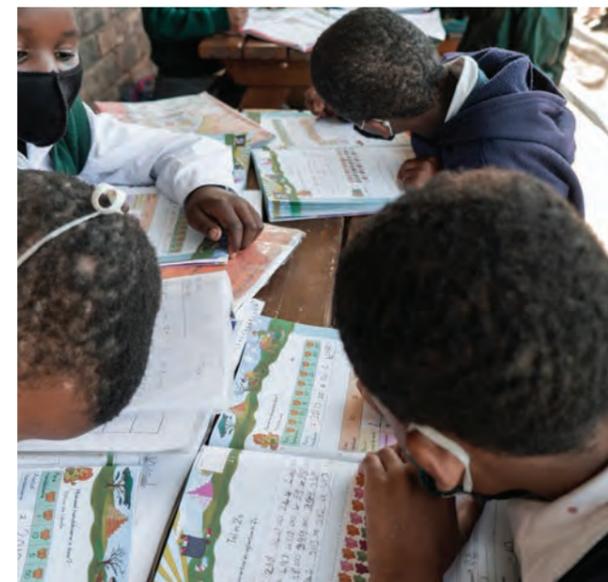
In the group, she would take the lead by helping her teacher with some of her tasks, and enjoys assisting her friends with their work. Mia dreams of becoming a teacher one day, but for now, she enjoys practicing her teacher skills while role-playing with her friends at the afterschool sessions for the future!

BRIONAY PRINS – A little ball of fire

Brionay is an 8-year old friendly, loving and caring learner of Touwsrante Primary School. She enjoys the afterschool activities and is very helpful.



At this early age, she has already decided that she wants to be a teacher, so she always manages to convince her friends to play along so that she can "teach" them. She likes to take part in the life skill activities and is never shy to voice her opinion. Everyone enjoys being in her company because of her energetic nature. Her facilitator says it's only a pleasure to work with Brionay.



Grade 3

LEEMOGAN PAULUS – Our own Da Vinci

Leemogan, also known as Mogen, is a 9-year-old, shy boy. He is very kind, helpful, and talented. He has an incredible imagination and that is why one of his favourite activities is drawing.

In Grade 1 and 2, Leemogan was struggling to do his schoolwork. He found it very hard to concentrate and was easily distracted. Keeping up with the work in class, was very difficult. His reading struggles impacted all his work, which led to him not being promoted to the next grade. Over time, and with much additional help from facilitators, his concentration improved. This helped him to complete tasks on time which led to overall progress.

Now that he is in Grade 3, his reading ability is still getting stronger, especially in English. Although Leemogan requires individual attention, we are confident that he will only do better, because he is committed and willing to learn.

His facilitator says, "When I think of Leemogan, I'm always reminded of the saying, "If you want a child's mind to grow, you must first plant the seed."

ALMORIO LOURENS – motivated to excel

Almorio, a Grade 3 learner at Touwsrante Primary School, is 9 years old. He lives with his grandmother, father, and siblings.

When Almorio started attending the afterschool sessions three years ago, he was a bit shy and didn't mingle with the other children. As time passed, Almorio gained confidence and started interacting spontaneously with the other children. Almorio especially enjoys the Life Skills and Holiday Programmes.



He is a disciplined boy who is able to do his homework independently. He is not shy to ask for help when he is struggling. He responds well to motivation and we are excited about his future development.

Grade 4

LIEZEL ANNA SAMPSON – A story of hope

Anna Samson, 34, had to adapt to living with a disability in her one hand. She is also unable to speak. After Anna attended a school in Knysna, she received additional schooling in Cape Town, until 2007.



Anna isn't able to socially interact with people in her own age group. Therefore, she initially joined our holiday programme, and later, the afterschool, where she is part of the Grade 4 group. Anna is always on time and thoroughly enjoys the activities that she is able to do. She is a great help to the facilitator in maintaining discipline in the group. Anna has grown in confidence, loves dancing and always takes part in competitions. She particularly enjoys using different colours for her art projects. At home, Anna is able to do some household chores, like washing dishes and making her own tea. It is an inspiration and joy to have Anna as part of this group.

YOUNG MAN – On the ball

When this young man,* Grade 4, attended afterschool for the first time, he was very shy and kept to himself.

The facilitators reached out to him by inviting him to play ball games with them. His facilitator noticed that he was quite adept, and thoroughly enjoying himself. They started having chats about different ball games, and slowly he flourished. As his bond with his facilitator grew, he became more interactive in the bigger group of children.

Now he does very well, and he is always ready to help his friends with their homework. It was delightful to witness his transformation. The once shy boy is asking questions and participating in all activities. Last year, he received a prize in recognition of his excellent afterschool attendance.

Grade 5

PATRIANO KOK – Courage and grit will take him far

Patriano, a Grade 5 learner, has always been known as a well-mannered, shy, and quiet boy – someone who always does what is expected of him.



Earlier this year, he approached his facilitator, Felicia, with a special request. He told her he was struggling to read, especially in English, but he wanted to improve. Felicia was surprised, but also very proud, that this shy boy had plucked up the courage to reach out for help. They set aside time every afternoon to sit together and read. He also wanted to have a book that he could take home for practice. One afternoon, he told his facilitator that he would like to read to her. She was astounded. She praised him for his excellent progress, and encouraged him to continue practising. Patriano is more confident to read in class now, and his facilitator promised to carry on with their afternoon extra reading sessions.

Grade 6

YOUNG LADY – A parenting programme star

A young lady,* aged 13, has been attending the afterschool sessions for the last five years, and is currently in Grade 6 at Touwsrante Primary.

In Grade 4 she participated in the reading programmes in Hoekwil every Thursday as she was struggling with her reading. She made excellent progress through this programme.

When she entered Grade 5, her behaviour started posing some challenges. The afterschool facilitator struggled to get her cooperation, but thankfully, the Sinovuyo Parenting programme was incorporated in the afternoon activities. With the help of the parenting facilitators, and by applying the Sinovuyo principles, her behaviour improved. She was once again participating in the class activities and games.

This year, since being in Grade 6, she has also been a regular attendee at the afterschool sessions. Her facilitator says it is a pleasure to work with her now and she enjoys the young lady's unique sense of humour.



Grade 7

ASHANTE DAMONS – Our smiling nightingale

Grade 7 learner, Ashante Damons, is well-mannered and loves singing. Maybe this is why she always appears to be in a good mood! Her facilitator, Querida, brims with pride when she talks about Ashante.

A regular at the afterschool sessions, she is always eager to do her homework, asks for help if she struggles and

is always willing to go the extra mile. "She likes to listen actively when I read them short stories and is quick to answer the questions I ask."

Querida was deeply touched when Ashante told her that her words of encouragement and wisdom kept her going and flourishing. "Knowing that I can have that impact on one learner's life, is great reward for hard work!"

High school learners are staying focused in the chaos

Don't think lockdowns, school closures and social distancing will keep our high school learners from reaching their goals. We are extremely proud of our high school learners that attend the afterschool sessions diligently, despite the major challenges they face. Their positivity is inspiring. It is clear that they are trying their best to stay focused on their homework and still want to achieve and excel in school.

One of the subjects that they find particularly challenging, is Mathematical Literacy. We are grateful that Mr Louw, a teacher at Touwsrante Primary, has availed himself to help with volunteer classes on Wednesday afternoons to address this need.

Great news is that our drummers have been able to attend drumming lessons regularly on Fridays in Rondevlei with Mel Grooves and Jenny Foster. This group has been performing at a few events and are getting better and better all the time.

We have saved the best news for last! The learners all passed their grades last year and have done very well in the March test series. We are thankful for the support of everyone on our team that is making a lasting, positive impact on the lives of these young people.



High school learners (back, from left): Shenaaz Stuurman, Monique Kortje, Lushaan Appels and Natalie Mentoor (facilitator). Front: Jureesha Buys and Charlton Arries.



NATALIE MENTOOR, High School Facilitator – Paying it forward

For the first time in the history of the Seven Passes Initiative, a High School facilitator started working at a high school in George, assisting with support sessions for Grade 12 learners.

At first, Natalie was asked by a teacher from the school to motivate the Grade 12 learners because they were overwhelmed with the workload and needed some encouragement. Natalie fondly remembers that time, saying, "I wrote them a song to lift their spirits and give them hope."

Jy is tot alles in staat deur God wat jou die krag gee, want Hy sal jou altyd deurdra as jy Hom net sal vra. Dit lyk dalk moeilik en soms onmoontlik, jy voel oorweldig en uitgedaag. Sal jy dit regkry om aan te hou en van die jaar 'n sukses te maak?

For those readers who don't understand Afrikaans, here is a translation...

You are able to do everything through God who is your provider, Because he will always carry you – you only have to ask. At times, your circumstances may look difficult and

impossible to handle, You feel overwhelmed and challenged. Will you be able to persevere and make a success of your year?

The learners were touched by this tribute. Whenever they walked passed Natalie, they would start singing the song.

During this same time, Natalie was appointed as a full-time high school facilitator at the Seven Passes Initiative. Not wanting to stop supporting the learners in George, she continued her work on Tuesdays to Thursdays from 08h00 until 13h00. During that time, the learners in the Touwsrante Community was still at school.

"It has been a great privilege for me to give back to my alma-mater where I used to be head girl in 1995. The teachers and learners welcomed me with open arms and I love being able to make a difference in the lives of these precious young people. They are really having a difficult time during Covid-19 and I salute them for staying strong and committed to their goals!"



Our mentors are spreading their wings

DENZEL DE SWARDT

Denzel can hardly contain his excitement when he starts talking about his work at the Seven Passes Initiative.

"I always say that Seven Passes is the best place for a young person to grow and develop their skills. From the very first day I started working here, my learning and growth journey began. And even after four years, I'm still learning more every day."

During April 2021, Denzel started a training course to present the Life Skills Programme to other organisations. He is also part of the first group of facilitators to deliver the programme at the Tikketai Vegetable Packaging Plant, which is part of the well-known In2Foods Group. Training has always been a dream for Denzel, and he feels that this opportunity is a great step in the right direction.

"The presentation of the programme at Tikketai went extremely well. Since I love working with people, I've enjoyed every moment of it. I'm very grateful for the opportunity and very excited to learn and develop my facilitation skills even further."



CHENICK OELF

Chenick started working at the Seven Passes Initiative in 2019 and is thankful for the workplace training that was provided. Training not only develops skills and competencies, but as in Chenick's case, builds confidence and drive.

"I have worked hard to prove myself. I'm doing my work with passion, and although I have already enjoyed my work as an education facilitator, I was excited when a mentor position opened in 2021."

Chenick was appointed as a mentor facilitator in March 2021, and found the initial transition to this position quite challenging. This was new territory, and mentoring two facilitators was hard work. Instead of complaining about the work, Chenick decided that it's time to up her game and she took on a third facilitator.

"I enjoy working with them, because we understand each other. I look forward to working with them throughout this year."

Chenick remembers the day in September 2020 when the aftercare was eventually allowed to reopen.

"We were very excited to see the children! It was our new facilitators' first opportunity to work with the kids. I'm so glad to report that things are going very well and my facilitators are doing great work in their groups."

Chenick is glad that her team is doing so well under difficult circumstances. However, she is committed to teaching them even more and strives to keep on making a difference.

Well done Chenick, your enthusiasm is inspiring. We are proud of you and your team.



Mentor

noun: an experienced and trusted adviser

verb: advise or train (someone, especially a younger colleague)

KAYLEE-ANN BUYS

“Working hard for something we don’t care about is called stress. Working hard for something we love is called passion.” Kaylee-Ann Buys says that this quote from the famous Simon Sinek, describes perfectly how she views her work.



“I have always enjoyed my work as a mentor education facilitator. However, at the beginning of February 2021, with the intake of new facilitators, I was assigned three very energetic people to mentor. I soon realised that I would have to up my game as a mentor, if I was going to make a positive impact on the lives of these three unique individuals.”

Kaylee-Ann describes her new mentees as outspoken, extremely enthusiastic, and challenging her to constantly find new and innovative ways of overcoming problems. She views their varied personalities as a positive contribution to the work they’re doing.

“What I appreciate most about my facilitator team, is the fact that they know how to do their work in a proper way and don’t expect me to spoon-feed them.”

Kaylee-Ann says that she is grateful for the help of her mentor coordinator who pushes her to do better all the time. This lady is eager to learn and grow more in her position as a role-model for her facilitators. We are blessed to have you on our team, Kaylee-Ann.

CARMEN APPELS

Carmen Appels has been an Education Mentor at the Seven Passes for the last three years where she has been working at the Touwsranten Primary School as a Grade 3 assistant teacher.



In her work as an Education Mentor she oversees three facilitators who are working with children with difficult behaviour. She also assists with the Life Skills Programmes.

“With the Covid-19 pandemic still disrupting our lives, we have had to adapt our services according to the prescribed health regulations. Our facilitators assisted the Touwsranten Primary School to provide school work for the children during the time they were unable to attend school.”

Carmen is excited about the training they received in April for Workplace Interventions. She thoroughly enjoyed co-facilitating the session on self-care with Sheridan Kennedy, one of our parenting facilitators, during the first roll-out outside Pacaltsdorp, at the Tikketai Vegetable Packaging Plant, which is part of the well-known In2Foods Group.

Education staff (below, from left): Carmen Appels, Chantal Damons, Denzel de Swardt, Kaylee-ann Buys, Shuntel Oelf, Natalie Mentoor and Chenick Oelf.

Youth development programme builds future leaders

We remain committed to the development of the youth. Our mission is to assist our youth in reaching their full potential.

We are helping Grade 9 learners to make the right subject choices and support those interested in tertiary studies with their university and funding applications.

This year, our Grade 11 learners have been writing a specialised Career Direct test which guides them to make better study and career choices.

Our Youth Development Programme includes the employment of local youths – mostly young women – as the programme’s educational facilitators. This provides them with valuable work experience that prepares them for long-term employment. The Western Cape Department of Community Safety’s Expanded Public Works Programme provides stipends for our facilitators.

Our education facilitators receive training to equip them for the outside world. They also benefit from in-house

training with the parenting facilitators. This helps them to gain additional skills on how to work with children.

Training opportunities offered this year include: Lifeline’s Personal Development, Communication, Conflict Resolution, Leadership, Accredited Computer Training, First-Aid and Health and Safety Training, Afterschool Basic Practitioner Training, Dealing with children with difficult behaviour, Empowering people through choices, and Budgeting.

Facilitators have regular meetings with the Seven Passes management to establish their key performance indicators and assess their progress. With the results from the Career Direct assessments, we are able to guide facilitators in finding the jobs best suited to them. We also assist them to further their studies at the end of the twelve-month period.

We are proud of our young people and hope you will enjoy reading about their success stories...

CHRISLYN DE JAGER

Working at two locations every day, might be daunting for some, but not for Chrislyn de Jager. In the mornings, she works as an education facilitator at the Lancewood Primary School. In the afternoons, she is one of the valued facilitators at the after-care sessions.

“I really enjoy my work at Lancewood Primary. The children need lots of help, and I do my best to help them where I can. The children and the teachers are very friendly, and we get along so well.”



Chrislyn finds her work as an afterschool facilitator equally rewarding. She collaborates well with her colleagues, and is thankful that there is always someone willing to help out or offer advice when needed.

Chrislyn can’t stop smiling when she talks about her Grade 1 learners.

“They are fantastic! I love working with them, helping them with their homework, and playing with them. They are really good kids. They pay attention and treat us with respect.”

When Chrislyn was asked if she thinks she is successful in her work, her answer was enlightening...

“Yes, I think I’m successful because “my children” are happy, they attend regularly, and they bring friends along. Because I see the number of kids coming to afterschool is increasing all the time, I know we are doing something right!”

We agree with you Chrislyn. Your work ethic, of treating every child equally, and regarding every child as your own, is indeed part of your success story.



QUERIDA REYTERS

By her own admission, Querida was very unsure of herself when she first started working at the Seven Passes Initiative. However, nobody noticed this “lack of confidence,” because the gutsy lady decided it was sink or swim...and she chose to swim!



“I never thought it would be possible to experience this much growth in such short space of time. I grew emotionally and intellectually. This organisation keeps challenging me to be creative and to be the best version of myself. This keeps me on my toes. Over the past few months, I have become confident because my mentor always praises my hard work.”

Querida ascribes her growth and development this year to the training provided by one of our volunteers, Marius Andrews, youth mentor and career consultant.

“The training Marius did with us, reminded me that there are better ways to deal with conflict. I have learned that it is important to try and understand the other person's feelings when confronting the issue. I also understand my own personality better and why I do things in a certain way.”

Querida feels that this training improves the collaboration between colleagues – which in turn, benefits our precious children.

“In working with children, I'm learning so much from them. I keep growing and growing and I am forever grateful for this wonderful opportunity to better prepare myself for the future.”

Querida's success story highlights the importance of targeted training. We look forward to following her journey.

NASCHE WINDWAAI

Nasche joined the Seven Passes Initiative in February 2021. Her journey is another example of how we develop leaders for the future.

She participated in the Sinovuyo training, as well as Basic Health and Afterschool Training. These courses equipped her for her work with the Grade 2 learners.



AMBROCHIA MULLER

Ambrochia matriculated in 2018 and had been unemployed for almost two years when she heard about a job opportunity at the Seven Passes Initiative.

“I told myself I want to apply for the job because I have only heard positive things about the Seven Passes. I knew they were very involved in the community and was excited to join this team. I got the job as an educational facilitator where we help children with their homework and keep them busy in the afternoons.”

Ambrochia says that she knew a bit about working with children, but the Sinovuyo Kids training broadened her understanding.

“I know so much more now. For example, I see the good results when I praise the children for their good behaviour. They need someone to talk to and I want to make a positive impact on their lives.”

Ambrochia believes it is her duty to be a good role model to the children. With her dedication, we believe she will fulfil all her dreams and goals and we are thankful that we can play a part in her success journey.



“I enjoy my job and have a great relationship with the children. I never knew Seven Passes offered these opportunities and I am very grateful for that.”

Nasche believes the training she received also taught her about herself and will open up new opportunities for her in the future.

LEVINIA APPELS

Levinia is another shining example of how important training is in the development of our youth.

She started working at the Seven Passes Initiative in February 2021, as an education facilitator.

“I didn't know what this year had in store for me. I thought I was going to be here just helping the children with their homework. Now, after five months, I have progressed and learned so much.”

She started out with about four or five Grade 6 learners, but as time went by, her group grew. Levinia says her learners are passionate, hard-working, and love the games they play. She is definitely impacting their lives in a powerful way. Levinia believes she has gained valuable knowledge and skills such as having patience, going the extra mile, the importance of teamwork, and multitasking. She enjoyed the Afterschool Game Changer training, but says, learning how to understand people, was something that changed her way of thinking.

“The training made me realise that when I truly understand someone, it is easier to work with them and to talk with them.”

Levinia is passionate about her community.

“It is they who help you and who stand behind you. My community is important!”

We feel the same way, Levinia. Together we can overcome all challenges and help each other grow.



FELICIA ELBRUGH – LIVING HER DREAM

Felicia joined the Seven Passes team in February 2021 and is thrilled that she is able to live her dream.

“I have always wanted to help children, and now I get the chance to do that. I couldn't be happier!”

Felicia believes she has gained valuable knowledge through the training she received. Learning how to work with learners with difficult behaviours and to have a lot of patience has equipped her for her work.

“The values of Seven Passes also taught me not to judge others. We don't always know what circumstances they face. I try to always respect everyone around me. I find that this is why the learners and my colleagues also treat me with respect.”

It is truly rewarding to hear that the young leaders we develop are growing and loving what they do!



LEANDY RAFFERTIE

Leandy works at the Seven Passes Initiative with our Grade 3 learners. She says that she has enjoyed her work from day one, even though some learners need more help and pose a bigger challenge. She describes her learners as loving, energetic, and kind.



"I enjoy every moment with them. I feel happy and comfortable when I am around them."

Leandy says when she discovered that some of her learners are experiencing difficulties with their school work, she immediately started working on strategies to help them. She is spending individual time with these learners and they are receiving extra lessons. Leandy finds it especially rewarding when she sees how her extra efforts are helping the children with their school work or improving their behaviour.

"There are also learners who are comfortable talking to me and I am always there to listen when they need an ear."

With this kind of compassion and dedication, we know that Leandy will continue making a positive contribution to the lives of the children in her care.



JOSLYN BENSON

When Joslyn started working at the Seven Passes Initiative as an education facilitator, she got much more than she expected...



Many children grow up in Touwsranteen with only one parent raising them. The single-parent struggles, as they often get no moral or financial support from the other parent. This was unfortunately also true for Joslyn.

"I faced motherhood at a young age, raising my daughter without her father. Then I applied for a job at the Seven Passes Initiative, and my life changed!"

Joslyn is excited when she talks about the different training courses she did after she started working for the organisation. *"I thought I knew everything about parenting. After all, I've been doing it on my own for seven years, so what more was there to learn? But, I knew I had to do the training, because it was part of my job. Then, I got the surprise of my life – you are never too old to learn."*

Joslyn participated in the Sinovuyo Kids training, and soon realised that this knowledge isn't just applicable to her work, she could also implement the strategies at home with her daughter. She says that she also learned a lot about herself. Before doing the training, she found it difficult to describe her feelings or emotions to her child. She kept everything to herself. *"In the parenting classes, I understood for the first time why it is important to give clear instructions to my child, instead of becoming angry when she didn't do things right and doing it myself. I used the 5-minute cooldown technique when things became stressful, and learned new ways of dealing with aggressive behaviour."*

Joslyn believes that the training she received for her work, has had an enormous positive impact on her relationship with her daughter. They are able to share their emotions in a healthy way, and their bond is stronger than ever. Now that she knows how to give one clear instruction at a time, there is much less room for misunderstandings or conflict.

"The work I'm doing and the training we did, taught me that you are never too old to learn. I thank the Seven Passes for all the help and support."

Joslyn's story is what makes our work and your support worthwhile!

KAYLENE JAMES

Kaylene was in awe of her elder sister's first-born child. She vividly remembers how thrilling it was to see the little baby growing and developing every day.



"Since school, I wanted to be a teacher. When I had finished school last year, I decided to give it my all to get a job at the Seven Passes Initiative."

Kaylene started working for us in February 2021. She fully embraced the chance to participate in different training opportunities. This journey also confirmed her belief that she should study towards becoming a full-time teacher.

Kaylene benefitted from additional training provided by one of our valued volunteers, Marius Andrews. She found the strategies for controlling anger and dealing with conflict situations especially helpful.

"The Seven Passes Initiative is good for the community. They help the children with their schoolwork and keep them away from bad activities. To me, this place feels like a second home. I feel safe here, and I know the children do too."

We are indeed working towards creating a safe haven for as many children as possible. Dedicated facilitators, like Kaylene, is helping us spread that feeling of "being safe" into each and every home in our community.



HERCHELLE BEUKES

Herchelle is one of our Grade 1 education facilitators. By his own admission, he didn't know much about the organisation when he started working here in February 2021. However, this soon changed when the training sessions began.



"The training I received at the Seven Passes taught me how to deal with children in a loving and productive way. I'm seeing many things from a different perspective now. Instead of just thinking a child might be difficult, I first get to know the children on their level."

Herchelle believes the training provides the skills and insight he needs to make a difference in a child's life. He also says he is learning just as much from the children.

"When the kids arrive at afterschool, I can see that they are happy to see me. This gives me a warm feeling in my heart, because I want to continue this journey with them. The sky is the limit."

A willingness to learn, and a passion to improve the wellbeing of our children goes a long way in being successful in your work at the Seven Passes Initiative. This sincerity is what we have seen in Herchelle.



Parenting programmes bring healing and hope

The Seven Passes Initiative uses four parenting programmes to equip parents to form loving bonds with their children. The programmes are developed to help the parents enjoy their time with their children, rather than focusing on harsh discipline and punishment. Our aim is to alleviate the stress that parents are experiencing when having to deal with challenging situations and to give all our children a better chance at realising their goals and dreams.

The Seven Passes Initiative is the only organisation in the world that is implementing all four programmes in the Parenting for Lifelong Health suite simultaneously. The programmes are supported by the World Health Organisation and UNICEF, and were developed and

tested by universities in South Africa and the United Kingdom. The programmes are delivered free of charge to participants and are available to all parents and caregivers in and around Touwsrante, Kleinkrantz, Lancewood and Wilderness Heights.

Despite having to adjust and adapt the delivery and presentation of some of our programmes, due to the impact of the pandemic, we are grateful that our work could continue. Our parenting programmes once again made a positive impact on the lives of many families in the Touwsrante community.

Here are short summaries of the benefits of each of the programmes, together with a few of our success stories...

Book Sharing Programme (Prente Pret)

Caregivers and children aged 2 – 5

Parents learn how to share a book with their child. This strengthens the bond between them, increases children's vocabulary, and contributes to their school readiness so that they may benefit optimally from their early learning experiences.

CLAUDIA and NADINE SWARTS

Claudia Swarts is the mother of 2-year-old Nadine. She shared that before her toddler found it difficult to concentrate and sit still when she read story books to her.



Since they joined the book sharing programme, she has become aware of the different positions they can use. She finds it most comfortable to place Nadine on her lap whilst allowing the little one to hold the

book by herself. This way Nadine is occupied and able to focus better.

Nadine has made great progress in identifying objects in the books and connecting it to her environment e.g., chickens and other animals. She is also able to identify most colours. Nadine and her mom enjoy the "Pointing and Name" activity which help her improve her vocabulary.

RICARDO MNXUNYEM and RICIDO KLAASEN

Ricardo was very excited to do the book sharing programme with his son. He immediately started practicing doing Prente-Pret with his son, after their first session.

They are using this activity as part of their special time together, to build their relationship. Spending time with his son by sharing a book together, is strengthening their bond and Ricardo reports that he feels it's helping him to get to know his son better.

The 3-year old Ricido is making great progress and is already linking objects in the books with what he sees in and around the house.



Thula Sana Programme (Mamma Baba)

Pregnant women and new mothers

Our parenting facilitators visit pregnant women and new mothers and show them that their new-born babies are social beings who can do a lot more than they thought. We teach skills that give the parents confidence to interact with and stimulate their babies. This, in turn, strengthens the mother-infant bond and provides a firm foundation for the baby's future development.

LORRY-KAY and RIDOWAN MOOS

Before starting the programme, Lorry-Kay admits that she was quite sceptical.

"I didn't know what to expect, or what to think. When the facilitator explained the programme to me, I got excited and was very eager to do it."

Lorry-Kay quickly formed a strong, trusting bond with parenting facilitator, Roslynn, and felt comfortable to share her concerns about her baby and even personal issues with her.

"I never felt judged by Roslynn. She helped me to find ways to comfort my baby when he was crying non-stop. I was pleasantly surprised to learn about baby massaging and how it could calm him down and help him relax."

Lorry-Kay says the most important skill she learned, was to understand what her baby's cries meant.

"Babies can't talk, and I couldn't always understand what he needed. Now I know that sometimes he just wants to be held, or he wants to play."

Lorry-Kay is very grateful for the support she received and says she will recommend it to anyone, especially first-time mothers.

Parenting facilitators (below, from left): Sheridan Kennedy, Natasha Abrahams, Shila Ntenetyana, Linda Mondile and Roslynn Wehr-Damons.

CHEROLENE and WAYDIN VAN WYNGAARD

Cherolene is mum to 6-month old Waydin. She expressed her gratitude for the support she received from parenting facilitator, Sheridan.

"It was very special to have someone to talk to. I was surprised at how quickly we formed a strong bond. Waydin was my second child, but there is a 14-year gap between my two children. I felt like a first-time mother! I was a bit overwhelmed."



Waydin is a happy baby and doing very well. Cherolene enjoyed learning about behavioural assessment and how it helped her to be aware of her baby's development phases.

She believes the programme has equipped her to give Waydin the best chance to reach his full potential. She says raising her baby isn't as stressful as she had feared it might be. Now she knows a lot about his likes and dislikes.

"My baby is very social and observant. He already recognises the family members by their faces and voices. Whenever someone speaks, coughs, or sneezes he turns to look at the person."

Cherolene seems excited and content when she speaks of her parenting experience. She is eager to continue implementing the new skills and knowledge that she acquired through the parenting programme.

Sinovuyo Kids (Gelukkige Familie Omgee Program)

Caregivers and Children aged 2 – 9

Most of us know that toddlers and young children can sometimes be demanding and difficult. The Sinovuyo Kids programme equips parents and caregivers with positive strategies to deal with difficult behaviour. Instead of anger, frustration and aggression, the programme encourages cool-down strategies and the value of designated quality time is emphasised. Participants report positive outcomes and it is heart-warming to see how parents support one another with encouragement and tips on dealing with challenging situations.

JOSLYN BENSON

Joslyn is very pleased with the improvement in her relationship with her child since participating in the Sinovuyo Kids Programme.

"Before, I took part in this programme, I used to give my child too many instructions at the same time. I was impatient with her when she didn't follow my instructions. Now I realise that I have to give clear instructions, one at a time."

"My way of trying to control my child's negative behaviour, was to scream at her. Now I am calm when talking to her about the behaviour. I praise her for following instructions given to her. I am also able to talk to her about my emotions."



RACHEL VAN ROOYEN

Rachel van Rooyen takes care of her grandson. She decided to participate in the Sinovuyo Programme, because she needed help to deal with difficult behaviour, such as tantrums.

"Before I did the programme, things were bad. I used to scream at my grandson when he was throwing one of his tantrums. The programme taught me a lot of new things that is helping to improve our relationship. It is now much easier to take care of my grandson."

Here are some of the strategies that Rachel found helpful:

- Give clear instructions, one at a time.
- Praise the behaviour I like to see more often.
- Talk about your feelings with each other.
- Ignore behaviour, like tantrums, without feeling guilty. As long as he is not damaging an object or hurting a person.

"My grandson's interaction with other children has improved a lot. I even hear him praise his friends, telling them they look handsome or they are dressed well!"



Sinovuyo Teens – Gelukkige Familie Omgee Program vir Tieners

Parenting adolescent children under the best of circumstances can be challenging. When teenagers grow up in violent and non-supportive homes, they are more likely to suffer from anxiety and depression. In these homes, the abuse of alcohol and other substances, risky sexual behaviour or becoming involved in crime and violence become more prevalent. The Sinovuyo Teens Programme aims to assist parents in the community to engage, connect and communicate with their adolescent children so that they can deal with, eliminate, or, at least, reduce these risk areas.

HENDRIENA and KATELYN TERBLANCHE

Mum Hendriena says it was only after attending the second parenting session that she really started getting excited about participating. Now she is happy about the improvement in her relationship with Katelyn.

"I have learned a lot. I see that I get a better response when I talk to my child in a calm and positive way. We are following a routine, and that has made everything in the house much better."

Katelyn is grateful for the positive outcomes after attending the Sinovuyo Teens Programme with her mum. She realises that by playing closer to the home, her mom worries less about her, and by following instructions immediately, there is less chance of tempers flaring up.



CLAUDINE VAN STADEN and MICHAEL TERBLANCHE

Michael lives with his aunt, Claudine. Before he attended the programme with her, he was frustrated and used to get angry very easily. He got into arguments with his friends when he did not get his way and was experiencing feelings of stress on a regular basis.

Claudine says she was equally stressed out.

"Before I started the programme, I just kept a smile on my face, even though I was hurting on the inside. It was very difficult for me to even speak to my family about the things that was hurting me. So, I ended up just feeling constantly sad."

Claudine was also struggling with low self-esteem. Now that she has participated in the Sinovuyo Teens Programme, she has begun to put herself first again and to be happy. She says the session on "Talking about Feelings" helped her see the importance of acknowledging her emotions and talking about it calmly.

The relationship between Claudine and Michael, has grown.

"Michael follows instructions and attends to his chores. Since he attended the program with me, he has learned to be calmer and does not stress so much anymore."

It is wonderful to see that Michael is more responsible, follows the house rules and plays nicely with his friends.



Working together to create safe communities

SHERIDAN KENNEDY – From educational facilitator to parenting coach/trainer

Sheridan Kennedy, 34, is mum to a 10-year old daughter, a 7-year old son, and a 1-year old baby girl. She started working at the Seven Passes Initiative in 2015 as an educational facilitator. She had already gained some experience in child care through obtaining an NQF Level 4 Certificate in Early Childhood Development. She also gained practical experience in her work at the Touwsrante Community Crèche as a teacher's assistant.

Working as beneficiary of the EPWP Community Development project at the Seven Passes Initiative, Sheridan enjoyed her duties at the afterschool centre tremendously. Being committed, passionate, and motivated, she grabbed every opportunity to learn more through the various training programmes conducted at the organisation.

In 2016, her contract with EPWP expired and she was given the opportunity to join the new Parenting Facilitator team who would be delivering Parenting for Lifelong Health Programmes in the community.

Sheridan was very grateful for this opportunity.

"This new position helped me grow intellectually and emotionally. I also realised that members of our community were starting to look up at me as a role model for parents."

This enterprising lady was juggling quite a few balls at the same time. Being a parent, having to work in the evenings to prepare for the next day's delivery of



the parenting programmes, taking responsibility for new duties and undergoing more training...

In 2017, Sheridan was appointed as the Social Activation Co-ordinator.

In 2018 she qualified as a Parenting Programme Coach.

From 2018 – 2020 she has broadened her knowledge and skills with Train the Trainer TOT programmes. This has equipped her to train other facilitators for the

following parenting programmes: Sinovuyo 2-9 years, Sinovuyo Teens and Book Sharing.

In Sheridan's own words, "I have come a long way and it was all worth the effort!"

She is looking forward to be a fully qualified trainer in her department.

"I am very grateful for all the opportunities provided by the organisation as I am always eager to learn. I want to set an example and encourage others to strive for success by working hard to reach their goals."



In response to a multitude of requests to better understand locally driven initiatives that offer sustained interventions that prevent violence, the Institute for Security Studies embarked on developing case studies of three long-standing community-based initiatives.

Lessons were derived from the following three initiatives, each which have incrementally expended the suite of services provided within the respective communities:

- Hantam Community Education Trust in Colesberg
- Net vir Pret in Barrydale
- Seven Passes Initiative in Touwsrante

These organisations were initiated for differing reasons, and with the exception of Seven Passes Initiative, did not have violence prevention as an explicit objective. However, these initiatives were all focused on providing children in their communities with opportunities that could enable them to thrive – academically, socially and emotionally. The strategies employed within each context revealed the following key lessons:

- Community-based organisations are catalytic in responding to immediate community needs. This level of responsiveness, which requires agility and innovation, is instrumental in building trust. With trusting relationships, solidarity and agency can be ignited to foster social change. For example, during the COVID-19 lockdown, the initiatives ceased their usual activities, and instead became hubs through which the community could access meals. Each initiative demonstrated their commitment to supporting the community, and reported greater willingness for collaboration among community members.
- Building knowledge and skills that become embedded within these vulnerable communities



are critical for social transformation to occur. Across each initiative, there were varying degrees of awareness of power and privilege, and how these could be used to generate transformative practice and/or serve to impede much needed change. For example, the ability of these organisations to achieve their objectives were strengthened when networks were created among more affluent members,

internally or externally located to the community. However, the extent to which transformation occurred was often confined to a 'community' stemming from apartheid-era spatial planning.

These initiatives operate in very challenging contexts. Therefore, to contribute towards prevention of violence, the following are imperative:

- Government, donor agencies and private sector partners need to craft funding mechanisms that enable community-based initiatives to provide sustained violence prevention interventions.
- Well-established non-governmental organisations should partner with local community-based initiatives in order to facilitate and explore supportive funding opportunities.
- Provincial governments should have a map of locally-based initiatives working to prevent violence and forge partnerships in order to work more collaboratively, improving referral systems so that responses to community needs become more effective.

To read the full report click on the link below.
<https://www.sevenpasses.org.za/lessons-from-community-based-initiatives-to-prevent-violence/>

Penny Parenzee
 Senior Research Consultant, Justice and Violence Prevention Programme, Institute for Security Studies



The Budding Buddy System: An international collaboration

In collaboration with graduate students at The New School for Social Research in New York City, USA, under the mentorship of Dr Miriam Steele, Director of Centre for Attachment Research, The Seven Passes Initiative is working to implement the co-developed “Budding Buddy System” (BBS) programme. The programme is designed to help improve the social-emotional health and non-violent communication skills of local youth in Touwsrante. It also aims to empower community workers, in order to reduce all forms of violence in the community.

Budding Buddy System programme description

The Budding Buddy System is a 20-week, afterschool experiential learning process for learners. Key activities involve a combination of group and “buddy” (peer-dyads)-based interventions. Every two-hour session includes drama therapy and expressive arts activities. Each session centres around a specific social-emotional theme, such as Active Listening, Healthy Anger, Active Consent, Advocacy: Standing Up for Self and Others, Gender Equality & Anti-Racism, Asking for Help, and Resilience.

Activities include drama therapy and expressive arts modalities, skills-practice, group discussion and reflection, and co-created rituals in order to facilitate bonding and trust. Prior to administering the Budding Buddy System, we will begin by training community workers in the model. Training will be tailored to address the specific concerns and needs of staff. Through training, staff will engage in the programme with a specific focus on building safe bonds with peers, learning to express emotions, and practicing communication skills. Training will also present an opportunity for staff to process personal experiences of community violence, secondary traumatic stress, and compassion fatigue.



Specific objectives

1. The Budding Buddy System aims to improve critical socio-emotional skills of youth in order to reduce all forms of violence within the community. While the Seven Passes Initiative has been highly successful in eliminating gang violence in the area, other forms of violence, including gender-based violence, remain an ongoing concern.
2. Through training staff in this model, we aim to empower the community workers of the Seven Passes Initiative, who themselves experience burnout, secondary traumatic stress, and compassion fatigue as a result of their efforts to eliminate violence in their community. In order to address the needs of the larger community, we envision the change beginning with these community workers: the mentors, caretakers, leaders of the community, through practicing mutual support, healthy communication, and interpersonal and collective care.

This programme will strengthen our on-going efforts to reduce all forms of violence in our communities. We are looking forward to experiencing the positive impact of this exciting international collaboration.

Hannah Maté

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THE NEW SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH



ISS/Seven Passes: Workplace violence prevention programme

What a privilege it has been for the ISS to partner with The Seven Passes Initiative in recent months to conduct the first prototyping round of a new violence prevention intervention programme!

For the past year, the Violence Prevention Team at the Institute for Security Studies has been conducting ground-breaking research to develop a programme for preventing family violence, one that is aimed at simultaneously preventing gender-based violence and violence against children in South Africa.

What makes this project unique in another way is that our research site is a small, family owned agro-processing business outside of Pacaltsdorp in the farming community of Hansmoeskraal. By designing an intervention for a workplace, we are creating access for people that are unable to attend community-based programmes due to their work commitments. There are also incentives for businesses, as evidence shows that such programmes may have a positive impact on productivity, employee wellbeing and satisfaction and reduce absenteeism or requests for time off to attend to appointments related to experience of violence and abuse at home.

Offering a violence prevention programme at a workplace not only decreases practical barriers to attendance but also offers a safe, confidential space to receive support which may be important if the perpetrator is a family member or intimate partner.

We are very pleased to report that we have just completed the first prototyping round of our programme. And while there is still a way to go and much to learn before this programme can be rolled out on a larger scale, there have been some notable impacts on those who have participated:

- One participant reported how much the “take a pause” (emotional regulation) exercise has helped her at work to manage her emotions and behaviour. She was very upset



calmly to resolve the situation. She said that this was different to how she would have reacted before she learnt this skill.

- Another participant shared how the programme helped her to learn communication skills and help her to feel less stressed: “On the first day of the programme, I was very uncomfortable and I was not myself. I want to say that today I feel ten times better than when I first started.

I now know how to communicate; I know how to be in control. I also know that it is not always good to be in control, but to also listen to one another. My picture shows that I was a very angry person (stormy weather) and on the other side (now), I’m a very happy person with a flower in my hand and gratefulness in my heart for everyone.”

For participants who are parents or grandparents, the programme offered an opportunity to learn positive parenting skills: “I was uncomfortable at first. The group was interesting and made me laugh a lot. My son and I are very close to each other now. Spending special time is great. I know his moods, the do’s and don’ts and that is very important to me”.

What is also very exciting is that participants shared the content of their sessions with their family members and friends. Participants described how they are practicing their new skills at home and that there is interest from household members in the activities and programme. This is great news as the intention is for the skills learned in this programme to be passed on to family members. Anecdotally, we have also had reports of positive impact from the business owner who reported a marked reduction in the incidents of conflict on the production line as well as apparent decreases in absenteeism. These and other impacts will be formally measured in the pilot study which will be conducted in 2022.

However, it is not only recipients of the fledgling programme that have reported positive impacts. This programme has also given facilitators at the Seven Passes opportunity to learn new skills and build their confidence. For two facilitators, this was their first time ever conducting such sessions! We are very proud of what we have achieved together and look forward to sharing more about this innovative programme as we progress with the research and implementation.

Thandi van Heyningen

Senior Research Consultant, Justice and Violence Prevention Programme, Institute for Security Studies



with a co-worker (in the week) and she used this skill to take some time to calm down and was then able to go back to the person who upset her and spoke

Four volunteers share their Seven Passes experience

Some people hesitate when they think of volunteering. They are worried that it might take too much of their time. Others mistakenly think they have nothing to give. These beautiful words from author, Topher Kearby, describe the true essence of volunteering...



I love kind people, because kindness is intentional. When someone goes out of their way to do something for someone else. When they are generous. When they are giving of their time or resources. A listening ear. A shoulder to cry on. A conversation at the right time. For the right person those acts can change everything. So, when I notice that, I also see the person behind the kindness, and I instantly become thankful. Because people like that help make this world more beautiful.

We want to thank each volunteer for giving their time, skills, and resources, to make a positive difference in our community. Four of our volunteers share their Seven Passes experience ...

MARIUS ANDREWS – Youth mentor and Career Consultant

I have been involved with the Seven Passes Initiative as a volunteer since July 2020. What an exciting and fulfilling journey it was and still is. Being passionate about the upliftment of young people and the development of young leaders, Seven Passes Initiative is the perfect place to live out such passion. I could not have asked the Lord for a more perfect environment.

My involvement at Seven Passes is mainly mentorship and certain parts of training with the leadership component of the organisation. This in itself is a privilege! I work with a group of humble, yet focused people. They are committed to the community of Touwsrante where they work towards change on a daily basis. They do this by investing their skills and knowledge to uplift and bring stability in the community.

Their work ethics are commendable and the way they live out the organisation's values, not just as a team, but also in their individual lives, is inspirational. With such a diverse set of personalities and character traits it can at times be a challenge for an organisation run as a well-oiled machine. Somehow, the team at Seven Passes Initiative has managed to do just that!

Their heart for serving, not just the community but also one another, is evident throughout the organisation.

Every time I leave, I walk away with a sense of fulfilment in my spirit for the small amount of value I could have

added to their lives. But I also leave with a feeling of overwhelming gratitude to be associated with the Seven Passes Initiative.

I would like to take this opportunity to boldly challenge any individual, business, or company to get involved with this unique team of individuals. Whether you decide to donate time, volunteering your services or skills, resources or finances, I guarantee that you will experience the same kind of blessing that I have experienced over the last year.



GRETA VAN DER WALT – Admin and translating assistance

Why would someone choose to give their time, possessions, or love to someone they don't know, without expecting anything in return? There are probably many reasons. Mine is quite simple. I feel compelled to give, because I'm so grateful for everything I have.

By "donating" a little bit of my time, volunteering at the Seven Passes Initiative, is my way of showing gratitude for all the privileges I have. And then, the realisation...in doing this, I receive even more! The thought that I might

make a difference in the life of even one of the children at the Seven Passes, is truly rewarding. Every time I leave, I feel that I have been on the receiving end.

This organisation and their staff are the embodiment of servant leadership. The programmes and assistance that they present to the community, are of the highest standard. I feel both excited and privileged to play a part in such an excellent organisation. I believe the impact of the incredible work done at Seven Passes will be seen in the children and in the community of Touwsrante for generations to come.

Making a difference with narrative therapy

Rachelle Wilson and Elricka de Jager are Signo registered narrative therapists who have been volunteering at the Seven Passes Initiative since October 2020. They have been assisting the community and staff members with individual therapy sessions.

Narrative therapy seeks to be a respectful, non-blaming approach to therapy and community work, and centres around people as the experts in their own lives. Narrative therapy views problems as separate from people and assumes people have many skills, competencies, beliefs, values, commitments and abilities that will assist them to reduce the influence of problems in their lives.

Here are their thoughts on their experience thus far...

RACHELLE WILSON

After a brief introductory speech under a tree, we started counselling at Seven Passes Initiative in October 2020 – and what an enriching experience it was!

I receive a list of clients on a Monday and when we arrive on a Thursday morning, everyone is ready to get started. The people are friendly and accommodating and really makes me feel very welcome. It is a privilege to be let into their lives. It is amazing to see how they, being the expert on their own lives and us just facilitating the process, succeed in re-authoring a dominant problem story into a new preferred life story. Social construct plays a big role in everyday life and needs to be taken into consideration when looking at different options for the preferred story. It is clear that more help is needed regarding social issues in the community. The people at Seven Passes will always remain very dear to me. Thank you so much for the opportunity to be a part of your lives!

ELRICKA DE JAGER

My involvement with the Seven Passes Initiative started in October 2020. What an eventful year. The Covid-19 pandemic, coupled with lockdowns, social distancing and many other new rules and safety measures, caused widespread emotional and mental distress. Many people had a need to tell their stories and we wanted to hear them. Some of the clients found it difficult to find the right words to share their experience. This is where my colleague, Rachelle Wilson and I could help.

Every Thursday morning, we were greeted with smiles and welcomed into a warm atmosphere. In the mornings, while driving to the Seven Passes, it felt as if God was reminding us, "Pray for the people in this place, listen to their stories, because they are making an impact in their community."

We have heard many beautiful stories at the Seven Passes Initiative. The realisation that, despite the difference in culture and social construct, stories have the potential to bring people together.

During my time at the Seven Passes, I have learned that every person has the ability to rewrite their story. Every client that I have seen at the Seven Passes, is in the process of using their skills to write a new story. I regard it as a great privilege to be involved with this organisation and making a difference in the community.

Financial statements

Seven Passes Initiative: summary of financial statements on 31 December 2020

| | 2020 R | 2019 R |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| Income | | |
| Grant: World Childhood Foundation | 1 222 348 | 1 663 939 |
| Grant: Department of Social Development (DSD) | 356 400 | 345 000 |
| Grant: Pathcare | 198 350 | 188 544 |
| Donations: farmers and general public | 1 035 904 | 276 890 |
| Golf Day income | 205 713 | 206 808 |
| Interest received | 68 081 | 110 177 |
| | 3 086 796 | 2 791 358 |
| Expenses | | |
| Projects and community development | 2 293 963 | 2 765 978 |
| Administration and development | 194 849 | 199 909 |
| | 2 488 812 | 2 965 887 |
| Surplus / (deficit) for the year | 597 984 | (174 529) |
| Accumulated Reserves (net assets) beginning of the year | 2 244 264 | 2 418 793 |
| Accumulated Reserves (net assets) end of the year | 2 842 248 | 2 244 264 |



Seven Passes Members' Code of Conduct

Members should:

- Conduct themselves with honour and communicate feelings honestly and respectfully
- Look for safe ways to express anger and other emotions
- Work at solving problems
- Not have a dangerous, threatening or aggressive manner towards any other person
- Take care of themselves and others – physically, emotionally and mentally
- Take responsibility for their actions and refrain from self-destructive behaviour. If they struggle to do this on their own, they must seek help
- Be accountable for their own actions
- Be frank and honest in their endeavours with others
- Be fair and impartial when dealing with others
- Deal with all people courteously, honestly, impartially, treat them equally and in a way that is sensitive to their rights
- Listen carefully to others, especially those who disagree with them
- Take into consideration others' feelings and needs rather than insist on having their own way
- Apologise and make amends when they hurt another and keep themselves from holding grudges
- Be courageous and actively challenge violence in all its forms, wherever they encounter it
- Believe and support women, children and men who say that they have experienced any form of violence
- Encourage a culture of reporting abuse so that the vicious cycle of violence can be stopped
- Socialise in a non-violent way by selecting social activities that strengthen our commitment to non-violence and avoid social activities that make violence look exciting, funny or acceptable
- Strive to be a parent who raises well-balanced children by instilling strong values and confidence
- Ensure that they are conscious about creating a functional family environment by reducing violence, vulgar language and anti-social behaviour because they should be sensitive to the fact that children who are exposed to this environment are more likely to adopt the same behaviour
- Not expose themselves or any children to excessive substance usage that increases aggressiveness and inhibits the ability to exercise reasonable judgement in the event of a confrontation
- Stay true to the values of the organisation: non-violence, non-racism / non-discrimination, respect, empathy, equality, fun, active listening, commitment, courage, and honesty
- Conduct themselves in a way which enhances Seven Passes Initiative's image and reputation
- Not disrupt the Seven Passes Initiative activities through misbehaviour or negligence
- Not subject any employee or client of the organisation to any form of victimisation, whether physical, emotional, psychological, through slander or racial discrimination
- Be committed to the continuous improvement of services
- Contribute to a clean and safe environment

Socialise in a non-violent way and avoid social activities that make violence look exciting, funny or acceptable





GET IN TOUCH!

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