

# December 2005

## PEBBLES PROJECT one year on ... and the WOSA hands on day.

***Since the Pebbles Project was established in Nov 2004 some significant achievements have been made and the pilot project is up and running.***

The Pebbles Pilot Project in association with Dopstop has identified twenty-five wine farm crèches in the Stellenbosch area where our support is needed, and work has begun in five crèches in the pilot project, in addition to a project in the Lwandle township in Somerset West.

The programme began with the crèche workers being briefed on how to set up and run a crèche with particular guidance on activity planning and how to work with special needs children particularly those affected by Foetal Alcohol Syndrome. A workshop programme has been developed for on going training of the crèche workers and this will be implemented as soon as Pebbles finds a suitable office and training venue and a vehicle in which to transport the crèche workers and children. The funds raised from the abseil challenge, company sponsorship, personal donations and fundraising activities have enabled Pebbles to deliver 'resource boxes' containing educational toys and games, outdoor play equipment, language games, paint and drawing exercises to four of these crèches.



The funds have also enabled Pebbles to begin 'on-site' instruction for the crèche workers who have been given initial support and training on how to work with children with speech and language difficulties and how to develop activity ideas, topic planning, and group activities. The programme in the fifth crèche begins in January.

Pebbles has also met with a number of the parents of the children in these crèches and advice has been given in many cases of how to support the crèche worker and their own children, particularly for the parents of special needs children. For any input in the crèches to work, the involvement of the parents and community is vital.

The children for the pilot project for Pebbles 'Sponsor a Child' programme have been identified and the programme will be launched in January, with the first four children receiving sponsorship for their crèche to provide specific education materials and resources.

The wine farm crèche on Villiera has seen some incredible results in the short time that Pebbles and Dopstop have been involved. The number of children now attending the crèche has dramatically increased as the parents have seen the value of a structured, organised learning environment for their children. Continued training and support will be given to the crèche worker whose enthusiasm and commitment is an encouragement to other crèche workers and is a credit to her profession. A mentoring programme will be implemented next year where crèche workers can share their skills and promote best practices.

### **Pebbles / WOSA 'Hands on Day'**

The international team from Wines of South Africa held their team building day on one of the Pebbles / Dopstop wine farms recently. A team of 35 including Pebbles trustees, Dopstop staff, parents, other workers in the community and an exceptionally hardworking handyman called Walter, spent a whole day renovating their crèche. The spirit of everyone was electric.



The WOSA team from the USA and Holland dug a sand pit, built a wooden swing structure and started the tomato garden. WOSA Germany and Canada together with some of the mothers painted a bright mural on one wall, the WOSA UK office washed and cleaned blankets and dolls and WOSA SA with a number of the mothers got stuck in with paint brushes and transformed the three room crèche into a fresh, clean environment conducive to a happy, healthy learning environment. The community effort together with this practical help from WOSA was invaluable and will set this crèche on a renewed path where the children will be able to learn and now have a chance to succeed at school and become valuable members of society.



Pebbles will be running more 'Hands on Days' for other companies who want to help.

### **Pebbles in Lwandle**

The project in the Lwandle township has begun and Pebbles is part of the 'How 2 Help in the Helderberg' network that was launched at the Lwandle Museum recently. From private sponsorship Pebbles will be donating funds to purchase a plot to build a crèche in this township in Somerset West. Pebbles will then supply resources to the crèche and begin training the crèche worker and increase the Sponsor a child programme.