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July 2011

Dear Pebbles fans

We spend a lot of time at Pebbles telling people what we do for the 600 children that we support but we thought it might be good to share in a little more detail 'how' we do this. The 'how' really comes down to an amazing team of staff who work tirelessly to ensure that the charity fulfils all that it has promised to do. Close to 90% of what we are involved in, is providing a service rather than a resource. Resources are vital but meaningless without the human connection behind them.



One of our main investments over this past year has been in providing a team of special needs teachers for the crèche children and staff. Marks and Spencers made a whopping big donation of £20,000 last year (with more coming later) to be spent specifically on special needs and we now have a strong team made up of three incredibly talented ladies - Philippa, Marelie and Jo. So what does this mean practically to the children and the crèche staff?



Each special needs teacher is allocated a number of farms and spends at least one morning a week there. They

work closely with the children that have been identified with any specific challenges as well as giving support and training to the crèche teacher and crèche as a whole. Once a child has been identified as needing extra support, the girls may work on their own with the child or alongside our Occupational Therapist, social worker and/or any other therapist that he or she might need in order to put a fully supportive plan together. For some children it is just a matter of this extra session every week with one of the special needs teachers (or even as simple as an eye test and a pair of glasses) to make a difference; whilst for others it can be a multi layered approach involving occupational therapy and even the support of our social worker, Mineke. This is often a process of time, with many highs and lows for both the children and the staff involved.



An example of this is a little girl called Misande who was born physically and mentally disabled. When Misande first came to the crèche, she walked hunched over and on her toes, she couldn't eat solid food or drink out of a cup, she was scared of most visitors and she struggled to sit on her own. Three years later, Misande is attending crèche every day and despite her physical problems, she is well accepted in the crèche amongst her peer group. She always has a broad smile, reacts well to adults and strangers and her speech is improving. She works for short periods with her peer group until she gets tired but she is making progress every day. The sheer dedication of the staff and their patience and love for Misande is evident when one sees how her self confidence is growing. She goes to physiotherapy monthly and she is being assessed again by our Occupational Therapist to see what else can be done to help her.



Phillipa who joined the Pebbles Team in October last year, has been blown away by her work at Pebbles especially the diversity and challenges that she faces each and every day. No one day is ever the same for her.

♦It is all about building relationships with these children, the crèche teachers and sometimes their families. It is always a thrill to walk into a crèche and hear the children call out your name, excited with the anticipation of doing some work with you, knowing that you can make a real difference to their opportunities moving forward in life! I can see the crèche teachers start to take pride in their own work with the children and you really feel like you are making an impact on a personal level.♦



Sometimes there are factors (such as poverty, poor living conditions and alcohol abuse) that we at Pebbles cannot change but the goal for us is to ensure that each child that enters one of our crèches or after school clubs receives the right care and attention in order for them to reach their fullest potential despite their external circumstances.



As we always re-iterate we couldn't do it without you so thank you for your continued support.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the following donors who have made donations this year:

- R6,250 from an art exhibition of student's work at Grande Provence
- R150,000 from CJP Chemicals for our Toy Library
- R50,000 from Unicef for the Toy Library Award winnings
- R30,000 from KWV and Arvid Nordquist Argus cycle race team for our after-school club sport programme
- R15,000 from KWV also for the sport programme
- R40,000 from the HCI Foundation for our ECD programme
- R23,257 from Beaconsfield Rotary club in the UK for school leaver programme
- R5,000 from Enartis SA
- R50,065 from Nederberg Auction and Distell CSI
- R10,000 from LubreQuip

Best wishes and many thanks
From all of us at Pebbles ♦♦♦♦

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