

Learn to live with centre

LISA LOTTERING

 @demi_lisa

The Learn2Live Community Centre NPC, a non-profit organisation based in Kraaifontein, aims to create a society where children and adults have proper educational opportunities. This is done by investing in early childhood development (ECD) and sustainable living.

Arina Kitching, director of the organisation, says their vision is to build a good foundation during the first 1 000 days of a child's life.

The organisation has six permanent staff members and all projects are supported by recruits of the City's Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) as well as volunteers. It mainly works in the informal settlements of the greater Kraaifontein and Eerste River areas.

"These areas also boast a great need for programmes that address women empowerment, health awareness and creating a safe place for children to live, learn and thrive in," says Kitching.

According to Kitching the Learn2Live provides a hub for ECD centres in these areas, where they can access training programmes in 0 to 3 year old curriculums, leadership development, well-being, vegetable gardening training and cook training.

Learn2Live which was first established in 2010, has six projects working holistically together to achieve well-being, empowerment and connection.

● Registration project

The registration project, which started in 2012, involves the facilitation of the ECD centre registration process, leadership development and curriculum support.

The organisation partnered with the provincial Department of Social Development and assist ECD centres with their registration process. This project is implemented in Kuilsrivier, Eersterivier, Kraaifontein, Brackenfell, Bloekombos, Wallacedene and

Mfuleni.

● Library

In support of the Registration Project, Learn2Live also established a toy, book and puzzle library which targets the 0 to three years age group. This involves teachers who borrow valuable resources that are theme-related to supplement their class activities.

● Homegrown project

The homegrown project aims to educate the community on healthy eating habits, sustainable living and water-saving. "We assist schools and parents to create their own vegetable gardens at home and teach them how to cook nutritious meals on a budget for their learners and families," says Kitching.

She says she launched two *Felix* storybooks and a *Felix Recipe Book*, a fun way of creating an awareness of nutrition and how to start vegetable gardens in schools. The weekly exercise group where they teach people how to exercise and live healthy lives is also a new edition to this programme.

● Brainfood project

The brainfood project aims to bring educational programmes and nutritious meals to vulnerable children on the street.

● Parenting Programme

Parents are taught basic parenting skills and techniques. This includes relationship building, proper nutrition at home, discipline and basic medical care.

● Connection groups

Kitching says this year the organisation aspires to launch women empowerment groups in Wallacedene which will aim to positively impact their perception of their own self-worth, purpose and inner strength.

The organisation has upcoming projects in partnership with children's book author, Alani Nel, who will launch a new children's storybook range, *Vuzi the Worm* on Thursday 18 July in Durbanville.