

HUIS MAERUA NEWSLETTER

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HEALTHY CHILDREN = BRIGHTER FUTURE

KEEPING CHILDREN HEALTHY IN A CHILDREN'S HOME

Every child deserves the opportunity to grow up healthy, strong, and ready to embrace the future. At Huis Maerua, providing a safe and loving home is only part of our mission. We also strive to ensure that every child has access to the healthcare they need to thrive.

Keeping children healthy involves far more than treating illness. Regular medical check-ups, vaccinations, dental care, eye examinations, nutritious meals, and prompt treatment when they become sick all play a vital role in their physical, emotional, and educational development.

Many of the children who arrive at Huis Maerua have experienced neglect or difficult circumstances that may have affected their health. Through consistent medical care and support, we can address these challenges early and give them the best possible chance for a brighter future.

However, quality healthcare comes at a cost. This is why our Medical Aid Fund is so important. By contributing to the Huis Maerua Medical Aid Fund, you help ensure that no child has to wait for essential healthcare because of financial constraints. Every contribution, no matter the size, directly impacts the wellbeing of the children in our care.

All monetary donations are tax deductible, making it easy to invest in the health and future of vulnerable children while receiving the applicable tax benefits.

Together, we can ensure that every child has the opportunity to heal, grow, and flourish because a healthy child has the foundation to build a hopeful future.



PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN

HOW TO REPORT CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT IN NAMIBIA

Every child has the right to grow up in a safe, loving, and nurturing environment. Unfortunately, some children experience abuse or neglect, leaving them vulnerable to physical and emotional harm. Recognising the signs and knowing how to respond can make all the difference in protecting a child's future.

At Huis Maerua Children's Home, safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. If you suspect that a child is being abused or neglected, it is important to act promptly.

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT?

Child abuse can take many forms, including:

Physical abuse – intentionally causing physical harm.

Sexual abuse – involving a child in any sexual activity or exploitation.

Emotional or psychological abuse – persistent behaviour that damages a child's emotional well-being or self-esteem.

Neglect – failing to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision, education, or emotional support.

A child does not have to disclose abuse before a report can be made. If you have reasonable concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing, it is better to report your concerns than to remain silent.

HOW TO REPORT CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT:

If a child is in immediate danger, contact the

- **Namibian Police** immediately by calling 10111 or reporting to your nearest police station.

• YOU CAN ALSO REPORT CONCERNS TO:

- The nearest **Gender-Based Violence Protection Unit (GBVPU)** at the Namibian Police.

- The **Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare** through your nearest regional office or social worker.

- A registered social worker or recognised child protection organisation like Huis Maerua Children's Home (Windhoek Child Protection Association 083 332 5030 or sw1@huismaerua.org).

• WHEN MAKING A REPORT, TRY TO PROVIDE:

- The child's name (if known).

- The child's location.

- A description of the concerns and any information about the alleged perpetrator (if known).

- You do not need proof that abuse has occurred. The responsibility of determining the facts rest with the relevant authorities.

• HOW THE HUIS MAERUA SOCIAL WORKER CAN HELP:

- Making a report can feel overwhelming, especially when emotions are involved.

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Yes We
Can! Build it
Build our communities through
talent & hardwork

Our social worker is available to guide and support individuals throughout the reporting process.

THE HUIS MAERUA SOCIAL WORKER CAN:

Listen to your concerns.

Help determine whether a situation should be reported.

Explain the child protection and reporting procedures.

Assist with referrals to the relevant authorities or liaise with the Ministry and law enforcement where appropriate.

No concern is too small when a child's safety is at risk. Child abuse often continues because people are afraid to speak up or believe someone else will intervene. Reporting concerns is not about accusing someone, it is about ensuring that trained professionals can assess the situation and protect children who may be at risk.

If you are uncertain about what to do, seek advice. Asking questions and reporting concerns could change the course of a child's life.

Together, we can create a community where every child is safe, protected, and given the opportunity to heal, grow, and thrive.

"Children may not always remember what we say, but they will always remember who protected them when they needed it most."

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION:

LifeLine/ChildLine Namibia: Call the toll-free **116**. This service provides immediate crisis counselling and will help guide you on the next steps to secure the child's safety.

NAMPOL: Dial **10111** or visit your local Namibian Police station. The police are required to intervene to remove a child or the alleged offender from the home immediately if there is a threat of imminent danger.

Ministry of Gender Equality: Contact the Ministry's regional offices or social workers to request protective services and a formal welfare investigation.

Office of the Ombudsman (Children's Advocate): For extreme neglect or oversight by authorities, contact the Children's Advocate. You can reach them by visiting their offices on the corner of Feld and Lossen Streets in Windhoek, calling **061 207 3111**, emailing office@ombudsman.org.na, or sending an SMS to **20401**.

Windhoek Child Protection Association (Huis Maerua Children's Home). You can contact the social worker to assist with the reporting procedure at 083 332 5030 or sw1@huismaerua.org



ONS WAS GEBORGE

- DEUR PIET CROUCAMP

Aan die einde van 1973 het die Christelike Maatskaplike Raad (CMR) ons drie Croucampies vir die duur van die skoolvakansie by die Coetzee-familie van Omaruru geplaas. Ons het nie werklik 'n familie gehad wat daardie jaar na ons kon omsien nie. Die Coetzees was 'n baie interessante familie met drie dogters en 'n jongman (ek weet nie hoe hy verwant was nie) van ongeveer 30 jaar met die naam Kierie. Hy was die "adult in the room" wanneer die familie-vrolikhede tipies van die feesseisoen gespanne geraak het.

Die tannie het 'n eietydse bolla gehad en selde haar valstande gedra. Die oom het 'n glasooig gehad wat hy soms om een of ander vreemde rede in sy bier gegooi het. Wanneer hulle die dag dorp toe gaan, is al die kinders uit die huis gesluit, want ons sou beslis die yskas plunder.

Maar, dit was die lekkerste vakansie van my lewe. Ek was smoorverlief op die familie se jongste dogter, Tienie, en was baie hartseer om weer terug te gaan koshuis toe na 'n vakansie vol pret en avontuur. Wel, nou met die wysheid van terugblik besef ek die Coetzees het die hele vakansie geweet ons gaan nie weer koshuis toe nie. In Januarie van daardie jaar is ons by die Windhoek Kinderoord afgelaai.

Ek onthou my eerste dag in die Windhoek-kinderhuis soos gister. Ek het soos 'n Jack Russel die wêreld begin omdolwe opsoek na die geheimenisse van 'n misterieuse tehuis met baie vriende en min grootmense. Indien jy niks doen om aandag te trek nie kon jy letterlik 'n grootmens vir weke vermy.

Die kinders se stories van verwaarlosing en vervreemding het my laat besef 'n ouerhuis is



nie altyd die veiligste plek vir 'n kind nie. Ek het nie werklik 'n ervaring van 'n ouerhuis gehad nie, in elk geval nie wat ek kon onthou nie. Ek het gewonder oor my ma en het na my ouma verlang.

Byna vyf dekades later vra 'n vrou wat saam met my in die kinderkuis was of ek al oor my post-traumatisie stres van die kinderkuisjare is. Ek kon met eerlikheid sê ek het te veel goeie herinneringe van daardie jare om die traumas waarna sy verwys te onthou.

Ek het vriende daar gemaak wat ek vir ewig sal mis. My en Jan van Zyl se paaie het geskei nadat ons die skool verlaat het, hy was my sielsgenoot. Bambie van Zyl was een van die ouer dogters en ek sal vir ewig en altyd die deernis onthou waarmee sy eendag my skooldas vir my geknoop het. Gertjie Barnard was al in sy laaste jare op skool toe ek in die kinderkuis gekom het. Hy was 'n stille mentor vir my totdat ons paaie weer op universiteit gekruis het.

Daar was nooit weer 'n skoolvakansie met my wat op my tas by die hek sit en niemand kom haal my nie.

Die Croucampies was geborge...



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