



## Big dreams start small

HeadStart Kids changes thousands of children's lives on a daily basis, endeavouring to equip productive and effective citizens of our land. Our core objectives are to eradicate malnourishment, activate key and critical age appropriate learning and ensure optimal child development as we curb stunting and iron deficiency through our holistic, collaborative well-being programme.

This is done through rigorous and continuous testing, measuring and daily monitoring. Our latest software and integrated cloud technology enables detailed reporting with key access to beneficiary analysis and progression. Our complete well-being programme has full tracking of all funding received and allocated to each individual beneficiary incorporated into our programme.

HeadStart Kids has been operational for three years in South Africa and currently impacts over 10 000 children daily in the Early Childhood Development space.

HeadStart Kids is a non-profit organisation, a registered section 18a company and receives its funding from various sectors - business organisations and private. This enables us in fulfilling our commitment to the early childhood development, wellness platforms and the love for the children.

We provide preschool children (six months to five years of age) of low-income families with a comprehensive wellness programme to meet the little ones emotional, social, health, nutritional and psychological needs. Currently, HeadStart Kids has successfully rolled out the programme in the Gauteng Province. Our footprint will initially expand to KZN, North West and Free State Provinces. Our aim is to be ACTIVE, on the ground, providing high impact and support within the ECD sector to all 9 provinces in the near future.

In order for a child to reach optimum development and thus potential, we believe that nutrition and health go hand in hand. Let's detail what HeadStart Kids provides:

- Daily micronutrients, Nutrilite™ Little Bits™, that is added to existing or implemented daily meal programmes
- Quarterly measurements: weight, height, head circumference and MUAC (mid upper arm circumference)
- Deworming twice a year
- Annual haemoglobin screening
- Annual eye testing
- Annual hearing testing

Third- and fourth-year nursing students pledge their time in these communities to perform these duties. They are supervised by a registered nurse from the Empilweni College and accompanied by fieldworkers from HeadStart Kids. The students receive the following exposure:

- Deworming children from six months to five years of age
- Haemoglobin testing from six months
- Keeping and signing off of clinic records
- Organisational skills
- Quarterly measurements
- Working in testing conditions

HeadStart Kids focuses on collaboration in order to create a sustainable model that will get us to our goal of reaching one million children in the ECD space in the next five years. Reversing malnourishment and getting kids physically well, and enabled, before school going age, to give them the ability to function optimally during their schooling, career and life. We want to assist in producing effective, productive citizen's on which our country can depend.

## We give our children a Head Start!

### Corinna Walsh

Professor of Nutrition and Dietetics  
University of the Free State

Micronutrient deficiency is a form of undernutrition that refers to an inadequate intake and absorption of vitamins and minerals, with negative consequences for health and development. Globally, micronutrient deficiency occurs in one in every three people, most of who live in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Whereas severe micronutrient deficiencies lead to visible clinical

Every year, micronutrient deficiencies are responsible for about 11 million of the 3.1 million child deaths that occur as a result of undernutrition.

signs (such as blindness due to vitamin A deficiency), less severe micronutrient deficiencies, or "hidden hunger", affect the health and development of many more children who do not have obvious clinical signs of deficiency. Preventing and treating micronutrient deficiencies can significantly improve the health and well-being of the next generation.



## Impact story

This is one of the many impact stories that motivates HeadStart Kids to do what we do to make a difference in the lives of the children we serve.

Good morning Lily,

Our cook came storming into my office this morning with a box of the "little bits". Out of her own, she said, "I think these powders are working, have you seen how clear Charlotte's skin is?". I have not said anything to them yet regarding me thinking it is the powder making a difference for the kids. Charlotte is a second child, besides Tswarelo that have been suffering from severe eczema since birth. Her skin is always hard and crusty, almost like crocodile skin. Her eczema sometimes gets infected causing large water blisters that burst and bleed. I have attached a photo of when her eczema is at its worst. Please note the photos are quite sensitive. We have had her seen by many dermatologists, doctors and even a homeopath, but nothing worked. Charlotte's skin is soft and clear now, with no traces of eczema.

At the same time, we have now also experienced a type of chickenpox or herpes infection on the kid's skins. But like I said in the previous email, I believe it is their immune systems that are waking up now and fighting all the bugs they have been carrying. I will keep you updated on how everything is progressing by us, as well as the difference we notice in the kids with chronic issues.

Thanks so much!!

Lynette Erasmus  
Haven Manager  
& Social Worker  
New Beginnings

Warmest regards,  
Lynette

