

## Ext 1 man killed in alleged fight over booze



Image credit: iStock

iStock  
Credit: FluxFactory

On 1 November a man died tragically after being stabbed with an Okapi in Ext 1.

Orange Farm SAPS Communication Officer, Sgt Shaan Motsapi, said: "According to the witness, the deceased was at a nearby tavern with two friends. Him and one of his friends left their beers with the other friend, who is now the suspect. When they returned, the beers were missing, and an argument broke out while they went to look for him." "The witness further stated that the suspect then went to his

grandmother's house and returned holding an Okapi knife. During a discussion on the street, the suspect stabbed the deceased in the chest," Motsapi shared. "The victim was rushed to Baragwanath Hospital via Stretford Clinic but later succumbed to his injuries. A murder case has been opened, the 26-year-old suspect was arrested, and the knife was seized. The suspect appeared at the Vereeniging Magistrate's Court facing a murder charge on 5 November," Sgt Motsapi added.

# Asibonge Bazali: Steve Biko parents secure victory over unsafe busses



Image: Orange Farm News

Parents stage three day protests at the school while demanding the urgent replacement of unroadworthy busses

## AWARENESS ON THE PREVENTION OF ELDERLY ABUSE

### Who is an Older Person?

An older person refers to anyone aged 60 years and above. Many have retired and may be receiving an old-age pension grant.

### Understanding Ageism

Did you know that ageism is a form of discrimination based on age?

It is a violation of the constitutional rights of older persons and often manifests through negative attitudes, stereotypes, or unfair treatment simply because of a person's age.

### What Makes Older Persons Vulnerable to Abuse?

#### Health Challenges:

With advancing age, many older persons experience health issues such as impaired sight, hearing loss, or other age-related conditions.

#### Cognitive Decline:

Memory loss and reduced problem-solving abilities can make older persons more susceptible to manipulation or neglect.

#### Social Isolation:

Older persons often experience loneliness or social exclusion after retirement, which increases their vulnerability to stress and abuse.

#### How Are the Rights of Older Persons Violated?

Age discrimination occurs when an elderly person is treated unfairly because of their age. This may include:

- Being denied employment or training opportunities.
- Exclusion from social or community activities.
- Receiving delayed or inadequate medical treatment due to age-related bias.

### Rights of Older Persons

Every older person has the right to:

- Access employment, education, health care, cultural, spiritual and recreational resources.
- Live in dignity and security, free from exploitation, neglect, and abuse.
- Enjoy respect and recognition within their families and communities.

### Reporting Abuse Against Older Persons

If you suspect that an elderly person is being abused, report it immediately.

- Open a case with the South African Police Service (SAPS).
- Or contact your nearest Department of Social Development office.

**Remember:** It is a criminal offence not to report abuse or any criminal act committed against an older person.

**Protect the Elderly. They Deserve Care, Respect, and Dignity.**

### FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT THESE OFFICES

NAME OF THE ORGANISATION	ADDRESS	CONTACT DETAILS
South African Social Security Agency	Ext 2 Orange Farm, 1805 Next to SAPS	Tel: 011 213 2901
Mina Nawe Centre for Elderly People	1205B Ext 7 b, Orange Farm 1805	Evelyn Mazibuko Cell: 076 691 8461
Age in Action	Gandhi Square Johannesburg 2000, Next to Capitec	Tel: 011 354 0136 gauteng@age-in-action.co.za
Department of Social Development (Orange Farm Satellite Office)	SAPS Ext 2 Orange Farm	Tel: 011 213 2914 / 5
Department of Social Development (Regional Office)	41 Fox Street Edura House, Johannesburg 200	Tel: 011 355 9200
Department of Social Development (Head Office)	69 Commissioner Street Thusanong Building, Johannesburg 2000	Tel: 011 355 7600

#GrowingGautengTogether



Images Supplied

A bus transports learners back to school after days of delays

After days of halted learning at Steve Biko Primary School in Ext 2, students were finally able to return to class on 3 November after the Department of Education delivered new busses.

The interruption came after parents raised safety concerns over the old and unsafe busses transporting their children. From 27 to 30 October, parents staged a protest at the school gates, demanding urgent replacement of the unsafe and unroadworthy busses.

Parents from Drieziek 9, Tjovitjo and surrounding areas, accused the transport provider of putting children's lives at risk and vowed to halt learning until action was taken. Parents said they have been raising these issues since 2022, with little response.

At a meeting on 30 October, the Department of Education's spokesperson, Steve Mabona, assured parents that a temporary contractor would be appointed while issues with the current provider are addressed.

On 3 November, parents were relieved as the new busses arrived to pick up learners. Credit goes to the parents for standing firm and advocating for the safety of their children. While closing the school was never their goal, it became necessary to ensure their voices were heard. Charlotte, a parent, told OFN: "The

previous busses had broken seats, worn-out floors, holes where children can see the road passing underneath, doors that don't close properly and when they break down children are left stranded. Educators must find ways to take little ones home, while others walk long distances on busy roads." "Busses are supposed to be safe, but those carrying our children were not. Our children's lives were being put at risk every day. The JMPD had issued several warnings to service provider, yet no action taken by them or even met with parents to address our concerns," another parent said. Thabo Mnisi, School Governing Body (SGB) chairperson, said: "There was a time where the busses couldn't collect learners for school because drivers said they did not have diesel. Parents have been calling for the service provider to be changed for a long time."

"We were relieved and happy to see the new busses fetching our children. The driver even made two trips to ensure all the children were transported safely, which we truly appreciate. We are grateful, the Department kept its promise and hope these busses become a permanent solution," Charlotte added.

This moment demonstrates the power of unity: when parents, the school and the Department come together, solutions become possible.

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**PRINTED BY**  
Rising Sun Printers.....084 554 5269



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Izindawo ongabika kuzo yilezi:

- Amaphoyisa (SAPS Emergency): 10111
- Gender Based Violence Command Centre (24/7): 0800 428 428
- DSD National Social Development Hotline: 0800 220 250
- Childline SA (uma kukhona abantwana abakhubazekile): 116



Traditional leaders and community members light candles for the safe return of children heading to the mountains from 21 November

**TTIT hosts prayer for a safer initiation season**

**The warm glow of candles lit up Mafatsane Hall in Evaton on 1 November, as stakeholders gathered to pray for the safe return of children heading to initiation schools this year.**

The event was attended by various traditional organisations from Orange Farm and Vaal, highlighting the deep-rooted support for this important cultural tradition. Organised by Portia Manoto, treasure of Tshaba Tsohle Initiation Tradition (TTIT), the evening was led with grace, faith and community spirit. Despite having no sponsors, the event shone brightly - filled with songs, prayers and words of encouragement. TTIT members came together in unity, creating a powerful moment of reflection and hope. As the school holidays near, many young

boys and girls will be embarking on an initiation journey, a custom that has been preserved for many years. But the deaths and bad behaviour by some initiates have overshadowed this culture. Manoto told OFN "We gathered to pray for divine intervention so that initiates have a safe passage through their journey and return home healthy. We also prayed for the strength and wisdom of their principals and caregivers." Manoto expressed heartfelt gratitude for the collective effort that made the gathering possible. She added: "Thank you to TTIT members who supported the event, especially the executive, who trusted and gave me the opportunity to organise it. The day symbolised light, protection and love, reminding the community of the importance of standing together in faith."

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**Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

(As outlined in the White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: 2016)

- The right to quality education that meets individual needs



- Equal opportunities for employment and career advancement
  - Access to quality healthcare services
  - Accessibility to physical infrastructure, transportation, and information
  - The right to participate fully in society and community life
- Let's work together to remove barriers and create a society that values inclusion, equality, and dignity for all.**

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# United front against illicit trade: CGCSA and partners call for collective action



Speakers and panelists in no particular order : Zinhle Tyikwe; Ashleigh Theophanides; Steve Pore; Cas Coovadia; Dr Michael Masilela; Lt-General Tebello Mosikili; Karabo Rajuili; Athi Biko; Joseph Ngungi Mwangi; Michele Francis-Padayachee; Selle Moya; Bongani Bingwa and Tlalima Sandy alongside representatives from IMF, Interpol and Wits School of Governance. Images: Xenor Projects' Ottis Manyoba

**At a high-level side event hosted by the Consumer Goods Council of South Africa (CGCSA), industry leaders, law enforcement officials and governance specialists came together to underscore the urgency of tackling the expanding illicit economy in South Africa.**

The event held in Hyde Park on 4 November formed part of the broader agenda under the Business Unity South Africa-led B20 South Africa executive cycle, which positions business leadership at the heart of the global business forum for the G20. Delivering the closing remarks, CGCSA CEO Zinhle Tyikwe warned that the flow of illicit consumer goods is undermining both business and consumer trust. "The fight against illicit goods affects every South African from the manufacturer to the shop floor, and ultimately the consumer," she said. "We need everyone on board: government, industry, and the public. The illicit economy robs us all of jobs, tax revenue and a future built on fairness and integrity."

Her remarks resonated with findings from the Illicit Economy Report 2024, which highlights the proliferation of counterfeit and smuggled goods across fast-moving consumer sectors such as alcohol, tobacco and pharmaceuticals. Representing the Border Management Authority (BMA), Commissioner Dr Michael Masiapato outlined new technology-enabled measures to harden South Africa's borders, including

smart border gates, integrated cargo-tracking systems and intelligence-driven joint operations. He said: "Our goal is to ensure all goods entering the country are accounted for. We are moving from a reactive approach to a proactive,

technology-enabled border management system." The South African Police Service (SAPS) has also established a dedicated National Counterfeit Goods Unit to coordinate investigations into large-scale counterfeit networks. The unit sits within the National Joint Operational and Intelligence Structure (NATJOINTS), chaired by Lt-Gen Tebello Mosikili, and works closely with industry and international partners. "Counterfeit operations are not just about fake products, they are about organised crime and corruption.

Our mandate is to protect consumers, uphold the rule of law and restore trust in legitimate commerce," said Mosikili. Stakeholders at the event emphasised how digital tools can play a pivotal role in disrupting both illicit trade flows and the financial channels that enable them. Technologies such as AI-driven

transaction monitoring, blockchain-based supply-chain tracing, and real-time data-sharing platforms between industry, law-enforcement and regulators were identified as key to countering financial illicit flows. One

practitioner noted that illicit trade and financial crime are "two sides of the same coin," emphasising the need for stronger collaboration between banks, regulators and the retail sector to disrupt the funding streams that enable smuggling and counterfeiting. The event reflected the broader objectives of B20 South Africa, the official G20 dialogue platform for the global business community. Established in 2010, the B20 brings together business leaders from G20 and invited countries to shape policy on global economic and trade issues. Its 2025 theme "Inclusive Growth and Prosperity through Global Cooperation" underscores the importance of collaboration across sectors and geographies, and places emphasis on building resilient economies that leave no one behind. The CGCSA-led side event aligned

closely with this mission by focusing on integrity, transparency and fair competition. As one of the closing speakers, Scarlet Wannewetsch from the Basel Institute on Governance reminded attendees that collective action is not merely a slogan but a mechanism for change. "A transparent and ethical business environment is the foundation for sustainable growth. When government and business move together, corruption has no room to hide," she said. The illicit economy steals more than tax income, it drains jobs, erodes investment, diminishes consumer confidence and undermines the foundation of fair commerce. The CGCSA's message was clear: cooperation across business, government, enforcement and civil society is not optional it is essential. The CGCSA-hosted side session forms part of the broader B20 South Africa Summit process, anchored by Business Unity South Africa, which convenes global business and industry stakeholders in the lead-up to the G20. The forum's final papers will be submitted to G20 leaders to inform policy recommendations on trade, investment, industrial transformation, and integrity and compliance.

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**Civil-society voices also featured strongly. Corruption Watch reported receiving over 36 000 public submissions of corruption and illicit-goods incidents under their "Collective Eye" initiative, a clear indicator that citizen-reporting is becoming a vital pillar of transparency.**

**"The public's eyes and ears are crucial in exposing networks that thrive in secrecy," said Karabo Rajuili of Corruption Watch.**

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## Abomkhulu nogogo babe nosuku olumnandi eZoo



Image: Khonzaphi Mbele

Seniors heading to Johannesburg for a day connection and celebration

*Drieziek 4 and Ext 2's elderly experienced a memorable day on 31 October when they were treated to a special excursion to the Johannesburg Zoo - an initiative led by community leader Khonzaphi Mbele, to honour and celebrate the elderly in the area.*

The outing was filled with joy, laughter, music and storytelling - creating moments that the seniors will cherish for a long time. The event was made possible through the support of the City of Johannesburg's Cllr Lubabalo Mangwentsu, who sponsored with both transport and meals for the group. The day allowed the elders to relax, connect with one another and enjoy the

city's renowned attractions in a refreshing environment outside of their daily routines. Mbele told **OFN**: "Our elders are the roots of our community. They have raised families, built our neighbourhoods and guided us through some of our toughest times. We love and value them. We must take care of them. This day was about giving back, showing appreciation and reminding them how valued they are." Mbele also extended his thanks to the City of Johannesburg and Cllr Mangwentsu, for supporting community upliftment projects, adding that such programmes strengthen relationships across generations and help keep communities united and purpose-driven.

## Tjovitjo hosts impactful Breast Cancer Awareness event



Image: Mokgadi Monareng

Health advocates unite to educate and spread hope

*This vibrant event was held at Tjovitjo Ext 10, Mkhabela Café later last month by various stakeholders to educate the community about different types of cancer and the importance of early detection.*

Afia Tai in partnership with Sizanani Community Development Project, Stretford Clinic, Imbalenhle Clinic, Clean Touch, Charles Langa Organisation, Jozi Ihlomile, Isiqqi soMama, and other supporting stakeholders brought this event to Tjovitjo. Services offered on the day included Pap smears, HIV testing and counselling (HTS), family planning, PSA testing, vital signs checks, deworming, TB screening, primary health care and cancer education. Residents also took part in an energetic aerobics

session to promote physical fitness and healthy living. The event attracted a strong turnout, showing growing community participation and interest in health awareness initiatives. Nomsa Sibaya, Sizanani Community Development's project manager, applauded the collaboration and turnout. She said: "Our main goal was to raise awareness and empower the community with knowledge about cancer and overall health. The positive response shows that people are ready to take charge of their wellbeing." The event's success highlighted the power of partnerships in promoting wellness and inclusivity - with even a disability organisation participating in the activities.

## Jozi Bush's award win lifts Orange Farm



Jozi Bush

*Ext 1's Siyabulela "Jozi Bush" Ndzimeni is a dynamic South African artist celebrated for his powerful fusion of Afro-pop, reggae, hip hop and kwaito. On 1 November, he scooped a SAUMA Award for Best Traditional.*

With solid roots in both music and poetry, his creativity cuts across multiple platforms and performance spaces. Born in the Eastern Cape, he has invested years of dedication, growth and artistic refinement to evolve into the well-rounded talent he is today.

Ndzimeni began performing at local and regional events, sharpening his skills as both a musician and poet. He went on to expand his footprint in media - working as a radio presenter, music compiler and marketing manager at Unique FM, where his passion for creativity, storytelling and community merged

naturally. His talent has been showcased on major stages such as Word Fest, Macufe and Ilifa Lethu. He has also collected notable wins including Ekurhuleni Slam Poetry, King of the Streets and the Freestyle Battle at Hip Hop on the Grind. Ndzimela was further recognised with a nomination for Best Traditional Song at the South African Upcoming Musicians Awards to take place on 14 December. Known for blending raw truth with rhythm, he continues to be a voice driving culture and meaning through music - embodying the creative spirit of the Eastern Cape and the streets that raised him. He is currently working on his next full album, set for release in 2026 and will be performing across various events and festivals this festive season - from Gauteng to the Eastern Cape - continuing his rise as a force in South Africa's evolving music landscape.



Image: Sgt Shaan Motsapi

Stakeholders offer on-site support and services to residents

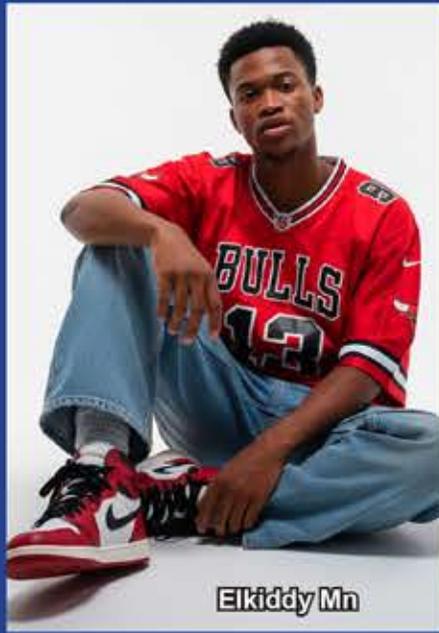
## TSWA DAAR Anti-Substance Abuse campaign brings hope to Orange Farm

*This initiative aimed to fight drug abuse, promote rehabilitation and encourage wellness within the community was hosted on 27 October in Ext 6a open grounds, under the theme TSWA DAAR.*

The event was attended by several key stakeholders, including SAPS, CPF, GTW, PCO, EMS, Africa Tikkun, Ke Moja, Sizanani Community Development Project, Saint Charles, GBV Brigades, Johannesburg Homeless Programme, Thuthuzela Care Centre, RHIZA Babuyile, Isizila se Mpilo and the Departments of Health, Education and Home Affairs. Organised by the Gauteng Provincial Government in partnership with the Department of Social Development, the campaign sought to raise awareness, promote rehabilitation and mobilise communities to take a strong stand against substance abuse. It also highlighted the importance of support systems for those affected by drug and alcohol dependency. Various departments and organisations offered on-site support and services. The Department of Health provided medical assessments, outpatient treatment, and counselling, while the Department of

Home Affairs and SAPS assisted residents with ID applications, document certification and affidavits. GTW and Patrollers ensured safety throughout the event, and NGOs registered community members for skills development and job placement opportunities. Several individuals courageously came forward to register for rehabilitation and transport was arranged to take them to recovery centres. Their willingness to take this step toward healing was met with applause and encouragement from both the community and officials. The MEC for Environmental Affairs, Ewan Botha, thanked all stakeholders and community members for their collective effort in making the event a success. The MEC also commended those who registered for rehabilitation, praising their courage and determination to turn their lives around. The event was widely regarded as a success, offering hope to the Orange Farm community. It reminded residents that government and partner organisations are committed to their well-being and to building a healthier, drug-free Gauteng where every person has a chance to a brighter future.

## Elkiddy Mn set to drop "Experience 3 (SIDE B)"



Elkiddy Mn

*This long-awaited mixtape, Experience 3 (SIDE B), will officially drop on 14 November, under Rehabilitation Records. This latest installment follows the success of SIDE A, which was released in June and is currently available across all major digital platforms. SIDE B features 5 fresh tracks, packed with dynamic collaborations from local stars Mbalenhle, Kayy Hadebe and S.V - each adding their own unique energy and flavour to the Experience series. Speaking to OFN, Elkiddy said: "We've put our hearts into this project for the culture - SIDE B is another level of growth, realness and pure experience. We believe this mixtape will strongly resonate with our fans and we would be happy to provide advance access before release." Visuals from the project will also be released in the coming weeks, which Elkiddy says they are excited to share for promotional use.*

For updates follow him on social media.

## Amapiano hit "Unovuyo" coming soon



SOJA

*Siyabonga Lindokuhle, popularly known as SOJA, is set to release his highly anticipated single "Unovuyo" on 6 December.*

Fans are urged to mark their calendars for a track brimming with energy, rhythm and the signature passion that has become Lindokuhle's hallmark. At just 19 -years-old, he is already making significant waves in the local music scene. Based in Ext 4, he began honing his musical talent at the age of 12, inspired by the pulse and excitement

of powerful beats - a love for music that continues to fuel his journey today. Earlier this year, on 15 May, he released "NGILILA" featuring Official Steezy, a single that highlighted his authentic Amapiano style and emotional depth. The track helped cement his growing reputation and expand his fanbase. Despite challenges and occasional underestimation, Lindokuhle remains steadfast. "People might underestimate or undermine my work, but I'm pushing forward. One day it'll all make sense," he said with determination. Looking ahead, he aims to collaborate with more artists and continue building a loyal following. With "Unovuyo," he hopes to connect even deeper with listeners and strengthen his presence in the Amapiano movement. Fans can look forward to sneak peeks, behind-the-scenes content and exciting updates as the release date draws near, signaling another milestone in the promising young artist's career. Follow him on social media for updates.

# Bridging Home and School: Why parents matter in learning... When learning happens in a child's home language, every kitchen, garden or bedtime story becomes a classroom!



Benedict Ncube and Dineo Kane are two mothers from Lenasia South (Image: FHI Design Agency)

Experts have long held that a key to reading success is not exclusive to the classroom, but in the everyday learning that happens at home.

This timely reminder of the role of community and parenting comes in the wake of the release of vital research on Mother Tongue reading benchmarks and trends in the Foundation phase, by the Department of Basic Education on Monday, 10 November. The Funda Uphumelele National Survey (FUNS) findings introduce the country's first national literacy benchmarks for African languages and provide data to track reading progress before learners reach Grade 4, a stage widely recognised as the make-or-break point for comprehension.

The research comes against the backdrop of a 2021 international PIRLS study, which found that 81% of Grade 4 learners in South Africa cannot read for meaning in any language.

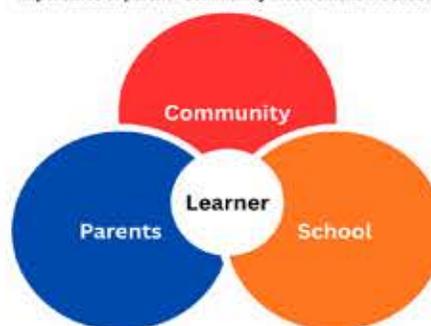
The link between school and home is key to learning, according to the United Nations International Children's Educational Fund's (UNICEF) Child Friendly Schools Manual

stated in 2009. It reads: "Learning does not begin when children walk through the school doors, nor does it end when they exit for the day. It takes place all the time and everywhere, throughout life. Children are engaged in a continuous, dynamic process of bridging the world of school and the world of home and community. They learn from both worlds, facilitated by teachers, family members, neighbors and others. Linking schools and communities is widely recognised as good pedagogic practice."

In South Africa, the 2016 Department of Basic Education's School - Parent - Community Engagement Framework reminds us that education is a shared journey, where children "bridge the world of school and the world of home and community." It explains that this bridge is largely influenced and sometimes restricted - by language. When children learn in a language different from the one spoken at home, they may find it hard to express ideas, grasp lessons, or connect school learning to everyday life. This doesn't reflect

a lack of ability or effort, but rather the limits imposed by language barriers.

Importance of parent - community involvement in schools



Source: DBE School - Parents - Community Engagement Framework

The framework, which is informed by the National Development Agenda 2030, positions parents and communities as essential, equal partners in education. Yet many caregivers remain excluded because of linguistic and cultural gaps. In many schools, the framework notes, "assimilation remains the dominant model", where one language, often English, dominates. "This creates distance between schools and the families they serve." One parent quoted in the framework reflects this divide: "Sometimes I tell my child to read for me, I can't read English nice. I don't know if he reads the truth or what." While parents may want to be involved, the system often doesn't speak their language, literally. The framework urges schools to build inclusive communication, for example, by providing interpreters at meetings, sending letters in multiple languages,

Benefits of improved school-parent community collaboration

Learners	Parents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have positive attitudes toward school</li> <li>• Higher expectations of self</li> <li>• Higher achievement, better attendance and more consistent classroom participation</li> <li>• In good relationships with teachers and experience less in-classroom behavior problems</li> <li>• Better quality learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater knowledge of education programs and how schools work</li> <li>• Higher expectations of children</li> <li>• Knowledge of how to be more supportive of children</li> <li>• Greater confidence about ways to help children learn</li> <li>• More positive views of teachers</li> <li>• Greater empowerment</li> </ul>
Teachers and school management	Communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater teaching effectiveness</li> <li>• Higher expectations of learners</li> <li>• Increased ability to understand family views and cultures</li> <li>• Greater appreciation of parent volunteers</li> <li>• Improved morale</li> <li>• Greater sense of community</li> <li>• Adapted from Carter S, 2003, p131</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater energy and education commitment through sustained and active involvement</li> <li>• Greater support of services through a comprehensive</li> <li>• Integrated approach</li> <li>• Increased ability to identify problems</li> <li>• Greater sense of community</li> </ul>

Source: DBE School - Parents - Community Engagement Framework

or using SMS (or WhatsApp) groups, community radio and home visits. These practical steps can strengthen trust and participation.

The framework's call aligns with the country's growing development policies, like Mother Tongue-based Bilingual Education (MTbBE), which advocates for learning that connects to the child's home language. When parents can understand school communications, discuss homework, and participate in school life in their own language, they become co-teachers. The framework captures this beautifully:

"Cooking soup for supper becomes a literacy, maths and life skills lesson vocabulary around ingredients, maths around quantities, science around cooking, and hygiene as a life skill." Every home can be a classroom when learning happens in the language of the heart.

Schools have been experimenting with bilingual learning materials, such as interactive isiZulu/English and Sesotho/

The six types of involvement

Communicating	Using appropriate strategies to facilitate genuine communication
Parenting	Helping families to establish home environments to support children as learners
Learning at home	Helping families to assist their children with homework and to recognise other learning-at-home opportunities
Decision making	Including parents, learners, and community members in the school decision-making process
Volunteering	Recruiting for and organising the school's volunteer programme
Partnering with the community	Identifying and integrating resources and services from the community

Source: DBE School - Parents - Community Engagement Framework

English calendars, not only to aid teaching but to help parents reinforce lessons at home, even if they have limited formal education.

"Collaborative relationships with the wider community strengthen the ability of schools and families to support learning outcomes," it states. This means involving faith groups, NGOs, traditional leaders, and local businesses in education, from sponsoring reading corners and mother-tongue storybooks to hosting family literacy events.

## Parents speak about the highs and lows of Mother-Tongue Learning

Across Orange Farm and Lenasia South, parents reveal divergent views on the language policy of learning - between preserving identity and preparing for opportunity.

The extension of Mother Tongue-based Bilingual Education (MTbBE) promises inclusion and understanding, but parents on the ground in Orange Farm and Lenasia South, are divided about how language impacts their children's learning, revealing the tension between preserving identity and preparing for opportunity.

The Mother Tongue-based Bilingual Education (MTbBE) policy is steering classrooms toward bilingual learning, using a child's home language as the foundation for comprehension and confidence.

The policy notes that English and Afrikaans learners have the benefit of MTbBE "from cradle to Grade 12".

The MTbBE approach is being rolled out incrementally this year, extending mother tongue instruction beyond Grade 3 into Grade 4. It initially focuses on subjects such as Mathematics, Natural Science, and Technology.

Dineo Kane, from Mooira Park Informal Settlement in Lenasia South, recently enrolled her 4-year-old son at Uyabonelela Day Care Centre, an informal ECD based in Hospital Hills 5 to 5. She said: "I really value Uyabonelela because it's not just about babysitting, the children are taught in English. As a Sesotho speaker, I feel it's

important for my child to learn English early, it gives him confidence and helps him to communicate with other learners. At home, we speak Sesotho to make sure that he does not forget his mother tongue." Benedict Ncube's 3-year-old attends the same day care. She sees early exposure to English as a tool for confidence and connection, believing it helps children navigate classrooms where multiple home languages meet. She said: "At home we speak Xitsonga, but at school my child learns in English. It helps because most of the children speak isiZulu or Sesotho, so English brings everyone together. I still want my child to know his mother tongue, but I believe English opens many doors. These days, English is needed everywhere, at varsity, during interviews and in the workplace, so it's important to know and understand it."

For some, the growing focus on mother-tongue instruction feels like a step backward because English is seen as the language of progress and opportunity. Julia Tshawe, mother of Amahle, a Grade 3 learner at Laus Deo Primary School in Orange Farm Ext 6a, feels her daughter is being held back. "I'm not happy with my child being taught in her mother tongue. I raised the issue during a parents' meeting, but it wasn't addressed. They told us it's the government's decision." Tshawe believes English is more inclusive and prepares learners for future

opportunities. "At universities and during job interviews, they must use English. Starting to learn English later delays them and makes it hard for them to express themselves." She also noted that learning at school often clashes with what children learn at home. "At home we count in English - one, two, three - but at school they count in the mother tongue. It confuses them. Even learners in Grades 4 to 7 still struggle with English. If they started earlier, it would be much better."

Puleng Mosikidi, whose daughter, Orefa, is in Grade R at the same school, said that the challenge was not only about which language is used, but about how well children are supported when learning in an unfamiliar language. "I would prefer that learners are taught in English because some children, like my daughter, take time to understand. At home, she speaks Tshivenda, but at school she learns in Sesotho, it's very hard." Mosikidi believes educators should offer extra support for struggling learners. "The teacher should start extra lessons for those who find Sesotho difficult. I'm planning to transfer my daughter because it's too hard for her," she said. Despite her frustrations, Puleng values her home language. "If there was a school that teaches in Tshivenda, I'd be happy. Mother tongue is important - when children visit their villages, they must be able to communicate. They should know where they come from to understand where

they're going." Some parents are finding a balance, embracing both English and home languages. For Khethiwe Khumalo, whose two-year-old son attends Raden Academy in Lenasia South Ext 1, bilingualism offers her child the best of both worlds. "I prefer my child to be taught in English because it helps him navigate life in today's world, while his mother tongue (Sepedi) keeps him connected to his roots. Learning both helps him grow confidently and gives him the tools to thrive anywhere." Her son started daycare aged 18 months and has had no difficulty learning in English, while speaking Sepedi about 60% of the time. "At his age, his mind is open to any language. As he grows, I believe he will understand both better," said Khumalo. She plans to enrol him in an English-medium primary school but remains committed to teaching him Sepedi at home. "English gives him opportunities, but Sepedi keeps him grounded. Language learning is a shared responsibility; the school does its part, and we as parents must do ours," said Khumalo.

• This article is part of a series that has been produced with the support of the



# SPORTS

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Image: James Shabangu  
THE FUTURE OF SPORT IS LOOKING BRIGHT: Well done to all the young coaches who show and level up at this skills session

## Dona's Mates' Coaches Workshop to groom future mentors

This impactful event hosted on 31 October at the Multi-Purpose Centre saw football legends Mike Ntombela, Floyd Mogale, Hendrick Modise and Tebogo Moloi amongst others, share nuggets of wisdom and insights with the coaches. These mentors are part of Dona's Mates Youth Development Project and deployed in ECD Centres, Primary and High Schools in Orange Farm, Lakeside, Drieziek, Finetown, Kanana Park, Weilers Farm and Migson Manor. They use sporting activities to teach life skills and positive behaviour among learners. In partnership with SSCNA and the National Youth Service (NYS), Don'a Mates is tackling youth

unemployment while restoring discipline, respect and positive values. Dona's Mates founder, James "Dona" Shabangu, said that their vision is to kill two birds with one stone by empowering youth through sports and creating employment. He told OFN: "With 26 years of experience, we know the power sports has to reduce violence, gangsterism and negative behaviour in our communities." He expressed deep gratitude to the legends, sponsors and partners who made this event a success. "SSCNA, Kosa-Kick Off Academy, SuperSport TV, Tshebedisano Burial Society, NYS, NYDA and everyone who supported this workshop," he added.

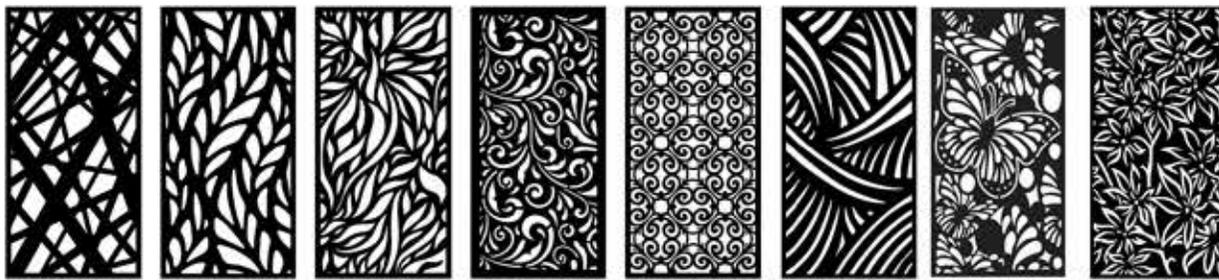
## Siyabonga Eyethu Mall: Kweneng FC grateful for much-deeded sponsorship



Image: Kweneng FC  
Abafana the boys rocking their new kit with pride!

This generous contribution will greatly benefit all Kweneng FC divisions - First Team, U11, U13, U15 and U17 - as they continue to nurture young talent and build a strong sporting community in Orange Farm. The Kweneng FC family extends heartfelt gratitude to Eyethu Orange Farm Mall for their sponsorship and ongoing support towards the development of their teams. The equipment was handed over on 17 October at Eyethu Mall, it included two full kits, ten soccer balls, training equipment and attire for the technical team. Kweneng FC's Inkabi Yama Feleb

told OFN: "As Kweneng FC, we are truly humbled and thankful for this support. It is through partnerships like this that community teams like ours are empowered to grow and achieve excellence both on and off the field." He added: "Siswele amazwi okubonga. Sengathi abakwenze kithi bangaqhubekela phambili, uNkulunkulu abaphe amandla, bekwenze futhi nakwabanye abaludingayo usizo. Lempahla izoba wusizo kakhulu kithi. Abadlali nabaphathi beqembu bajabule kakhulu. Siyabonga kakhulu. Phambili nge-Eyethu yomphakathi, phambili ngeKweneng FC."



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