

82 Montclair Road
Montclair
Durban
South Africa
4004

Tel: 469-0029
Fax: 469-0419

March 2005

Dear friends of Udobo

Our year started with a great, big bang!! From 8 children last year to 21 this year was a huge experience for all concerned – to quote one of the staff, “ This year we are seeing what Grade R is really all about! ” I wonder how they will respond when we have 40 – 60 children next year!!

As expected, most of the children arrived with very weak skills and very little understanding of the English language. However, it has once again been very exciting to see how quickly children learn and adapt. The skills have, in just over 6 weeks, improved greatly and most of the children are already familiarising themselves and experimenting with the new language. We have a very gender-even group, with 11 boys and 10 girls. All of them are absolutely delightful and a wonder to me – considering how extremely happy and contented children can be within some of the most frightening circumstances.

Our saddest news was the Umhlatuzana Informal Settlement that was razed to ground by a fire a couple of weeks ago - over 400 homes were lost. The families were moved to a ‘tent town’ of 3 marquee tents and 2 toilets to service the entire community. One of our little girls and her family lost their home causing quite severe emotional insecurity for a couple of weeks, but she is back to being a “happy chappy”. Unfortunately, the local community lodged a complaint that the tent town had been erected dangerously close to electrical power sources and the tents have now been moved to a plot of land close to Chatsworth, which means that this little family (and all the others) now faces the extra burden of another upheaval and travelling costs to get the child to and from school every day. So, we continue to pray and canvas for a vehicle of our own.

Other sad news is that Nombusa, my assistant of 8 months, has moved back to Stanger to be close to her mother and to seek employment closer to home. But God is faithful. He brought me a new assistant on the very day Nombusa handed in her resignation and this resulted in no disruption to the programme at all, except for a change to individual duties. Liz Spiller is now our chief chef and supervises outdoor play when she is available to do so. Mirriam Gugushe is now my assistant on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and Thobeka Hlakanyane comes in on Mondays and Tuesdays. She will have completed her Level 4 training by the end of June and will join my staff permanently at the beginning of July.

Our new Governing Body was elected. The following wonderful people have my eternal gratitude for making themselves available to serve the school in this way for the year of 2005:

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Chairman | Mr. Charles Rae |
| Secretary | Mrs. Dawn Rae |
| Treasurer | Mrs. Sheila August |
| Resident Minister | Rev. Graeme Mercer |
| Principal | Mrs. Kathy Mercer |
| Parent | Mrs. Ntombifuthi Issa |
| Parent | Mrs. Paulette Logan |

The Udobo School is funded through the Udobo ED-U Foundation, a Charitable Trust established for this purpose.

Fax & Telephone +27 (031) 469 0029

E-mail: mclr.mc@telkomsa.net

Fund-raising No. 031-161-NPO

Member of Community
Member of Community

Mr. Vusi Khumalo
Mrs. Sonja Botha

Our second term will start with our first birthday celebration, which will be celebrated as a Sunday morning service at the Montclair Methodist church on Sunday 17 April at 8H00. Please diarise the date so that you can be available to attend and meet 21 little souls who are being blessed by your support and sponsorship. More details will follow closer to the time.

Donations have continued to come in and bless the socks off us this term. We need to thank the Alice Bauman Trust for their very generous donation to the school to continue with the renovation of further classrooms. Speedprint, from the Montclair Mall donated an amazing photocopying machine and a laminating machine (both of which I thought were just pipe dreams). Mr Salmon from MP SALVAGE donated 40 crates for use in my storeroom and was not in the least intimidated by my request for many, many more. Karen Haynes Design Consultants donated 4 sets of symbols for the children's classroom and bathroom hooks and so many other helpful items.

The Maris Stella Girls of Grade 2 are once again adopting us as their community project and we look forward to seeing them all soon.

I need to thank the following individuals for their support and services, without which our school would not be the place that it is.

Tom Bennett for typing and storing all the programme preparation,

Rose Bennett for sewing shoe bags for each of the children's classroom hooks,

Isobel Goswell for organising a team of ladies to bake birthday cakes for the children,

Jimmy Mc Divvet for his continued work on maintenance on the school grounds,

Selva Rungan for his act of compassion in making a safety cover for the pets' corner after our guinea pig and several baby bunnies were kidnapped and killed by a neighbour's cat! It didn't even bother to demand a ransom!!!!

Barbara Kruger for very kindly using her precious administrative skills to help me re-organise my office and filing system.

I would never cope without you all.

In closing, I would like to inform you all of one fundraising effort this year. We will be selling "UDOBO GRATED CHEESE" in 1kg packs for the ridiculous price of only R25,00 per pack. So, if you are interested in purchasing this cheese, which can be frozen, please let me know.....hurry now, available only while stocks last!!!!!!!

And now, really in closing....it is my intention to connect the school to the internet from the office and therefore enable myself to send the newsletter by email as of next quarter. If you have an email address please could you forward it to me. I would greatly appreciate having my life simplified in this manner.

Once again, thank you for your support.

Proverbs 22:6

Always Fishing

KATHY MERCER
(Principal)

The Udobo School is funded through the Udobo ED-U Foundation, a Charitable Trust established for this purpose.

Fax & Telephone +27 (031) 469 0029

E-mail: mclr.mc@telkomsa.net

Fund-raising No. 031-161-NPO

A word of testimony from Mirriam Gugushe

My name is Mirriam. I am one of the assistant teachers at The Udobo School.

I believe that God led me to this school. When I arrived I felt that I was at home with my sisters. God has shown me His love in His people. Everyone tried to help me with everything I needed to know on my arrival. I like to work at Udobo – it is a pleasure to be there. At “my” school, I have noticed the love of God. Where God is, there is peace, love, communication and support. I like to work there – with all my heart.

I have learned so many new things. I would like to encourage God’s people to bring your children to Udobo, where they can learn to communicate with others in English. Don’t let your children down. Give them a good education from the start.

May God bless our principal and my colleagues. May many blessings still come to this school.

WHAT THE CHILDREN SAY.....

Jheonre: I like my school, because I wanna play here!!!

Dee-Ann: I like the toys, and the books, and the sandpit, and my friends.

Brittaney: My school is nice. My favourite place is the office with the pretty pictures on the walls. My favourite picture is the one with the farmhouse and the sheep. (*Made for Mrs Mercer by a past pupil of 2002*)

Carrenah: I like my school, because the children are listening. I also have lots of friends.

Bubonke: I want to be at my school, because I love my school too much.

Cebo: My school is cool. I like the junglegym, and the motorbikes and the skateboards.

Asif: I like to play here and I love the food, and I also like to draw.

The Udobo School is funded through the Udobo ED-U Foundation, a Charitable Trust established for this purpose.

Fax & Telephone +27 (031) 469 0029

E-mail: mclr.mc@telkomsa.net

Fund-raising No. 031-161-NPO

Lindo: I like my school because I am eating and I am playing.
I like the Udobo School.

Sakhi: I like the food. And my teacher is teaching me and I like playing here.

Sechaba: I like eating, I like cutting, I like praying.