

Issue:

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Crossroads Families



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July: a winter of floods and repairs

We are halfway through our third winter at Crossroads Families. A very cold winter that brought the largest flood and devastation in the history of our town, Bonnievale. All around us, the damage and loss of property were astronomically high. Orchards and fields were washed away, soil and all. Hundreds of people were left homeless and lost everything.

The Crossroads boys' home is almost a kilometre from the river, but even we were affected by the floodwaters of the Breede River. We are grateful that we suffered no losses, except for a plot that was completely flooded and remained under a layer of mud for weeks. When the flood warning was issued, we thought we were safe and far enough from the river, but later that night we had to evacuate the house and take the boys to a safe place. Only I stayed behind to make sure our property was protected.

The water rose until the lower third of our house was in the water, but fortunately the foundations are fairly high, and no water entered the house. The next morning the boys could return, and a few days later we could begin the clean-up.





Second School Term: Achievements & Challenges

Our second school term has been completed, and we can proudly say that most of our 13 children came home with good report cards. Unfortunately, three of the children did not pass the exam. Mathematics and English are weak points for most of them. The backgrounds they come from naturally have a big influence on their self-image and academic performance.

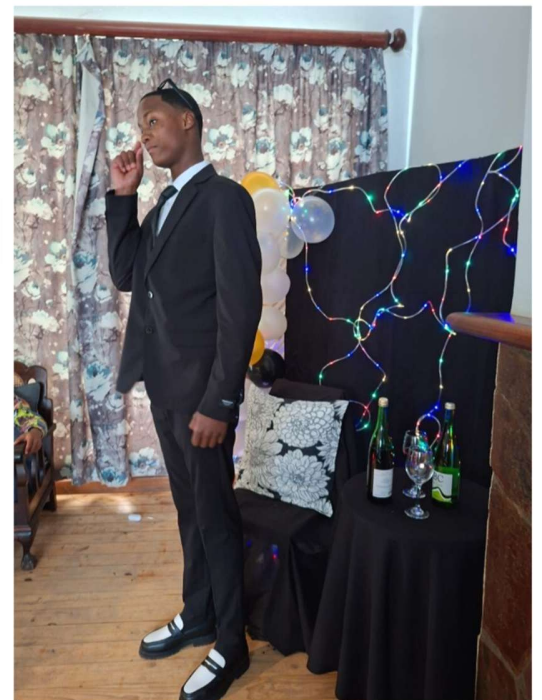
A major role of Crossroads Families is to teach the children self-worth, and that they should not allow their past or circumstances to become obstacles but rather stepping stones to reach greater heights. We teach the children that you cannot always determine the direction of the wind, but you *can* set your sails to travel with the wind in the right direction.

Beogan Pietersen: a year full of hope

Our second school graduate, Beogan Pietersen, had his final-year farewell. At the end of this year, Beogan will complete his school career at Jakes Gerwel Technical School. He moved into the Crossroads Families boys' home at the beginning of 2024.

Beogan had never been enrolled in a school, and his birth had never been registered. A benefactor in the town helped him to enter a school for the very first time at the age of 15. Despite the enormous disadvantage he started with, he is doing exceptionally well at school. We are excited with him about the possibilities that next year may hold.

For Beogan, it is still unbelievable that he—who once had no hope of education or a future—now stands on the threshold of completing his school career. He never imagined he would attend a final-year farewell dressed in a smart suit, or that he would be able to enter the workforce with a school qualification behind his name.





Winter Holiday:

Staying home and doing repairs

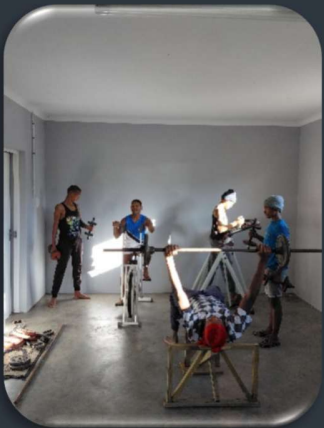
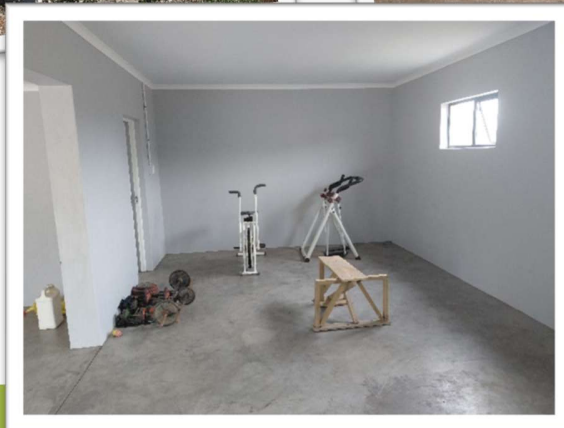
The school holiday was rather quiet. Usually, we take the children on day trips to the sea, or go on a hiking trail, or have a picnic in the mountains.



However, with the winter holiday we decided to stay home. With diesel prices shooting up worldwide, and the bitter cold winter weather, our enthusiasm for outings was a bit dampened. At the boys' home we worked in the garden and did some maintenance on the house. It is always good to develop skills and build pride in what we do. We also believe in doing what you can yourself, without paying someone else for something you are able to do on your own.

New Double Garage: Gym & Recreation Room

We are very happy and grateful for the extension to our old garage that has now been completed. Thanks to a sponsor who gave us a donation, the single garage could be converted into a double garage. The garage will be used to store our bus, but also as a gym and playroom for the boys. A private donor gifted us a whole collection of gym equipment. The boys, especially the older ones, are very excited about having their own private gym and they faithfully exercise every evening.



Girls'Home: a new Study & Relaxation Room

We were also able last year to convert the old garage at the girls' home into a study and relaxation room with a donation from one of our sponsors. The girls' home is very small, and the extra space makes a big difference for the girls, especially for their studies.



New Boys: Nikeewin & Ashwin

We welcomed a new boy: Nikeewin Mattheys came to us for help after he was put out of the house where he had been living. He comes from a single-parent household with no stable income. After three months he was reunited with his grandparents, and he now lives with them again.

Soon after Nikeewin left, we received another new application. Ashwin Baadjies lives with his mother in the informal settlement. His mother has no steady job or income. As in so many cases, parents then fall into alcohol and drug addiction, and little to no attention is given to the children. Ashwin shows potential to make something of his life if he is given the opportunity. We are excited to be part of the new path that has now become possible for him.



Mandela Day: Treats and Gratitude

On Mandela Day we were visited by one of our local dairy factories, and we were blessed with many treats — from juices to butter and cheese. We would also like to take this opportunity to say a heartfelt thank you to each one of our sponsors. Without you, we would not have been able to give these children the safe home that we are now able to provide. Every donation and sponsorship, whether big or small, is precious to us and makes a huge difference in our lives and in the lives of the children. We believe that what is sown into the lives of these children will not only have an impact on their own lives, but that the change in their character and outlook will also become a legacy for their descendants.

May each one of our sponsors receive the blessing that is due to you.

A Word of Thanks

We would like to thank each person who walks this journey with us. Your support, prayers, donations, and involvement make it possible for us to create a safe, loving space for our children. Every handshake, every gesture, every bit of help contributes to a greater future for them. We appreciate you more than words can express, and we are sincerely grateful that you are part of the Crossroads Families community.