



**Cheshire Homes - Durban
improving the lives of children**

I would like to thank the organizers of this conference for inviting Cheshire Homes to Germany and develop a new acquaintance and for giving me the opportunity to think and learn with all of you who have come together to address some of the key issues in ECD today.

Historical background

- Whilst race determined social status, it also entrenched worlds of difference between those living in rural or urban communities, those with and without access to education, those with and without decent housing and sufficient food, those with and without opportunities for fulfillment of potential those with and without recognition or respect for their dignity and humanity. For black disable children, the commonly experienced difficulties of social exclusion and marginalization, associated with their impairment has been compounded by the oppression experienced as result of their race. It is not possible to understand the situation of disable children in South Africa without placing it in the context of that history.

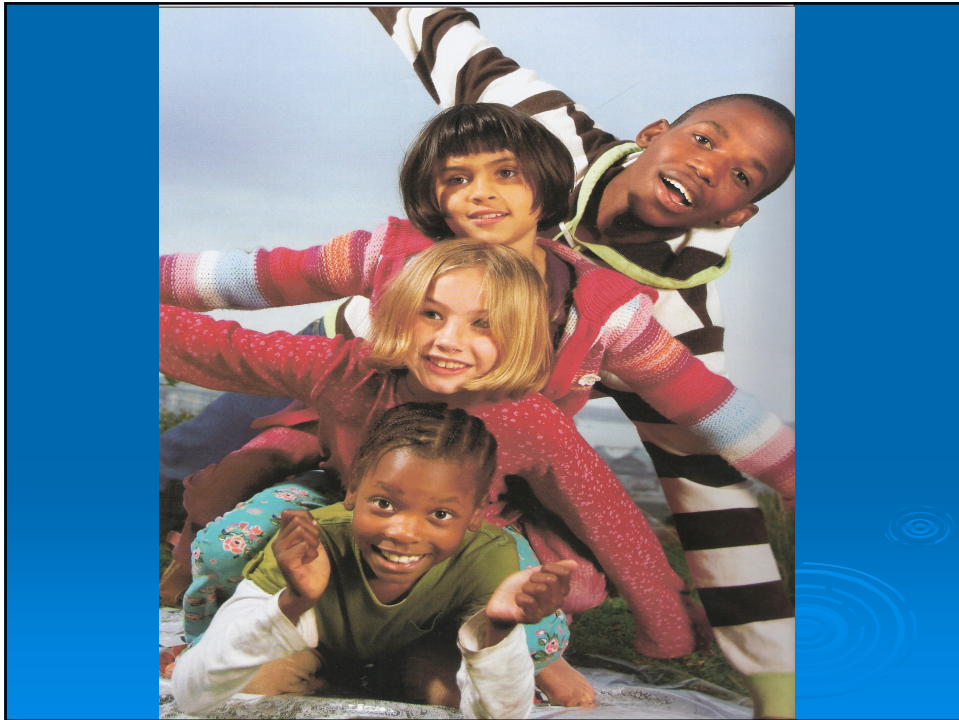
1996 Constitution:

Establishes the rights of all citizens to basic education; outlaws any discrimination against any person on any grounds.

South Africa School Act (Act 84 of 1996): public schools must

- Admit learners and serve their educational needs without unfairly discriminating in any way
- August 1999: Consultative paper on special education NO1 Building an inclusive education and training system
- Education White Paper 6 - 2001 - Gazetted in terms of the National Education Policy Act (ACT 27 OF 1996) PROVIDES Education and the framework for Inclusive Training System
- National Curriculum Statement 6th October 2003
- Un Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities ratified of endorsed bu the Parliament of South Africa On 5 June 2007

All of the international laws and conventions listed above compel countries including South Africa to recognize the right of persons with disabilities to education without discrimination. The UN Convention compels countries to ensure an Inclusive education system al all levels



In the human life cycle the early childhood phase from birth to 9 years old is considered to be the most crucial phase for every human being. Giving children the best start in life insures them good health, proper nutrition and early learning. The well being of children depends on the ability of families to function effectively. Children need to grow up in a nurturing and secure facility that can ensure their development, protection, survival and participation in family and social life. These imperatives work best together to lay the foundation for life. It is also important that the capacity of parents be strengthened and supported, to give their children the best possible start in life.

We therefore believe that all children should be provided with programmes that are relevant, appropriate and suitable to their capacity and circumstances and that such intervention should be as early as possible.

Keeping in mind that none of our programmes are a “stand alone service”, each being in synergy with others to compliment and provide support so they are sustainable using our “richest resource” is our staff.

SCDIFA RESIDENTIAL HOME - provides care and rehabilitation for children with profound disabilities. It presently accommodates 39 children who according to our license from the Department of Health are termed 'ineducable' and 'non-trainable'. Over the years the children in our care began to show progress in language development, developing independence, memory, concentration, and a more socially acceptable behaviour.

Keeping in mind the above positive change the Board of Management decided to diversify its programmes according to the needs of the children and the community ensuring the continued progress of the children by starting our present:

EDUCARE DAY CLINIC

- where the focus is on a developmentally appropriate curriculum and emphasis is placed on what the child can do and what he/she can learn. Time does not control the learning process and the children are able to develop at their own pace. The learning areas are arranged in a way that the children can move around freely and have a choice of activities. These choices help children make decisions, explore and learn through play in a structured way.



EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND INTERVENTION

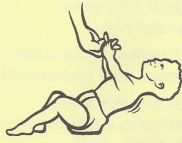
Introduction

It is well established scientifically that the early years are critical in the formation of intelligence, personality and social behavior AND THAT THE EFFECTS OF EARLY NEGLECT CAN BE CUMULATIVE.



- We believe that the care and development of young children must be the foundation of social relations. It is therefore important to take cognisance of the process by which young children, from birth to nine years, grow and develop. During this time they thrive physically, mentally, socially, intellectually, and morally. The provisioning of *Early Childhood Development* includes a variety of strategies, settings and a wide range of services directed at helping families and communities to meet the needs of children in their most formative years. Keeping in mind the above we initiated a Prevention Early Identification and Intervention Programme at two Primary Health Clinics run by the local authority. The lack of knowledge in Early Identification and Intervention prevents children from being identified timeously for intervention. Lack of identification can compound the child's need over an extended period of time and later manifests in behavioural difficulties, low self esteem, early drop out at school learning disabilities, and of course a range of disabilities. Therefore we believe that early identification and intervention is particularly important in the early years where most potential damage can be avoided. The Clinics have routine screening programmes for children when they come in for immunisation with their parents being present. The personnel at the Clinic interview them on the child's development to determine the milestones. However having identified problems there was no follow up mechanism in place.
- We have developed an assessment programme for all children from 0-6 years based on holistic development. Intervention is either instituted either through referral to our day clinic for implementation of an individualised educational plan (I.E.P) or referrals to other agencies to develop the child to his/her maximum potential. We have over the years through our work, realised that many young children are at risk because their developmental needs cannot be adequately provided for from the limited resources available within the community.

3 MONTHS OLD



Pulls to sit
Head falls back
a little



Turns head from
side to side to
follow objects
and sounds.
Makes sounds



Brings hands
together
Plays with fingers
Loud noises
frighten baby



6 MONTHS OLD



Sits with support
Turns to mums voice
Smiling baby says A-
A, A, Ma, Goo
Holds Bottle



Can lie on back
Lifts legs and plays
with feet
Laughs



Screams when
upset
Lies on tummy
Pushes up on
straight arms -



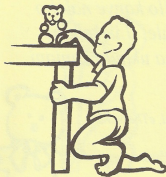
9 MONTHS OLD



Sits
Cup in one hand,
bottle in other hand
Baby tries to talk
when spoken to



Attempts to crawl
says Papa, Mama,
Agaga
Rakes through toys



Pulls to stand
Reaches for objects
in container, grasps
objects and throws
objects



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