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# *SAKHA ISIZWE DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION*

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## PARENTING PROGRAMME EVALUATION

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**SAKHA SIZWE  
DEVELOPMENT  
ORGANISATION**





## UCT KNOWLEDGE CO-OP

The UCT Knowledge Co-op facilitated this collaborative project between Sakha Isizwe Development Organisation and The University of Cape Town.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **AIMS OF EVALUATION**

This evaluation sought to ascertain the effectiveness of Sakha Isizwe Development Organisation's parenting programme and determine whether Sakha Isizwe Development Organisation was successful in achieving its objective of:

- Positively influencing the caregivers' parenting styles and attitudes.
- Improving the relationships between caregivers and their children.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF EVALUATION**

Prior research has revealed that disadvantaged communities, such as Delft, often face many challenges such as unemployment, violence, substance abuse, gangsterism and poor infrastructure. Parenting is incredibly challenging, however, when compounded by multiple environmental stressors and a lack of support structures, reactive parenting practices may arise to the detriment of children. This evaluation is essential as the data retrieved from this research will assist Sakha Isizwe Development Organisation with improving their parenting programme and designing relevant and effective strategies that will assist in achieving their desired objectives as mentioned prior.

### **DATA COLLECTION METHOD**

The research participants comprised 20 female parents/caregivers who were a mixture of biological parents and social parents/caregivers, such as grandmothers and aunts. These parents/caregivers were randomly selected from Sakha Isizwe Development Organisation's parenting programme enrolment database which consisted of 82 parents in total. They all ranged in age, race, marital status and educational attainment. The data was retrieved using a semi-structured interview guide wherein the participants were asked questions in accordance to the research aims and took place telephonically.

## **PARENTING PROGRAMME EVALUATION FINDINGS**

This section contains the findings from the interviews conducted where the researcher asked the participants questions about Sakha Isizwe Development Organisation's parenting programme to ascertain their perceptions and experiences in order to assist Sakha Isizwe Development Organisation in gauging the success of their parenting programme and to use the results to improve their programme. Aspects of the programme that were evaluated included the facilitators, programme content and the administration.

### ***Programme Facilitators***

Concerning their experiences with the programme facilitators, the participants provided an overwhelming number of positive responses. The participants mentioned the facilitators' receptive demeanor which had made them feel comfortable enough to talk openly and participate in the classes. Additionally, the facilitators were incredibly competent, passionate, and were rarely ever stationary whilst teaching. Lastly, participants stated that the facilitators were selfless and helpful, even providing support outside of the classroom setting.

Some of the responses provided by the participants can be found below:

*Oh, they were very nice. They gave you that platform to discuss how the workshop were and everything and they like to, they were open and you didn't even feel shy because they told you you don't need to be shy, afraid or whatever, you can open up because everything that happens and that we talk about is gonna stay there, it's gonna be confidential, it's not gonna go outside of that particular meeting or discussion.*

*Uhm...they were fun, the way they did it they did it very like, they captured my attention man. I didn't want to miss a word they were saying and they just, they were active also when they talk they don't just stand still and talk they do actions, they interact very good for me and that's what made it very interesting for me not to lose focus.*

## ***Administration***

Administration, in this research study, primarily comprised aspects concerning the venue, transport and the convenience of the programme. Regarding the suitability of the venues, all participants stated that the venue was located at a nearby school and was clean, comfortable, spacious, conducive to learning and safe, apart from a participant who expressed concern over child safety at one of the venues. Additionally, most of the participants were satisfied with how convenient and accessible the venue was. However, a couple of participants stated that the provision of taxi fare was not consistent.

Some of the responses provided by the participants can be found below

*Yes, and the temperature was nice and cool and I was like 'I'm not gonna sit in a place that's hot' because I get very hot. I can't stay in closed place where there's lot of people. It was in the hall ja it was spacious, and you could move around also that's why I say that they were very active cause we would sit in a half moon and then they would come in the half moon and talk and go walk around there so it was actually lovely*

*Yes. It seemed as if you were going to a spa, you sit and relax and you are even served breakfast, you don't have to do anything. They just spoil you, the only thing you do is sit there and listen and interact in the programme.*

As formerly mentioned, one participant identified the steep staircase at one of the venues which children frequently played on as a safety hazard.

*The stairways were a bit inconvenient and risk because of the kids, some of them went up and down so they could just slip and fall. One of the kids almost fall; he fell, and his aunt grabbed him... Maybe find another venue or maybe on the floors below. Instead of using upstairs venue they could use downstairs just so that the kids are safe.*

Additionally, one participant expressed difficulty focusing in the class on account of the presence of children which was distracting as they were engaged in play and thus frequently made noise. The participant then suggested that Sakha Isizwe Development Organisation designate a room for the children to play in while the parents/caregivers attend the classes.

*Yes. A bit distracting...Yes, it was comfortable, only that some mothers brought their children with. Maybe they can make a playroom for the children next time.*

### ***Perceived effects of programme***

Findings revealed that the participants displayed a change in their parenting practices since enrolment. They reported being more emotionally available for their children by listening, communicating better and spending more quality time with their children. Additionally, they were more patient and present with their children which ultimately resulted in their children feeling more comfortable opening up. They also mentioned being more insightful into aspects such as child development, relationships and alternative discipline which they stated made them realise that the manner in which they had reared their children was not the best, thus encouraged them to alter their former practices.

Some of the responses provided by the participants can be found below

*Before I came to the program I was also helping them with their studies but when they came I realized I wasn't doing so good with the grandchildren for sitting with them only for 1 day in a month or one day in a week; I must sit with them every day and be patient with them. When my 5 year grandchild when she couldn't read properly I would tell her she was stupid and so on but they teach us to be patient with the child, sit with them and make them understand counting and reading. They taught me to be patient with my grandchildren no matter what and understand that they won't always know what I know, it takes time because their brains are smaller than mine. They made me understand their mindset and be patient with them and help them in every way I can, expressing love and showing I care.*

*Before I came to Sakha I used to physically punish kids but when I came to Sakha Isizwe it is then I realised that physically beating a child is not good, you are gonna hurt the child or at the end of the day that child will become criminal and also you will drive them away from you. At the end of the day they are not going to trust you. It's not worth it and it's not right even in God's eyes. So I can say I learnt a lot from Sakha Isizwe.*

## SUGGESTIONS

Concerning feedback related to suggestions aimed at improving Sakha Isizwe Development Organisation's parenting programme, the participants requested for the provision of extra learning materials, food parcels and consistent transport fare. Additionally, as mentioned prior, designating a playroom for the children to occupy themselves whilst parents/caregivers attend classes and relocating venues to lower levels for the safety of the children.

*I think for the parents to do the activities they can hand out, if they can hand out an incentive like material for the children to do the activities... if they can maybe sandwiches or a small parcel for the kids.*

*The same. More activities they can learn with the parents at the workshops and maybe more days they can add for the parents and the children.*

Based on the responses provided by the participants, Sakha Isizwe Development Organisation's parenting programme was well received as the attendees cited positive experiences regarding various aspects such as the competent and passionate facilitators, the clean and comfortable venues, and the programme's convenience with regards to the operating days and time. Additionally, the programme content was found to be intriguing, helpful and relevant as they were able to apply the knowledge into their daily lives. Lastly, the findings of this research have demonstrated that Sakha Isizwe Development Organisation has been successful in fulfilling its objective of effectively addressing reactive parenting practices and improving the quality of parent/caregiver-child relationships. This was evident by the change in the parenting practices of the attendees as they had discarded their former practices for proactive practices such as non-punitive discipline methods, bi-directional communication and increased in quality time which made the participants children more comfortable opening up thus strengthened their relationships.



## **CONCLUSION**

Findings revealed that Sakha Isizwe Development Organisation had a positive impact on the participants parenting styles and parent-child relationships. Prior to enrolment on the parenting programme, several participants mentioned that they were incredibly impatient towards their children as they had often expressed frustration towards their children's slow pace whilst performing tasks and grasping concepts. The parenting programme had provided the participants with insight into the concept of child development and how adults' and children's' mental and physical capabilities differ thus encouraging the participants to practice patience and repetition with their children.

Additionally, participants were encouraged to be more flexible towards their children by providing them with freedom to explore, being receptive to their children's input, employing a bi-directional approach towards communication, which some stated that they had failed to do prior to enrolment. The participants were also exposed to alternative, more responsive, correction techniques such as 'time-out' which inspired them to trade in their former punitive measures. Moreover, on account of the various stressors parents/caregivers had faced alongside their lack of knowledge regarding child development, through Sakha Isizwe Development Organisation, the participants had started to play a more present role in their children's lives. Initially the participants mentioned that they were completely absorbed in their own lives and merely provided their children with necessities such as food and failed to support them emotionally by displaying affection and spending quality time with them. Since enrollment to the programme, the participants mentioned being more dedicated and spending more time playing with their children and assisting them with homework which they did not do prior enrollment. Additionally, many participants mentioned not communicating with their children which this programme encouraged thus the participants take more time to listen to their children which brought them closer together.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations provided by the 20 research participants, who were also programme attendees, and the researcher are directed at improving Sakha Isizwe Development Organisation's parenting programme.

### **Recommendations from research participants:**

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the participants requested that Sakha Isizwe Development Organisation:

- increase the number of days that the parenting programme operated;
- designate a playroom or safe area for the children to play in whilst parents/caregivers attend classes;
- provide food parcels as well as consistent transport money;
- providing additional learning materials to do activities with their children at home;
- And lastly, the participants would like Sakha Isizwe Development Organisation to consider the inclusion of programmes related to unemployment, sex education, substance abuse, sexual abuse and mental health to work in conjunction with the parenting programme in the future as they believe that these programmes will provide additional support to them as parents/caregivers.

### **Recommendations from researcher:**

The following findings were derived from another portion of the research which aimed to gauge factors which influenced parenting styles which the researcher felt was important and relevant information for Sakha Isizwe Development Organisation. The researcher would like Sakha Isizwe Development Organisation to consider these suggestions in the future when they have the capacity and funds to pursue these ventures.

- Findings revealed that most of the participants had a harsh upbringing which resulted in strained familial relationships. This highlights the need for interventions directed at familial reconciliation and therapy for the sake of the participants and their children.
- As child temperament was identified as the second most prominent factor influencing parenting styles, with adolescent children exhibiting troublesome behaviour, it is suggested that Sakha Isizwe Development Organisation consider establishing programmes directed

at assisting parents/caregivers of troubled adolescents and addressing the absent father phenomenon.

- The struggle to recruit fathers into the research process alongside the dismal numbers of fathers enrolled in Sakha Sizwe Development Organisation's parenting programme has highlighted the need for tactics directed at improving paternal participation in parenting interventions, such as small monetary incentives and access to basic goods.

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