



Report on International Mandela Day

'It is in your hands'

With all the challenges, conflict, poverty, food insecurity and climate change having both a local as well as global impact, it is fitting that the call to action for International Mandela Day is 'it's in your hands'. It is in our hands to be the change and make a difference in whatever small way we can. This is exactly what took place at the two Vuya Foundation creches – Oppie Koppie and New Rest Valley. We also added the theme of 'Gratitude and Forgiveness' that, being part of Madiba's legacy to us.

At both creches, the children invited a grandparent to spend the morning with them at the creche.

New Rest Valley Creche:

On the morning of 18 July 2023, we were greeted by showers aplenty. Despite the weather seventy-two very proud grandparents arrived at the creche. They were treated to pancakes, warm coffee, and donuts before the program for the morning started.

The program included speakers, music, and entertainment whereafter lunch was served. Speakers included the social worker from the local ACVV (Afrikaanse Christelike Vroue Vereeniging) who spoke on the rights of the elderly. This was an eye-opener as most aren't aware of the legal standing of older people.

The other two speakers, Deon Snyman of the Goedgedacht Trust and our very own founder Mercia Isaacs spoke into the theme of Gratitude and Forgiveness. Deon, as a 'white' South African, told of his gratitude to Madiba who after his incarceration walked to freedom and forgave his perpetrators. Deon asked for forgiveness from those who were there and told how he is trying to do better for this community.

Mercia brought it all together in her usual profound way with the analogy of forgiveness being like a spoon of honey to the soul whereas resentment is like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die. This together with the gratefulness of being able to be together rounded off the morning of great fellowship.

Everyone was treated to a warm two-course meal and a goodie bag to take home. Grandparents also visited the children in their classrooms and were amazed at what they had done in this short time.

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Oppie Koppie Creche:

Here too the day was overcast but it did not prevent ninety grandparents from coming to school. Seventy-one grannies and nine grandpas who were so overwhelmed by the women, they sat at the back of the group!

The staff welcomed the guests and a motivational talk around 'It's in your hands' was done by Wilhelmina Baird, the Principal. The children sang and recited poems. Thereafter the teachers brought the children to their grandparents where they massaged their hands as a token of their gratitude for all they do for them. For some of these oldies it was quite a moving experience.

After this it was game time! Games were played in groups and someone in each group had to sing, dance, recite a poem or tell a story. Great fun was had by all – so much fun that they want to come back as they didn't know Oppie Koppie was such a lovely place!

Everyone was treated to a warm meal with dessert and a goodie bag. Another comment was that it is the first time they celebrated Mandela Day.



The day was truly a blessing, and we are grateful to our supporters and sponsors for their generosity to our children and elders.

Mercia Isaacs

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