

## Minister Dlamini Launches Isibindi Programme

The HIV/AIDS epidemic has forced many children to take on adult responsibilities. They care for dying parents, look after younger siblings, learn to cook and clean. Playing is vital for child's development and is often compromised as children become parents to younger siblings. The Ivy Matsepe Cassaburi CNDC was established in Mafube Municipality, Frankfort for this purpose and it has its unique model encompassing the three services that complement each other to the needy and vulnerable children at Phomolong informal settlement.

The three services include the CNDC run by the six women who were previously unemployed, Isibindi Child and Youth care programme which was launched as the child and youth care programme initiative that deploys trained community-based child and youth care workers doing an outreach programme that provides care, protection and developmental support to vulnerable children and child- and youth headed families. 26 youth care workers were recruited within the area and trained to care for children at the safe park situated in one area as the CNDC.

About 313 destitute children and OVC are offered meals after school at the CNDC before they start their homework and computer classes offered by the Isibindi Child and Youth care workers.



Ministers of Social Development and Women, Me Bathabile Dlamini, Me Susan Shabangu, MEC Social Development Me Sisi Ntombela and Acting Executive Manager: Community Development Mr Lethoteng

The Child and Youth care workers are responsible for making sure that each child is given individual attention on different activities rendered after school until 16:30 before they are sent to their homes. The children who come to the Safe Park have different needs and are therefore offered various programmes at the centre to ensure that each child get the correct stimulation. The types of programs include; playing in the play area, playing with educational toys to assist with stimulation of their fine muscle development, bicycle riding Activities, cultural activities, computer training and supervised playing at the safe park, those who attend school are also assisted with their home-work. Children who are neglected by parents are also referred to the clinic when they are sick or escorted to their homes to assess their situation in order to be referred to the social workers for intervention

The Safe Park concept seeks to remedy this reality for children by providing them with the time and place to play, within the protective circle of trained child and youth care workers. National Association

of Child Care Workers (NACCW) has developed the Safe Park which is currently being replicated across South Africa by over 20 organisations.

The Free State Department of Social Development started rolling out the programme last year and it has a total of 12 safe parks, 3 of which are formal and the rest are informal. Two hundred and twenty two (222) child and youth care workers received training from the department are currently working and receiving The Department of Social Development is responsible for the funding of the Safepark from the Isibindi funding stipends on a monthly basis.

On the 3rd of December 2014, the Minister for Social Development, Me Bathabile Dlamini together with the Minister for Women, Children and People with disabilities, Me Susan Shabangu, MEC for Social Development, Me Sisi Ntombela and the patron for the National Association of Child and Youth Care Workers (NACCW) Dr Don Mattera officially launched the Isibindi programme and re-launched the Ivy Matsepe Cassaburi CNDC in Frankfort, Fezile Dabi District.