

## SECOND CHANCE

On Monday the 13th April 2015, 5 children were escorted to school by the HOD for Social Development Me, Matilda Gasela and other senior officials from the Department of Education. The



Free State department of Social development has embarked on a programme to reunite street children with their families and reintegrate them into society.

school during the second school term. done with the consent of their parents guardians.

In this pilot project which mainly focuses on the Motheo District, 10 children were taken off the streets interviewed by Social Workers and assessed their individual situations. Nine of them were taken back to

Me Mathilda Gasela, Me Bukelwa Qwelane; Department of Education and Me Phajane with the four new learners of Tawana

This was and or their

These are ordinary children who were to be faced with a range of challenges unfavourable circumstances at their homes which led them to seek refuge on the streets. Some of these children are orphans with no immediate families to take care of them, others come from child-headed families where putting food on the table is a daily struggle.

unfortunate and

According to Me Makgotso Moseitlhe, the Senior Manager: Children section at Social Development - there are about 105 children living on the streets in the five districts of the province.

“Children are not supposed to live on the streets, they should live and be cared for in a safe and loving home. That is why we have embarked on an exercise to take them off the streets and reunite them with their families”, said Moseitlhe.

The children were taken on a two week camp in Tweeling, the purpose of this camp was to rehabilitate them so that when the time comes for them to go to school they will be able to cope with the day to day activities that other children partake in.

The children were put under a series of tests to check if they were using any substances such as drugs and alcohol. If anything was found, they were rehabilitated in order to detox them. The camp also assisted the children to get into the habit of doing things in an orderly manner. Life on the streets is not structured and these children are used to doing whatever they want whenever it suits them. This was going to be a challenge at school that’s why they were trained using a structured approach in everything they did at the camp.

The children will be attending school at Tawana Primary School in Thaba Nchu and the Moroka Hostel will be their new home.

Me. Gasela had a brief meeting with some of the educators and the management of the school. She appealed to them to treat these children with the same amount of love and respect that they treat other children in the school. She emphasized that it is through the examples from the teachers that the other learners will learn to accept and welcome these children.

Me Gasela also spoke to the five boys and encouraged them to focus on their school work and use this opportunity that has been awarded to them to the best of their ability. “I want to come back

here in a few months and get positive feedback about you boys, please don't disappoint me, each and every one of you is special and the Department of Social Development is behind you all the way", said Gasela.



The children show uniform