

## **The Granny Programme**

**An innovative ECD programme of**

**Jo'burg Child Welfare**

**Funded by BMZ**



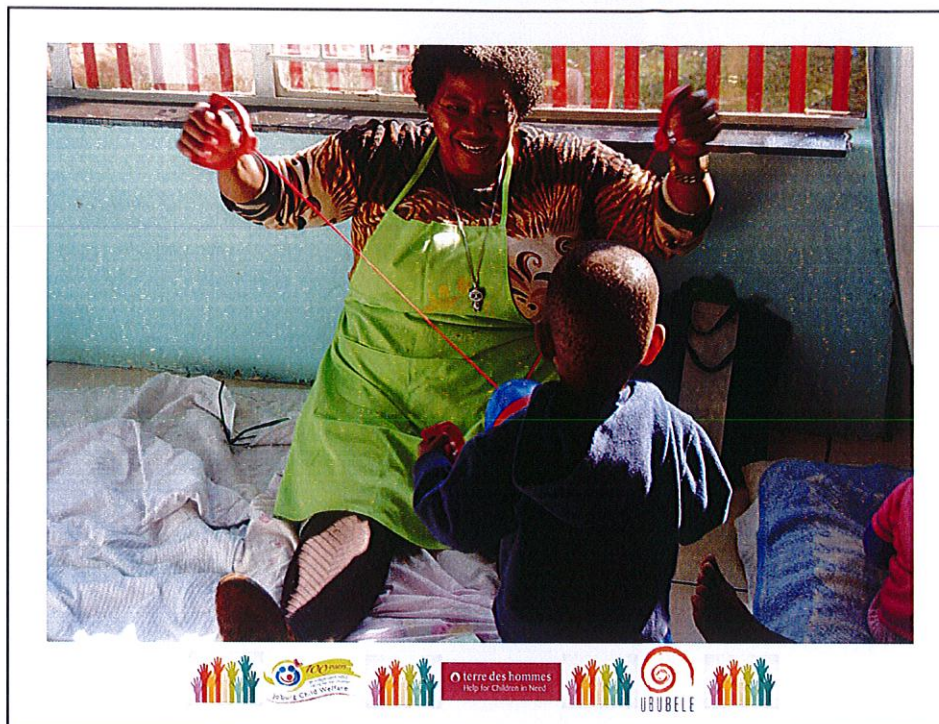
## **The Granny Programme**

### **Core Goals of the Programme**

Addressing the Essential Need for Bonding and Attachment with Babies and Young Children in Child and Youth Care Centres.

Simultaneously, monitoring the infant and toddlers' development and achievement of milestones





## Why do we need a Granny Prog?

Children living in long term Child and Youth Care Centres are at risk of physical, cognitive and emotional delays because their environment lacks direct, sustained nurturing.

Conditions in Child and Youth Care Centres are fundamentally poor. Inadequate food, medicines and supplies inhibit children's physical growth and disproportionate infant to caregiver ratios – sometimes 8:1 or 10:1 prevents emotional attachment and bonding.



Unfortunately, this “socially and emotionally” disadvantaged and under stimulating environment typifies most group homes and Child and Youth Care Centres

When these adverse early experiences continue past infancy, children often struggle with delays that present lifelong difficulties.

Without a stimulating early environment, the brain cannot make the neural connections that build **connection and attachment**



The nursery is also characterized by impersonal group care in which staff struggle to meet the basic needs of infants. As a result the children are raised without primary caregivers to monitor and encourage their development

The initial relationships between infants and caregivers are strong predictors for developing attachment disorders and low self-esteem in childhood and adolescence & lifelong emotional health



## Anxiety and “Frozen” Babies

A common phenomenon in institutional nurseries is the displaying of one of two types of dysfunctional behaviour. Children will either withdraw totally and stare into space – not expecting adults to show any interest in them or to pick them up. It is almost as if they have given up trying to get any attention. The other type of dysfunctional behaviour happens when an adult walks into the nursery and every child tries to get that adult to pick them up. If you observe carefully you will see that those children are displaying an incredibly high level of anxiety. They are having to compete with all the other children in order to be up by that one adult. Those children are very stressed and when they are not picked up they are totally distraught.



## The Grannies are trained in:

- Theory of child development
- Cognitive development
- Recording interactions with their child
- Use of the Early Learning Accomplishment Profile (E LAP)



## THE GRANNY PROGRAMME



## ABOUT THE GRANNY PROGRAMME

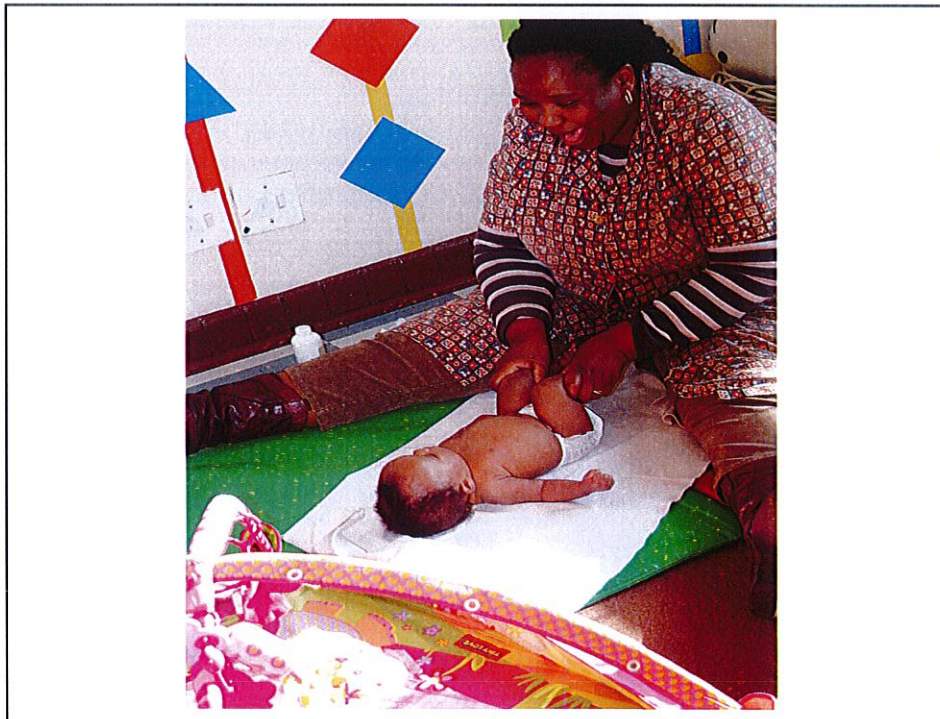
Local women from the community are recruited to provide the critical one-on-one attention as surrogate grannies for the young babies and toddlers in institutional care. They are trained in learning activities that will stimulate physical and emotional development and they provide the children with the much-needed individual love and attention.

The long-term goal is to provide the children with interim care to foster their development and to create a nurturing environment within the nursery



## Tracking Developmental Milestones

Each Granny is trained in the theory of early child development and how to track the development of a child according to the Early Learning Accomplishment Profile (E-LAP). E-LAP provides a systematic method for observing a child's development from birth to 36 months. It covers six areas – gross motor, fine motor, cognition, language, self-help, social-emotional. In this way the Granny becomes the person who stimulates the young child, builds a caring and nurturing relationship with the child and is also able to pick up when the child is not achieving developmental milestones



## Our experiences with the Granny Programme

- Our babies and toddlers are happier and less stressed
- We are aware of their developmental needs
- When the babies or toddlers leave to return to parents/are placed in foster care or adoption the transition is easier and the bond is transferred. The Grannies are part of the transition process. Research has shown that if a child has learned to bond at an early age they are able to form a bond with another caregiver. However if they have not learned to form a bond then they will not be able to form a bond with another caregiver.



- Other service providers have commented on the fact that our children are confident and not destructive e.g. when they are taken to the clinic or for occupational therapy
- Our children cope well when they go to Grade R in the community
- As an additional benefit our Grannies report that they are no longer isolated in their community. They have become more active in their churches and their communities.
- Many of the Grannies no longer need their blood pressure medication.



## For the Future

The Granny Programme is a simple, cost effective programme that answers to the needs of babies and young children in Child & Youth Care Centres.

It is easily replicable.

The benefits are quickly seen in the babies and young children and it has a unforeseen benefit of assisting the “grannies” as well.

Bonding and attachment at a young age is crucial and cannot be ‘caught up’ if not achieved in the first few years of a child’s life. Intervention needs to happen – and it needs to happen now!





# THANK YOU

