

# Success Story



In the latter half of 2013 Tsepho, a Thaba 'Nchu boy full of emotions and anger, ran away from home to end up in the streets of Bloemfontein. He had not been getting along with his older sister with whom he had been forced to stay following the passing of their mother. His wellbeing was not a priority to his sister (as opposed to the child support grant) and it was for that reason, amongst many others, that she failed to look for him or report him missing when he ran away from their home. By October 2013, Tsepho was found by the Kidz Care Trust Drop-In team, sleeping by a drain in the Mimosa Mall area of Bloemfontein and was referred to the Kidz Care Trust Drop-In program. His attendance was regular and the child soon began to make progress of wanting to change his life through his active participation of the drop-in program.

In February 2014 after undergoing numerous preparation sessions, Tsepho qualified to be admitted at Kidz Care Trust Child and Youth Care Centre to partake in the residential programs for better stability. He was successfully placed within the local school by the social worker and he flourished when it came to sports. He always partook in all the soccer tournaments both at the school and at the shelter. However, Tsepho's main problem was that of his emotions. He did not know how to convey his feelings appropriately and truly struggled to connect with his sister. These problems were observed by the Kidz Care Trust staff and were addressed by the social work team via regular individual therapy, group life skills sessions and family strengthening programs which comprised of scheduled and monitored home visits. It was not always easy for Tsepho to put into practice what he learnt but with consistency and reinforcement from Kidz Care Trust, by mid-2015 he found himself being able to make informed choices and handling his emotions better. Subsequently he started to open up more about his family challenges and further investigations were made as he was still not making any positive progress with his sister.

It was soon discovered that Tsepho had a maternal aunt that he had lost touch with. She was looked for and approached by the social work team and following screening, mediation and a few visits, the child was very excited to embark on building a relationship with her. The aunt who proved to be very responsible, supportive and understanding to the child's circumstances shed more information on the child's background which further assisted with intervention methods. As the child's sense of belonging began to strengthen as well as the progress made with the parenting skills provided for his maternal aunt, the latter subsequently volunteered to look after the child full time.

Exit planning commenced mid-September 2015 with the enrolment of the child at the local school for the last term of the year as well as termination counselling for the child. The social work team assisted with the transfer of the child support grant from Tsepho's sister to the aunt as well as obtaining the death certificate for his mother from the Department of Home Affairs to enable the aunt to apply for foster care. By the beginning of October 2015, Tsepho was placed back in Thaba 'Nchu under his aunt's care and he has been doing extremely well ever since. He is currently receiving our After Care services whereby follow ups are made every four months. In April 2017 we started assisting Tsepho in applying for a social grant. He has never absconded from his placement and his behaviour is reportedly exceptional. His brush with the streets are now a thing of the past and he actively warns other boys his age to not consider moving to the street as a way of dealing with their problems.

**Truly from the street back onto his feet!**