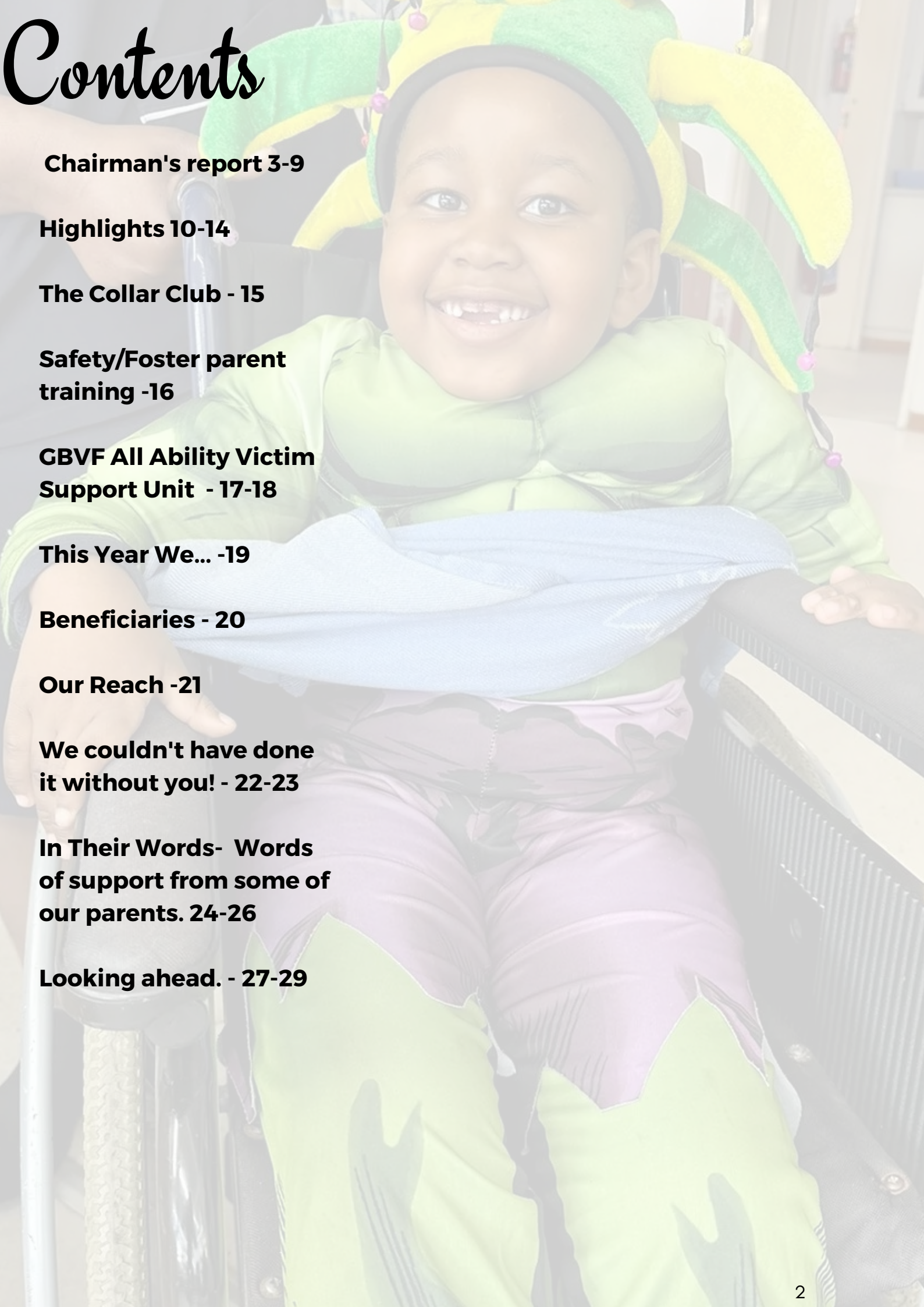


Impact Report 2023/24





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Chairpersons Report



Chairperson's Report for the Annual General Meeting Covering the Period: 1 March 2023 – 28 February 2024

Dear Members, Supporters, and Friends of Iris House Children's Hospice:

As I reflect on the past financial year, I am filled with a deep sense of pride and gratitude for the progress we have made, despite the challenges we've faced. The period from 1 March 2023 to 28 February 2024 has been one of both innovation and resilience for Iris House Children's Hospice. It is my pleasure to present this report, highlighting the key achievements and developments during this time

Chairpersons Report



Therapeutic Programs and Innovations

This year, we were thrilled to introduce aqua therapy sessions at St. Joseph's indoor pool. These sessions have been especially beneficial for our children with Cerebral Palsy, providing them with a sense of freedom through movement and helping to strengthen their muscles. The joy and physical benefits these sessions have brought to our children have been truly rewarding to witness.

Our therapy horses, Diva and Viltalgo, continue to be a source of immense comfort and joy for our children. Their gentle presence and the therapeutic riding sessions have made a significant impact on the emotional and physical well-being of the children in our care. In addition to our horses, Shaun the Sheep and our bunnies have continued to bring regular smiles and moments of happiness to our children.

Chairpersons Report continued



We also expanded our practical support offerings with the introduction of laying hens, which have provided a consistent supply of fresh eggs for the hospice. These eggs have not only supported our daily needs but have also allowed us to provide extra resources to our families and sell surplus eggs to the public, where they have been in great demand.

Financial Stability and Growth

Throughout the year, the demand for our services continued to grow, presenting challenges in balancing this need with our limited financial resources. However, thanks to the incredible support of our donors and the success of our fundraising events—such as Cuppa4Care, the Easter Egg Hunt online auctions, and The Purple Ball—we have managed to turn our financial situation around.

Chairpersons Report Contd



After two consecutive years of losses, I am pleased to report that we have successfully moved into a positive financial position, ensuring the sustainability of our services.

Enhancements to Our Transportation Services

A major addition this year has been the adapted Mercedes Sprinter vehicle, which has become a vital part of our operations. This vehicle allows us to safely transport more children to the hospice, reducing the need for multiple trips and thereby cutting costs. We are also pleased to have a dedicated driver for the vehicle, ensuring that our children are transported safely and efficiently.

Chairperson's Report Contd



Staff Changes and Organizational Restructuring

Staff Changes and Organizational Restructuring
It was with mixed emotions that we bid farewell to Carol, our dedicated Admin, who decided to follow her heart and continue her studies in December 2023. We are deeply grateful for her contributions and wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

In December 2023, we were confronted with the unsettling news that the Department of Social Development (DSD) might be unable to continue funding us after April 2024. This news prompted us to undertake a significant restructuring and retrenchment process in February. While this was a difficult time, I am relieved to report that only one staff member opted to take the retrenchment package, and we were able to successfully restructure the remaining positions, ensuring that our team remains strong and capable of meeting our commitments.

Chairperson's Report Contd



Strategic Initiatives for Future Sustainability

In February 2024, we launched a three-point plan designed to secure the future of Iris House. This plan includes the #NotWithoutAFight GivenGain online fundraising campaign, which is aimed at generating the necessary funds to continue our mission. We have also initiated a petition to make respite care a statutory service that the government must fund. Finally, we launched our own social enterprise, Carers@Home, which provides paid respite care services. This initiative will not only support our financial sustainability but also expands our impact within the community.

Chairperson's Report Summary



Conclusion

This year has been one of both challenge and triumph. Through innovation, community support, and unwavering dedication, we have continued to provide essential care to our children and their families. As we look forward to the year ahead, we do so with determination and hope, knowing that we are not alone in this journey.

Thank you to all our supporters, staff, volunteers, and donors. Your commitment to Iris House Children's Hospice is the cornerstone of our success, and together, we will continue to make a difference in the lives of those who need us most.

Warm regards,
Sue van der Linde
Founder / Chairperson
Iris House Children's Hospice

Chairperson's Report Highlights



Partnership with Nicole - Therapy for Autism

Despite my initial doubts, Nicole from Therapy for Autism has demonstrated that massage therapy can have a profound impact on individuals with autism, regardless of age or level of function.

Nicole, with the invaluable assistance of Nolu and Zoleka, has carefully selected a group of young autistic boys who now receive monthly massage sessions and participate in fun events at the hospice.

It's truly remarkable to witness the transformation in these boys—they become noticeably calmer and more relaxed during their massage sessions. Even more heartening is the bond that is forming within the group, something that is not often seen in the autism community. This initiative is proving to be not only therapeutic but also a beautiful way to foster connection and friendship among these young boys.

Chairperson's Report Highlights



A Very Special Day in November 2023

Marlene, who is 85 years young, had a burning wish to ride a horse again, and we simply couldn't say no. With great enthusiasm and determination, Marlene rode like an absolute star, reminding us all that age is just a number.

Adding to the magic of the day, the talented Keanan Eksteen serenaded Marlene with her favorite Elvis tunes and even performed one of his own Rock 'n' Roll numbers. The smile on Marlene's face was priceless, and we are immensely grateful that we had the privilege to make her wish come true. This day will be cherished as a beautiful reminder of the impact Iris House has in bringing joy and fulfilling dreams, no matter the age.

Chairperson's Report Highlights

October 2023 - Jica / National DSD Rollout

Expanding Our National Footprint

In October 2023, Iris House Children's Hospice took a significant step towards expanding its impact on a national level.

Our CEO, Sue van der Linde, was invited by JICA and the National Department of Social Development (DSD) to travel to the Northern Cape and Mpumalanga to train community-based carers. This marked the beginning of a national footprint for Iris House.

During this groundbreaking initiative, Sue provided essential training to carers and supervisors, focusing on assessment skills and caregiving techniques that are crucial for supporting children with life-limiting conditions. The program's success has led to its continuation into 2024, with selected carers from these regions coming to Cape Town for practical sessions with the Iris House team.

This initiative not only extends the reach of our mission but also ensures that more children across South Africa will benefit from the specialized care and support that Iris House is known for. We are proud to be leading the way in setting new standards of care nationwide.

Chairperson's Report Highlights

Strategic Response to Funding Challenges

In December 2023, Iris House Children's Hospice faced one of the most daunting challenges in its history. We received the alarming news that the Department of Social Development (DSD) Western Cape might not be able to continue funding us beyond April 2024. This news threatened the very existence of Iris House and the vital services we provide to over 670 families. Immediate Action: Three-Point Plan

Understanding the gravity of the situation, we wasted no time in developing and implementing a robust three-point action plan to save Iris House from the brink of closure. This plan was designed not only to address the immediate funding shortfall but also to secure the long-term sustainability of our organization.

1. #NotWithoutaFight GivenGain Fundraiser

In January 2024, we launched our #NotWithoutaFight fundraiser on the GivenGain platform. This campaign was created to rally support from our community and beyond, emphasizing that we would not give up on the children and families who rely on us. The response has been overwhelmingly positive, with donations pouring in from both local and international supporters who share our commitment to the cause.

Chairperson's Report Highlights

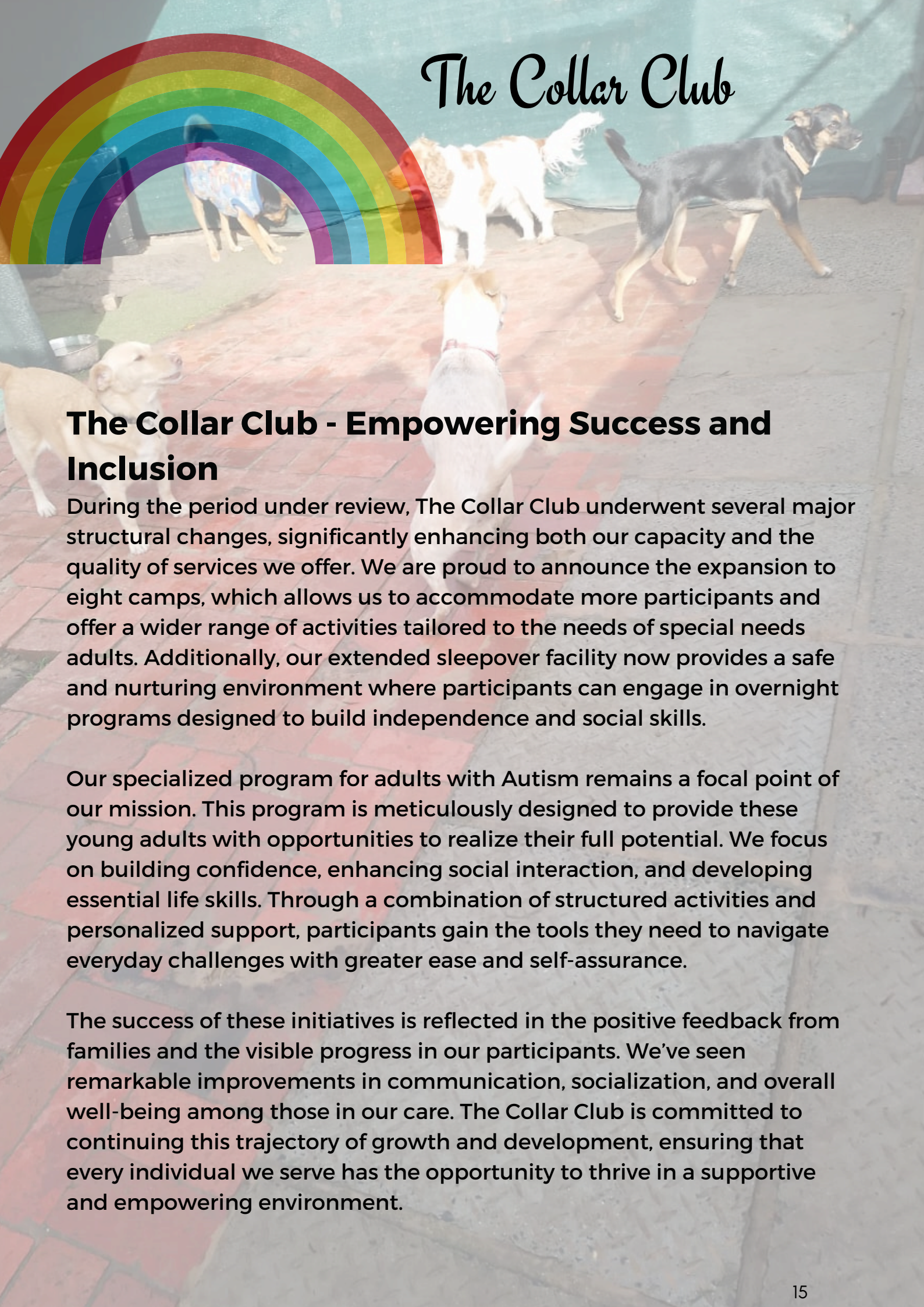
Strategic Response to Funding Challenges

12. Petition to Parliament

Simultaneously, we initiated a Petition to Parliament, urging government officials to recognize the critical importance of the services we provide and to reconsider the funding decision. This petition has garnered significant attention and support, highlighting the public's belief in the essential work we do and the need for continued governmental support.

3. Formation of Carers@Home Social Enterprise

Looking towards long-term sustainability, we established Carers@Home, a social enterprise aimed at generating revenue to fund Iris House. This initiative is designed to provide professional, compassionate care services to families in the broader community, with the profits reinvested into Iris House. While still in its early stages, we are optimistic that Carers@Home will become a significant source of funding for the hospice, ensuring that we can continue our mission for years to come.

A vibrant rainbow arches over a group of dogs in a park setting. The dogs are of various breeds, including a black and tan dog, a white dog, and a yellow dog. The background is a soft-focus image of a park with trees and a path.

The Collar Club

The Collar Club - Empowering Success and Inclusion

During the period under review, The Collar Club underwent several major structural changes, significantly enhancing both our capacity and the quality of services we offer. We are proud to announce the expansion to eight camps, which allows us to accommodate more participants and offer a wider range of activities tailored to the needs of special needs adults. Additionally, our extended sleepover facility now provides a safe and nurturing environment where participants can engage in overnight programs designed to build independence and social skills.

Our specialized program for adults with Autism remains a focal point of our mission. This program is meticulously designed to provide these young adults with opportunities to realize their full potential. We focus on building confidence, enhancing social interaction, and developing essential life skills. Through a combination of structured activities and personalized support, participants gain the tools they need to navigate everyday challenges with greater ease and self-assurance.

The success of these initiatives is reflected in the positive feedback from families and the visible progress in our participants. We've seen remarkable improvements in communication, socialization, and overall well-being among those in our care. The Collar Club is committed to continuing this trajectory of growth and development, ensuring that every individual we serve has the opportunity to thrive in a supportive and empowering environment.



GBVF Training Program: Progress and Expansion

The 2023/2024 period has been marked by significant strides in our Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) training program, which is funded by the National GBVF Relief Fund. Our ongoing efforts to equip SAPS officers and first responders with the necessary skills and sensitivity to handle cases involving victims with disabilities have yielded remarkable results.

Program Achievements

Throughout the year, we have continued to deliver specialized training that empowers these key stakeholders to provide more inclusive and effective support to victims of GBVF. The training covers essential areas such as communication techniques, understanding the specific needs of victims with disabilities, and creating safe environments for all individuals, regardless of their abilities.



Safety/Foster parent training

Continued Success of Our Safety and Foster Parent Training Program

In the 2023/2024 period, our Safety and Foster Parent Training Program has seen continued and growing success, reflecting both the critical need for such services and the effectiveness of our approach. This program, which is partially funded by the Department of Social Development's (DSD) Child Protection sector, focuses on upskilling existing safety and foster parents to care for special needs children who must be removed from their homes or who have been abandoned by their biological parents.

The demand for our training continues to grow, underscoring the increasing need for specialized care for vulnerable children with special needs. Over the past year, we have expanded our training modules to address more complex needs, ensuring that our foster parents are fully equipped to provide the highest standard of care. This comprehensive training covers a wide range of topics, including medical care, communication techniques, behavioral support, and emotional nurturing, tailored to the unique challenges these children face.



GBVF Training Program: Progress and Expansion

Our work has not gone unnoticed. The positive feedback from both the SAPS officers and the communities they serve underscores the critical importance of this training. It is heartening to see the tangible impact our program is having on improving the quality of victim support services in the areas where it has been implemented.

Expansion of Efforts in 2024

In recognition of our success, we have been tasked with expanding our efforts in 2024. Specifically, we will be rolling out another ALL ability Victim Support Unit, this time at Delft SAPS, following the successful establishment of our module at Bothasig SAPS. This expansion reflects both the growing demand for our expertise and the commitment of our partners to ensuring that victims with disabilities receive the care and support they need. The new unit at Delft SAPS will build on the foundation we've laid at Bothasig, incorporating lessons learned and best practices to further enhance the program's effectiveness. We are excited about the opportunity to extend our reach and make a meaningful difference in another community.



This Year We **Trained 133 safety and foster parents**

Provided 1038 hours of Community Respite care



Provided 880 hours of Hospice Based Respite care

Trained 148 parents on medical best practice



Trained 101 SAPS and First responders

Provided 249 Social Work Interventions



Provided 536 essentials packs to Families

Provided 1056 hours of therapies for our children





Beneficiary Overview

**672 REGISTERED
CHILDREN / OVER
3350 BENEFICIARY'S**

In the year under review we served over 670 children and young persons. However as our holistic care covers the whole family this figure is realistically over 3350 . Serving so many diverse families, affected by life-limiting and life-threatening conditions is a great responsibility, and as we continue to grow and expand our services, we commit to continue providing quality care and support at no charge, to ALL of our families.

Further highlighting the diversity in the children and families we serve is the wide range of medical conditions they face. In the year 2023/2024 our families are affected by over 68 different medical conditions,

68 Medical Conditions



70 Communities

Our Reach

RETREAT
PHILIPPI
RICHWOOD
NOOITGEDACHT
KRAAIFONTEIN
BRACKENFELL
ELSIES RIVER
BELLVILLE
DELFT
SALDANHA BAY
BOTHASIG
HOUT BAY
CONSTANTIA
MITCHELLS PLAIN
GRASSY PARK
CROSSROADS
HIGHBURY
BLUE DOWNS
YSTERPLAAT
STRANDFONTEIN
EDGEMEAD
BELHAR
TABLEVIEW
STELLENBERG
PLATTEKLOOF
SILVERSANDS

PARKLANDS
KENSINGTON
EVERSDALE
GUGULETHU
BONTEHEUWEL
GOODWOOD
VREDENBURG
WELGEMOED
MFULENI
Kalbaskraal
NYANGA
SAREPTA
CRAWFORD
MUIZENBERG
HAPPY VALLEY
RIEBEECK WES
HERMANAUS
STRAND
ATLANTIS
ST HELENA BAY
JOE SOLVO
DUNOON
NELSPRUIT
NORTHERN CAPE

SUNNINGDALE
STEL LENBOSCH
RONDEBOSCH
NORTHPINE
PLUMSTEAD
CHATSWORTH
PAROW
MILNERTON
DURBANVILLE
KUILSRIVER
KHAYELITSHA
BROOKLYN
BLOUBERG
EERSTERIVER
LANDSDOWNE
BELLVILLE SOUTH
WYNBERG
MONTE VISTA
KENWYN
TOKAI



Western Cape
Government

Social Development

**We couldn't have done
it without you**



THE PAINTED
DOOR



British
High Commission
Pretoria



We couldn't have done it without you

In their words...



Hi I am Nozuko Thabatha. I met people of Iris House by 2012 in fact Nolu Mbola helped me to be the part of Iris House because of my son Philas and Prudence Yibe.

I wasn't easy to accept the disability of my child I cried almost everyday coz I didn't know how must I handle and I was afraid of People out there they gonna laugh at my child but Iris House helped me a lot to accept it and the support group, that's where I met lot of parents with their children with disabilities.

Iris House as a whole gave me a shoulder to cry on, even if I want to stress free I call them and they sometimes take my son for the whole day and when he comes back home he always carry a parcel from them.

The founder Sue, workers, Social Worker ooh they are so kind, loyal and care about us and our children.

Even if I want share something like I don't feel okay or something is bothering me I call or whatsapp them not a single day they said to me no we are tired of you I really Appreciate to be with them

In their words...



We got involved with Iris House 10 years ago. Iris House helped our family in many ways, weather it was donation of food or just helped wherever they can. Sue attended parties of my children and the staff are well trained, which is very important to me to know how to take care of our children and how to stimulate them.

When I left my children at Iris House, I had peace of mind knowing that they were safe and well looked after. I trust all the ladies at Iris House, they are so respectful, kind and very understanding. Some of the are mothers with special needs children.

They do really good work for the community. Sue ensures that her staff are well trained and knows how to take care of any child with any diagnoses.

Well done to Sue and her Team, we will miss you all.

In their words...



Greetings to Iris House Children's hospice, this is Zukiswa Gwadiso, mother and caregiver to Joy Gwadiso.

My child is living with Autism spectrum disorder and Iris House has helped me and my son in various ways from channeling his behavior and emotions to learning how to be around others children, it relieves me some days and takes him and gives him horse therapy and be playful , and my gratitude extends.

Thank you



Looking Ahead 2024/2027

Looking Ahead: 2024-2027 Vision for Iris House Children's Hospice

As we look to the future, our focus at Iris House Children's Hospice is on ensuring long-term sustainability and expanding our impact. The next three years will be pivotal as we work to secure our financial foundation, strengthen our team, and broaden the scope of our services.

Sustainability and Donor Expansion

Our primary goal is to enhance our sustainability by significantly increasing our donor base. We will focus on attracting more monthly and quarterly donors who are committed to supporting our mission over the long term. By building strong relationships with our donors and demonstrating the impact of their contributions, we aim to secure the financial stability needed to continue and grow our services.



Looking Ahead 2024/2027

Leadership and Management Team Expansion

To ensure the consistency and quality of our services, we plan to expand our management team. This will not only bring in new expertise and fresh perspectives but will also allow for a smoother transition as I gradually step away from the day-to-day running of Iris House. Strengthening our leadership will ensure that the values and vision of Iris House remain intact and continue to drive our work forward.

Community Care and Service Expansion

Over the next three years, we are committed to expanding our community care teams to reach more families in need. We plan to offer more hospice and respite sessions, ensuring that all children in our care receive the support they need.

Additionally, we will continue our crucial work with the GBVF Response Fund, further expanding our training for SAPS officers and first responders. Our efforts to upskill safety and foster parents will also remain a key focus, ensuring that they are fully equipped to care for special needs children.



Looking Ahead 2024/2027

Sustainable Initiatives and Inclusive Opportunities

In conjunction with Agriculture, we are excited to introduce a sustainable food garden at The Collar Club premises. This initiative will provide young adults with a range of disabilities the opportunity to work in the garden, fostering independence, skill development, and a sense of community. This garden will not only support our sustainability goals but also create meaningful and inclusive work experiences for our participants.

Conclusion

The future of Iris House is bright, with a clear plan to ensure sustainability, leadership continuity, and service expansion. These next three years will be critical in laying the foundation for the continued success of our hospice, ensuring that we can provide care and support for many years to come.