



## Boyz2Men Winter Camp 2011 Report

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**Authors: Youth Workers International South Africa (YWISA) and Inspiration**

### Introduction

#### Background

After a lot of research and consultation (from 2006 to 2009), Inspiration came up with a concept to reach out to the youth of our time specifically boys through, The Boyz2Men Camp. After having looked around we came across a vibrant youth organisation called Youth Workers International South Africa (YWISA), who fit into the vision perfectly. It is true we have seen a lot of 'camps' in our time but nothing like the one planned by these organizations. To believe this, read our Aims and Objectives section. This will enhance the culture of learning and the redressing of the moral fiber in our young men that seems to be dwindling at an alarming rate.

#### Some of the Findings:

1. Girls have been in the past deprived of opportunities.
2. Abuse of women and children is still very high despite various programs
3. Society has become more aware of the need to groom and empower young girls. E.g. take a girl child to work.
4. Suicide rate amongst man and killing of families/spouses is on the rise.
5. Most men don't know how to handle pressure and the challenges of life so they either turns to alcohol, drugs and or violence.
6. Very little is done to groom men from an early age correctly e.g. in most families boys can go out till whatever time while girls are restricted. Girls are taught about their private parts and how to take care of them and what it means to get a period, but most boys discover on their own or through friends.
7. Most families believe that a boy should be beaten up whenever they've done wrong so that he becomes a strong man.

8. Most men don't believe in talking about their problems or counselling.
9. There is very little career guidance in our schools
10. Girls are usually better at choosing role models and careers than boys

### **Aims and Objectives of the Summer Camp**

1. To help groom a generation of Nation Builders. Based on the old philosophy of "it's not what my country can do for me but rather what can I do for my country.
2. To help the Youth exposed to this program in being assertive and goal minded.
3. To harness a drug free, alcohol free generation poised at achieving more in life.
4. To create a 'camp' where the 'nation builders' will go back to their Communities to lead and serve as role models to help recreate the moral fiber in our nation.
5. To teach young men /boys how going back to the basic principles of life can help them become better men
6. To get the young men to talk about:
  - their fears
  - their limitations
  - their expectations
  - past and current experiences
  - their challenges
  - their perceptions
7. To help the Young men to discover themselves in themselves (inner look - introspection)
8. To create a 'pool' of leaders whose lives will impact other young people, positively - after the camp.
9. To give career guidance to the young men by bringing in people from difference sectors of our dynamic society.
10. To create a generation of men who protect and love our society (women and children).
11. To bring hope to all young people by saying - "*Change starts with one*"

#### **Title:**

Boyz2Men Winter Camp 2011 from 15<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> of July Report from Youth Workers International South Africa (YWISA) and Inspiration

#### **Method**

The Camp was held at **Koinonia Conference Centre** for 110 young men age 12 to 19 years from different communities of KwaZulu Natal.

#### **We had powerful facilitators from different sectors namely:**

##### **Municipalities:**

- Cllr Mluleki Ndobe from Sisonke District Municipality
- Nhlakanipho Ntombela from Mkhambathini District Municipality
- Boniwe Zulu from Sisonke District Municipality

##### **Youth Organisations**

- Kwazi Ndlanzi (GAZ)

##### **Finance Sector**

- Charmain Shandu from Sanlam
- Mandla Mngomezulu(SARS Legal Advice)

## **Health Sector**

- Nonhlanhla Mnguni (Operations Manager of Don McKenzie)

## **Spiritual leaders**

- Pastor Thanda Zulu
- Sambulo Nkwanyana (Bible Society)
- Lungisani Mafu (ECC)
- Jack Modupo (ECC)
- Bongumusa Kubheka (ECC)

## **Media houses**

- Lucky Cain from (Ilanga newspaper)
- Alex Mkhize from (Ilanga newspaper)

## **Entertainment**

- Sfiso Ncwane
- Sgwili and Babo
- Abanqobi group

## **Radio stations**

- Siya Mhlongo (IGagasi 99.5 FM)
- Siphon Mbatha (Ukhozi FM)
- Criselda Kananda (Metro FM)

## **Leaders**

- Zet Luzipho (COSATU Provincial Secretary)
- Bonga Mpanza (Ukhozi FM Station Manager)

## **Community Safety and Crime Prevention**

- Vincent Mdunge (SAPS Provincial Spokesperson)

## **Topics**

- Mans spirituality
- Positive living
- How crime ruins my society
- History of the bible
- Taxes and SARS
- Biased media perception
- Abuse and domestic violence
- Drugs and alcohol
- Financial planning
- Young marriages and divorce
- Challenges of being raised by the single parent
- What are my options living a purposeful life
- What going to change

The topics were discussed based on the challenges that the young men of today are facing and most of the facilitators had personally experienced these challenges hence they were given a brief to facilitate each session based on their personal experiences. This gave the camp a realistic and very genuine outlook to these challenges, which made the sessions to be very interactive and effective for young people.

## Results and Discussion

After each session the young people were given a chance to ask questions and due to that it gave them a platform to open up and share their fears, challenges, limitations and expectations, as they grow up. Most stories that were shared by the young men were very personal and deep, even the questions they asked were extremely genuine and at times surprising some even needed serious attention and professional help. We identified those that needed follow ups as means of caring and supporting their developments. We set up a panel which comprised of most of the facilitators and that was an open session for them to ask any questions that they might had which had not been answered during the sessions.

## Summary/Conclusion

The camp was very successful and was at a very high standard and bigger then we anticipated, the plan went accordingly, the facilitator's session had a lot of substance and they were very reflective, because most of them used personal experiences and practical challenges, to convey the message to the young men. The fact that most of the young men even went as far as pleading for help with their current problems and mistakes e.g. it is toughing when a young men stands up in a room with about ten high profile leaders and about a hundred of his peers and confesses to dealing in drugs, alcohol abuse hurting his parents etc.

Based on the positive feedback that we receive from the campers and for them to show such high level of participation, we believe that the camp was successful.

One camper pointed out that where he lives most young people do not have Identity document (ID) and he asked Criselda to help him in organizing home affairs to come to his community and that was a positive response from a camper to even identify the needs of other young people of his community.

## Challenges

- The camp setting was big and the organizing teams did not realize how big the camp was until we were at **Koinonia conference centre** with **99** young men, facilitators from different sectors.
- We are faced with a problem of keeping up with what we have started, as the demand from the public was way above what we could handle, we literally had to turn down plenty of requests from parents and organizations who had wanted to bring in their children.
- The time was short and a lot of information was squeezed into two and a half days, The facilitators had lot of information that they wanted to share with young men and there was no time for energisers in between to keep the participants refreshed at all times, and that caused the campers to go in and out of the hall a lot times to refresh themselves and that was disturbing for the speaker and for those paying attention to the speakers.
- One on one session did not happen due to the shortage of time as the program was very intense.
- The biggest challenge at the moment is fundraising, which we hope to this pilot project will attract more stakeholders to come on board to help groom the boys of our communities.

## Conclusion

- This camp made it very clear that there is a huge gap between generations and that changing of things and time, courses pressure on these young men which makes the process of growing up more difficult. Therefore they are in dire need of strong support structures with guidance and mentorship
- Seeing this situation we as the organizers felt that it is important to form a caring, equal relationship with the young men to identifying each young person's needs, as means to help them from their transition from boyhood to manhood.
- We hope all districts municipalities, government departments, private companies and other stakeholders will engage themselves in this project of assisting young men in their personal development, and enabling young men to become active citizens, and this will reduce the challenges that we faced in our Communities nowadays.

## Purpose

- So that the needs are met in a way that's moves them towards achieving the autonomy to take control of their lives,
- To see them taking the initiative to say no to drugs, alcohol abuse and other risky behaviors.
- To see them setting goals for their lives, which will help them achieve more in life.
- To see a generation that believes in being a young man that's able to leads, love and protect.

## Areas of improvement

- Is to extend the camp into five days in order to fit all the planned activities.
- Facilitators to do one on one session with young men because some people do not feel comfortable to talk about their problems in front of other people.
- As this was our first and a pilot project, some of the challenges which surfaced during the discussions need a professional attention because it was clear that there are a lot of underpinning issues, which the young men are faced with in our society today.

## Quotes

*"Our vision of a South African in which all our people will have access to lifelong learning, education & training opportunities"( by Department of Education)*

*"Change starts with one" (by YWISA and Inspiration)*

## Contributors

We would like to thank the following people who contributed towards making a meaningful contribution towards.

### Boyz2men winter camp:

- Sisonke District Municipality
- Mkhambathini Local Municipality
- UMkhanyakude District (Arts and Culture)
- KZN Department Arts and Culture
- Social Development of KwaZulu Natal
- Fuddy events
- Youth workers international South Africa (YWISA)
- Sanlam
- Ukhozi Fm
- Criselda Kananda and metro fm
- Siya Mhlongo
- Bible society
- EThekwini community church
- SAPS
- Sfiso Ncwane
- Sgwilli and Babo

Thank you for being the part of the empowering family.

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