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Kids Haven protects and cares for children in crisis, and empowers families, children and communities to build safe and caring spaces for all.

FOOD GARDENS

Who is it for:

Individuals and families living in vulnerable communities in Marikana, Windmill Park, Chris Hani, Petit, Mayfield, Msholozhi, Barcelona, Nigel, and includes some of the aftercare youth in Benoni. We want every family to have their own small vegetable garden in their yard to grow extra food and supplement their meals with healthy vegetables. This improves food security for the family and ensures that children eat healthy meals for improved outcomes. Kids Haven will always budget to support **100 growers** annually. Ongoing survey data of garden use shows that 60% of families are able to grow vegetables for their own use, while 23% frequently share excess vegetables and 17% of growers are able to sell excess produce. Growers share their vegetables with their neighbours and for community events such as funerals.

Where and when:

The home-based food gardens are an ongoing project with the current gardens continuously being reseeded and harvested in areas such as Marikana (KwaThema), Windmill Park, Chris Hani, Petit, Mayfield, and Msholozhi, with hands-on support for communities around Kids Haven, currently in Barcelona, Nigel and Benoni.

Key outcome:

The food gardens were started in response to food shortages experienced during the Covid pandemic. The key outcome is to empower families to care for themselves, with Kids Haven's support so that they always have something to eat. Formal training and short workshops are conducted with garden champions on composting, financial management and good nutrition.

Additional outcome:

Growers, their families, and their communities are learning about and eating nutritious food. This initiative has instilled a sense of pride and achievement for many people as they can now feed their families and others.

Garden champions are elected in each community to support 25 growers in their neighbourhood. The champions are key to the success of this project. The champions provide hands-on help to the 25 growers in their network, share information with Kids Haven and help to monitor the success of the gardens.

Kids Haven has our own large vegetable garden at the Kids Haven Village producing vegetables for use in the Kids Haven Children's Home.

Cost:

Every grower is provided with basic implements for the garden, and up to six packets of seeds throughout the year. These may be replaced if seeds fail due to weather or other unexpected problems.

Growers attend three short workshops per year. The topics are nutrition and hygiene, finances and budgeting, and technical skills, including composting. Refreshments are provided.

A garden champion earns a stipend of R800 per month based on hours worked, and at the minimum wage rate. Garden champions are essential stakeholders to support growers in their neighbourhood and share information with the Kids Haven project coordinator.

The annual budget for the programme is R249 500 to support 225 growers.

➤ **Budget per grower per year – R 1 100**

This includes budget for:

- seeds and implements
- stipends for garden champions (23 % of total cost)
- refreshments for training
- garden awards events
- Transport (Kids Haven)
- Project Coordinator (Kids Haven) (12% of total cost)

How to help:

- **Funding**

Support the programme with a financial contribution towards the whole activity, or towards a specified number of growers. Alternatively, provide funding for a selected line item.

- **Donation of seeds, plants and compost**

Donations of seed packets (full or already opened), seedlings, plants, pots and compost are always well received.

- **Donation of gardening tools**

Donations of new or pre-loved gardening tools are appreciated.

- **Skills sharing**

If you are an avid gardener or run a gardening service and would be willing to upskill our gardeners, we would appreciate any time you could offer to Kids Haven.

- **Volunteer involvement**

Come and get a garden started with our Kids Haven staff and community members. The hours you spend with us will ensure a family enjoys healthy, home-grown food in the months to come.