

Mission Partner prayer and update 22 September 2024

Garden Route Children's Trust

Catherine Michell writes on behalf of the GRCT...

We would be very grateful for your prayers for the upcoming Christmas sale and coffee morning on 5 November at Oxshott Village Hall - for its smooth running, a great sense of community and successful fundraising.

We would also be grateful for your prayers for our partners in South Africa, in the busy months, in the run up to the end of the school year in South Africa: for good health, peace and energy.

I set out below a very touching account which reminds us how our donors' generosity and the work we are therefore able to fund impacts young lives in South Africa (around 8,000 lives at last count). This appeared in our main beneficiary's (the e'Pap Children's Feeding Project) latest newsletter. I think it says it all! I quote it here:

"Strikers FC Development Academy have gratefully been receiving donations of e'Pap since May 2023. Every Tuesday and Thursday at 4pm we have boys between 8 and 17 years of age, descend on Lorie Park to play soccer. All the boys travel by foot from townships around the Knysna area – most of them from Hornlea, Nekkies, Concordia and White Location, which is a 10-12km round trip (around 90 minutes to two hours walking).

Each boy has a team and a volunteer coach plus 1-2 older players who assist the teams. On the edge of the field are usually 1-2 further volunteers who make sure the boys have clean water, cordial juice, a piece of fruit and prepare e'Pap for the boys to have at the end of training (or before, if they need it). Some boys will not have eaten since the morning, some not at all. As you can imagine, this is a little challenging to do on a soccer pitch, but we have great camping tables, equipment etc and have created ingenious methods, such as using a tall tub, paint mixer and drill to mix the powder to be a very smooth texture! The boys love it and often come over for a quick go with the mixing.

The teams finish their training at staggered times so they can come and eat their e'Pap in smaller groups. By this time, they are extremely hungry and excited!

The process of soccer training and feeding of e'Pap means that the volunteers have created a family environment for the boys, some of whom have very difficult home lives with little food and support. **The nutritional impact is profound and very clear to see! We have noticed some boys having much improved skin, more consistent energy levels and a happier, calmer, demeanour. Their guardians have given encouraging feedback about their behaviour and attitudes being more focused and positive!"**

All the best,
Catherine