

the OUTCRY

Mar/Apr 09

Alan and Sheena Gaston work with children in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa



Playtime in ZB's room at Edendale



Safe Haven - decorating the nursery in Khayelihle.



Alan visited our parents in February



Safe Travel - our Land Rover can carry lots of children.



Edendale children enjoy ZB's new play equipment



Can you come tomorrow and take 2 children?

Towards the end of January Sheena received a phone call asking her to come to court and have the first 2 children placed in Khayelihle.

This 'place of safety' has been our vision over the last few years since we first came across abandoned children in hospital. Abandoned children are taken to hospital when there is nowhere else for them to go. Without the love and attention children need, their condition rapidly deteriorates. So we investigated looking after abandoned children in our own home. We found our friends, Nkosi

and Natalie from Zimbabwe, shared our passion for abandoned

foster or adoptive parents for them. Failing this, they will be placed in a children's home.



The new nursery is equipped to take up to six children

children so they are partnering with us. We extended our house to accommodate up to six children. Alan's boyhood dream came true when we bought a second hand Land Rover, which can seat up to nine people with proper seat belts. All of this thanks to the support of many generous friends.

A 'place of safety' provides care for children in crisis. The court removed 'A' (girl of 4) and 'S' (boy of 3) from an abusive foster home where they had been for two years after being abandoned. They have been placed with us for up to six months. This should give the social services time to find long-term

These little children came with all their possessions in two plastic bags. Despite their very traumatic history, they have settled well into our home. When they came to us they were hungry and frequently asked for food. Now they sleep throughout the night and eat hearty meals. Our other children, Henry, Siphon and Sihle, have adapted well to these additions to the family. The other day, Sihle said, "I care for 'A' and 'S'. I love them."

This successful start to the project is thanks to your prayers. Right from the word go, we have been very aware that God has been opening doors and providing what we need.

"God sets the lonely in families"

It has become very clear to us that 'A' and 'S' need a loving Christian family to grow up in. This is not something that we can arrange. We look to the Lord to lay these children on the hearts of Christian couples who can give them the home they need. **Please join with us in praying for these homes.**

ZANINI BANTWANA



Full Steam Ahead!

The Zanini Bantwana team continues to visit the children in all three government hospital six days each week. In many ways this is not glamorous work and we praise God for the faithfulness of those visiting so regularly.

In Edendale, Toyse or Mpume is there each day from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. They coordinate the hospital's new stimulation programme for children, as well as visiting children in the wards each morning and taking a group to the playground each afternoon. Both these ladies are very committed and very gifted. You should see the children's rapt faces when they tell Bible stories. ZB took on this new role on a trial basis. It has been so successful that we would like to continue - provided funding is available.

We are also looking at the possibility of taking on a similar role at Greys and Northdale. We need to agree it with the hospital authorities, but the fact that it is working well in Edendale is a strong recommendation. We would then look to the Lord to provide the right workers and the necessary funds.

Please pray for wisdom as we look at further developing the work in the hospitals.

We have always looked to the churches in our area to support the work. Recently Alan was thrilled to meet up with a lady from one church who is interested in starting to visit and is keen to get her cell group and church to support her.

Please pray that this church will enter in to a long-term commitment to the children in hospital.

We have lift off!

Alan braved the cold and travelled back to Northern Ireland for just over a week at the end of February. He was able to spend time with family and friends as well as speak in Fitzroy and Macosquin churches. He was really encouraged to see the interest in our work and to hear of the consistent prayer support. Many, many thanks to all who support the work and apologies to all those that he was unable to meet. Next time!

The Madhouse!



Some of our friends have started to call ours 'the Madhouse' - sometimes easy to see why! Henry is working hard at school, Siphos is doing well at swimming and Sihle has a new girlfriend! We have lots of friends and family dropping in adding to the lively atmosphere. Never a dull moment, but we thank God for such fun and energy.

Zanini Bantwana is registered in South Africa and is an associate ministry of African Enterprise.

It is possible to make donations through our website. Credit Card donations are via a secure facility. The website address is www.zaninibantwana.org. Please note that it is not possible to issue tax receipts for these online donations.

Donations can also be paid through any of the African Enterprise offices, making cheques payable to African Enterprise and marking clearly for the 'Zanini Bantwana' hospital work or Khayelihle, the place of safety in our home.

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