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Heaven's Nest: holistic foster care to include education

On the 18th of September local children's home, Heaven's Nest will officially launch their newly built classroom. Heaven's Nest is an emergency foster home for children under the age of 8 that have been abused, abandoned, neglected or are affected by HIV & AIDS. "Many of the children that we take in have had no exposure to even basic education. This means that when they were sent to school in the past, they were often unprepared for it," says Eleanor Bester, the coordinator at Heaven's Nest.

Heaven's Nest aims to provide holistic care for children in need. Bester spotted the need for a classroom on their property to add to the loving, safe home, healthy food, medical care, counselling and play therapy already provided.

"It is about changing the children's mindset," Bester explains. "They need to learn the feeling of leaving home and going to school. In the morning, they get their things together and get taken across to the classroom; it gives them a sense of pride in going to school. They now have three unique areas, the home, the school and the playground."

The classroom project was completed with the help of a few key sponsors, including Grinaker Construction, an Australian sponsor, Simone Sherman, Premier Stationers and two volunteer retired teachers who will be donating their time and their knowledge to teach the children.

Bishop Mervyn Castle of the False Bay Diocese, a key supporter of Heaven's Nest, will be officially opening the classroom on the 18th. This will be followed by a celebration which will include magicians from the College of Magic performing for the children.

If you would like to get involved with helping Heaven's Nest; there are many ways to do so. Please call Eleanor Bester on (021) 703 9781; email her on heavensnest@telkomsa.net or see <http://www.heavensnest.org.za/Support.html>

About Heaven's Nest
Heaven's Nest, a children's centre situated in Ottery, was opened in 2004 and is run by the task team of St Francis of Assisi in Strandfontein. Their mission is to be a safe place of care and nurturing for some of the projected millions of orphans to emerge from the HIV/AIDS pandemic and other "children in need".

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15/09/10

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