Northern Synod

TASK TEAM EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (ECD) 1&2

Report

1. Assignment

To continue, in collaboration with the CSC, the work done by a previous task team.

2. Task Team

Leader: Ronél Aylward (in collaboration with the CSC)
Members: Marie-Jean Brink, Liesel Ebersohn, Johan Erasmus, Paul Grobler (ex officio), Rehan Rheeder, Judy van Heerden.

The task team's assignment was repeated every year. Essentially, there were three task teams: Task Team ECD 1 (2023/24), Task Team ECD 2 (2024/25) and Task Team ECD 3 (2025/26).

3. Execution of the assignment

Meetings were held on the following dates:

13 March 2024
26 June 2024
4 September 2024
23 October 2024

At these meetings the following aspects were discussed and handled:

- Dr Johan Erasmus provided information regarding the first 1000 days.
- Prof. Liesel Ebersohn addressed the task team on the importance of play.
- Rev. Melanie Thirion addressed the task team about the Little Seeds programme being presented in the Western Cape in collaboration with congregations and Badisa.

FURTHER ACTION PLANS

3.1. Raise awareness in DRC congregations in the Northern Synodal region regarding The First 1000 Days and support them to launch action plans/programmes to promote ECD in the First 1000 Days, by focusing on mothers and the primary care of children 0-3 years.

- The making and distribution of an informational video regarding the first 1000 days.

  Rev. Tiaan van Niekerk (Rietfontein Noord Congregation) has already been contacted to have the video made by TUT students. The task team will meet him in November 2024 to do the planning. There will be follow-up videos as well.

- Empower congregations to respond actively and positively to this information by creating programmes and resources to minister to mothers and primary caregivers of children of 0-3 years (including pregnant mothers) with the necessary support and developmental services.

- *Dr Johan Erasmus, Dr Judy van Heerden and Rev. M. Brink are going to do presentations at the end of January 2025 at the CSC North's planning session for the CSC North's social worker staff for the purpose of establishing programmes aimed at mothers and primary caregivers (including pregnant mothers) of children.*

- *The task team is also available to provide this service to congregations who are interested.*

3.2. Promote awareness regarding ECD programmes in the synodal region and motivate them to become involved in specific projects.

- *Adopt a Preschool* programme: Do presentations regarding needy ECD programmes to congregations in the Northern Synodal region and empower the congregations to reach out on an ongoing basis.
- *The CSC North's marketing team will attend to the professional presentation of submissions. These will then be made available to congregations via the appropriate channels*

4. Closing word

The ECD task team members are inspired and passionate about Early Childhood Development and are looking forward to supporting congregations to promote this extremely important aspect of the Ministry of Mercy. Our children (and their carers) are our future and play a very important role in the Kingdom of God. Insofar as we have done (or have neglected to do) anything for them, we have done it (or have neglected to do it) for our Saviour.