



January 2012

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From Mario desk...

Welcome to our first edition of 2012!

It has been a very stressful start to the year losing two boys from Heideveld due to gang violence. I'm being approach for jobs by school drop outs every day, kids looking for rehab center's and parents looking for help for there trouble some kids. What make matters worse is that the unemployment rate is sky high and HIV has hit Heideveld. The drug abuse is beyond control and the school drop out rate is getting worse. Is there hope? I need to remind me every day yes there is!

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of January 2012 statistics was published in our local newspaper about gangs in the Western Cape in the year: **2007 - 150 000 gang members**  
**2012 - 450 000 gang members**  
**19 170 Cops in Western Cape,**  
**4.5 million Population**

As you can see the stats we are swimming against the tide, it is becoming more and more difficult to keep the children motivated.

Dear friends I have no words to describe my gratitude towards you, as you can see GCU is on the right track. Thank you for giving our children an opportunity to become someone in life, you are making a huge difference and a significant contribution to society and the economy.

**“REMEMBER CRIME TAKES A LOT AWAY FROM SOCIETY AND THE ECONOMY ‘**

**“Touch one and he/she can change there generation”**

GCU ended 2011 very well, the boys went to swim at Sea Point pavilion for there end of year party which we normally say goodbye to everyone. But this time around we did a bit different we had a fun day and issued out the medals and trophies for there achievements.



We were quick out of the blocks in 2012 as we brought the boys back very early, and it was nice having them back. We have really stepped up a gear in terms of discipline and it has been working them very hard. In order to participate in GCU sports teams you must attend the tutoring, life skills and greening projects.

**Coaches prunes the trees at Woodlands Primary**



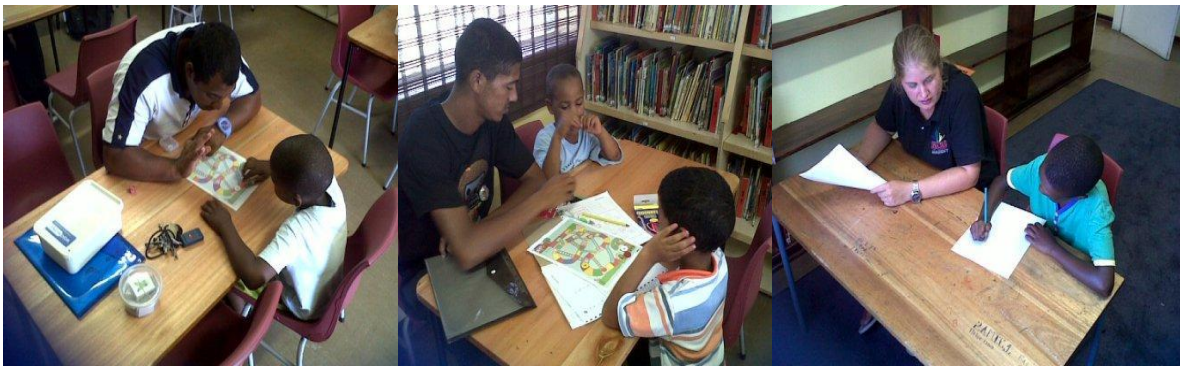
**Boys at work at the training ground**



**Boys enjoying a jam sandwich and a cup of juice at the training ground, you cannot imagine what this meal means to these kids.**



Our tutoring program is really improving by the day the tutors work hard to make it successful. We started off with reading assessment for U/9, 11, 13 and in the future we want to provide tutoring for the U/15, 17 .You may be asking but when will the U/15, 17 start as it is clear they need help to. We have challenged them to assist the U, 9, 11, 13 with reading and they have committed to helping them. They help the little ones and in return they help themselves, they become confident about themselves and start to become positive role models.



**Our Head of tutoring Shafiek  
Explaining to the U/17 the program.**

**Two U/15 reading to the little ones.**





We have also welcomed back the Woodlands girls from rope skipping last year with a twist they have moved into dancing. As part of their program and in line with Gordons Gym and GCU's new discipline measures that have been put in place, the girls must also attend tutoring twice a week. Jenny, our UK volunteer, has been heading up the program which has got off to a great start. They have also been assessed and their workshops will mix between assisted homework, assisted reading and educational activities. This week the girls had to learn about an African animal in pairs and give a short presentation to the group. They did brilliantly and it was encouraging to see the strong help the weaker girls read. The Giraffes won by a long shot showing great team work and presenting lots of facts that I didn't even know. Well done girls!



As promised in 2011 GCU have partnered with Wolves made the GCU Wolves basket ball program for the girls of Heideveld. In launching the girls project they had their 1<sup>st</sup> training session at the end of January. We are very excited because we are employing 2 girls coaches from the community who will also assist with a tutoring program which the girls must also attend.

They say that pictures tell a thousand words and I think you will agree that 2012 has truly got off to a great start. Our boys are responding well to the new structure we are enforcing and this can only help them grow and become the positive members of society we strive to achieve day to day. Sometimes it's difficult for me to put into words just how much of an impact we are having on our community, there are many things that happen on a daily basis that you have to see to believe. All that is left to say is thank you all again for your continued support to GCU and the communities.



End of year feeding scheme , served 500 meals

We have launched a blog site this year which already has great stories and we want this to be another way of telling you what is happening from the ground on a weekly basis. Please check it, become a follower and comment on the stories, we would love to hear what you think:

[www.greatcommissionunited.blogspot.com](http://www.greatcommissionunited.blogspot.com)