Transfer Immediately!

Story by Modjadji Maleka

Imagine starting your Grade 11 year with the news that you are to be transferred to a new school and that you have no say in the matter! That is exactly what happened to the Sepedi speakers attending Lobone High School in Soweto at the start of 2010.

"I was forced to leave all my friends behind and start afresh," said one of the affected learners. "I now have to walk for more than half an hour each way every day as this school is in a different part of Soweto (Mofolo)."

Why has this happened? According to the school, the demand for Sepedi has decreased to the extent that they cannot warrant offering the language – which is one of South Africa's eleven official languages – as a subject for Matric.

"Our parents were not happy at all because they knew that we would have to get used to the teachers and the new school. Also, they want to know and communicate with our teachers," said one affected student.

Why are the Sepedi becoming extinct? Let's join hands together and stand up for our culture.

Lobone Secondary School is a government institution therefore the government is responsible for the education we should receive. When they removed us because of the Sepedi 'problem', it showed how ignorant the government is regarding our cultures. Our constitution says that all eleven official languages have equal status, however, in practice, this is not happening. It's clear that certain languages are taking precedence over others!

First Aid to the Rescue

Story by Anelisa Tuswa

Whether you're going to be a nurse, an accountant or even an actor, First Aid is important knowledge. These past three days of the September holidays for the Port Elizabeth group wasn't just another holiday to relax, and let their minds escape from school work, but it was an experience of a life time with a red ribbon "certificate" in Level 1 First Aiders.

This training consisted of things like what is First Aid, First Aid Kit and First Aid guides to different things like fainting, injuries, diabetes, pain and wounds etc. These things happen in our everyday lives and in most cases they happen right in front of us. Right now the Access students consider themselves as valuable assets to the school and the community at large. "Now that I'm a qualified first aider, I can assist here at school, where help is needed. In cases like fainting, which happens regularly" explained Nobathembu Zide, a second year student in the programme. The school is faced with great challenge of students fainting, especially in summer when it is hot.

One thing that the students agreed on, was that the three days of hard work and intensive training was worthwhile. This was not only about training but the unity, commitment and self-confidence built into the course. "Impressive!", that's the only thing that the facilitator had to say when she was asked to define the three days she spent with us. The dedication of the group was amazing and they are still committed to making other's lives better.

Thanks to the US Embassy, the Port Elizabeth group will continue being good Samaritans . The Access group is a valuable asset to the community because of the skills that we now have. And for those who plan to studying nursing, Good Luck! First aid is not child's play. It's practical, practical, practical!

Training was provided by St. Johns Ambulance – First Aid Level 1

Do What You Love – and Love What You Do!

Story by Amy Ginyigazi

Everyone has a talent. Many people are so obviously gifted in so many ways while others have to search to find their talents. A group of teenagers at Walmer High School have found their groove through poetry and self-expression.

Sometimes we are shy or feel ashamed to stand up for ourselves. I believe that there's no point in being afraid of who you are and what you can do best.

Music, dance, writing, debating and poetry - these are all talents this group has and some members of the group have them all. Poetry is now very popular at Walmer High School. This, I believe, is also happening in other schools.

We can all create with our talents. Like if a group of people get together and pool their talents, that could help those who are afraid to stand up and be themselves. "Point 8" is the name of a popular group of poets at Walmer High. It is wonderful to see that they are very confident and proud of themselves. They love what they do!

We interviewed some of the members who said, "We are a group of friends united by a bond so strong and that bond is poetry. We believe that doing what you love and loving what you do is the key to our future." They say that life is better spent with friends who believe in you and who will help you shine your talent through good and bad times.

Making it in the New Year

Story by Kamogelo Phala

Each New Year brings new challenges in each of our lives, and as teenagers we have to organise our lives in order to deal with these new problems.
Teens often complain about not having enough time to themselves which leads to stress because they lose focus and spend time on unimportant things instead of concentrating on themselves and their health.

So as a teen that has been through all this and has survived the pressures that each year poses, I have come up with a list of things that can be done to make sure that you are better organised and ready to face a new year.

Always have a diary.
A dairy acts as your 'Personal Life Manager' so make sure you note any important dates and appointments down, in order to never forget anything important.
Make time for yourself.
Schedule some time every day which you can spend doing something you enjoy, like reading a book, surfing the net or exercising.
Eat a balanced diet.
Food is mostly never taken into consideration and what one must remember is that we get all our energy from what we eat. The correct combination of fats, proteins and carbohydrates can do wonders to not only keep your body in shape but also give you enough energy for all the new responsibilities and work that you will have to tackle.
Get enough sleep.
Sleep for at least 7 hours a day because that allows your body and muscles to rest, giving you more strength and endurance to be able to do everything you will need to do for the forthcoming day.
Enjoy yourself.
Fun and laughter are what make
life worth living so never neglect letting your hair down (in a responsible way) once in a while to enjoy life's little pleasures.