



THE HOUSE GROUP
P O Box 18557
Hillbrow, Johannesburg
2038, South Africa

December 10, 2000

Department of Social Services and Population Development
61 Rissik Street
Johannesburg

Att: **Dorothy van der Spuy**

Re: **What to do with this crazy world?**

Hallo Dorothy,

This font is called 'comic sans' and what I have to tell you may seem comical, but believe me it confuses me! Just when I think that we have found some (not all!) answers, we get hit with a slow ball, hardball, dirty ball or whatever...

The House projects in Hillbrow are experiencing serious full-time staffing problems and it is going to be very difficult to make any permanent changes right now due to the festive season and the industry that is closing down - however we will do our best so as not to harm the children currently in the projects.

The problems we are facing:

1. A full-time staff member was medically unfit to work any longer and resigned at the end of October, (we just got word that she died - rumours of Aids).
2. Two full-time staff members, that is our Social worker and a Youth Care Worker, decided that regardless of the fact that our projects are working for only 365 days of the year and for only 24 hours a day, which they knew at the time of their appointments in April/May, decided that they are not going to work over the festive season and absconded - no notice, phone call, or any indication that they will not return to work on the 1st of December (made sure they got their money and that is the end of them)!

3. The two remaining full-time staff members decided that they have already made their holiday arrangements and will not work over the festive season, not that any of our full-time staff members ever worked over the festive season, it has always been our feeling that they deserve to be with their families and we (Jean and myself) worked every christmas, new year, easter, women's day, or what ever day there has been So, guess who (the idiots that we are) will be working!
4. With great urgency we are busy locating volunteers to assist with the projects for the months of December/January. Kulula is too stable to send the girls that are in the Drop-in and Intombi to Kulula, we will have to take the responsibility of the children and ensure care for them.

Anyways, just to let you know that things are hectic, that we (that is the advisory or old management) suddenly have lots of responsibilities that we did not bargain for. By the way, other than to notify us about this 'gemors', the new managements to date have not had the need to invite us to any of their meetings or to make use of our advisory committee's expertise. Very difficult, but we are keeping our distance to allow them breathing space. Funny (?), that now suddenly we are right in the middle of the projects at this time of the year.

It is not that bad, we love the children, care about the projects and we will find volunteers to help with the projects and to take care of the children.

Will contact you in January to let you know what's happening.

Have a wonderful festive season filled with peace and love.

Adèle du Plessis
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