



WE DARE TO CARE

Princess Alice Adoption Home (PAAH), more than anything, is a place of hope. Although babies enter our care when they have not been given the ideal start in life, we are able to offer them the best possible second chance and ensure that they receive endless love and quality care, until they join their more permanent families.

The home cares for 30 babies and toddlers (aged newborn to two years old) in a healthy and homely nursery environment. As a temporary place of safety, we provide 24 hour residential care to babies who have been consented for adoption, abandoned, or occasionally removed from family care.

We are a facility of Jo'burg Child Welfare (JCW) and the adoption and foster care processes are handled by their social workers.



PAAH is also a safe haven for up to four pregnant girls who are destitute or in crisis. While staying at the home, the birth moms are counselled and helped to decide whether to keep their baby or consent for adoption. PAAH ensures that they receive antenatal care and are supported throughout the birth experience.

We provide trainee caregivers and nannies with practical experience in professional baby care. Our staff engages with schools and other community organisations in Gauteng, focussing particularly on workshops with teenagers addressing issues like sexuality, responsibility, teenage pregnancy and related topics.

The home is predominantly a donor funded organisation and drives an active volunteer programme to assist us in providing for the emotional, physical and developmental needs of our young charges.

THE PAST

PAAH is situated in the leafy suburb of Westcliff, Johannesburg and was established in 1930. The home was opened by Princess Alice, who was the longest-lived of Queen Victoria's grandchildren. Her husband, the Earl of Athlone, was Governor-General of the-then Union of South Africa between 1924 and 1931.



While in the country, Princess Alice was active in improving the welfare of Johannesburg's vulnerable children. PAAH's history is closely linked to the city's development. It was initially opened to serve the mining community, but our services have evolved into the current form as the surrounding community and society at large has changed. Part of our proud history is that PAAH was one of the first home's to serve children of all racial and cultural backgrounds.

HOW WE OPERATE

PAAH operates within a very controlled budget. 13 nursery staff and three domestic staff (working in shifts) meet the babies' needs around the clock, seven days each week, 365 days of the year.

However, to further ensure that our focus is on quality rather than routine care, we also coordinate an active volunteer programme to support the staff.

- **Volunteers**

PAAH has a long relationship with volunteerism, having operated on an almost entirely voluntary basis until 1994. After a relatively stringent application and orientation process, individuals play a pivotal role in caring for the little ones by playing with them, loving them, stimulating them and lending a much needed helping hand in feeding them. We have a solid database of volunteers that have enlisted with the organisation. In response to tightened legislation, each individual is required to provide police clearance before engaging with the children.

Several professional services are also rendered free of charge.

On average, 100 regular volunteers provide us with 450 hours of service each month.



PRIMARY SERVICES

- **Caring For Orphan and Vulnerable Children: Abantwana Bethu (Isizulu meaning “our babies”)**

Goal: *To provide round-the-clock emotional, physical and health care for approximately 65 babies per annum, who have been abandoned or consented for adoption, abandoned, orphaned or occasionally removed from family care.*



Our focus is on ensuring that infants do not remain in institutional care but move into permanent families before the age of two, where they will grow up in a stable environment within a caring family unit. Our emphasis therefore is not on babies who have been removed from their families due to abuse, although from time to time we do admit such cases. Similarly, while we don’t specialise in caring for HIV positive babies, they can be and are cared for and anti-retroviral treatment is administered where appropriate.

Auxiliary nurses and caregivers provide around the clock physical, health and emotional care to our babies, but we also rely on the volunteers to bond with the children. It is well documented that bonding is essential for an individual’s ability to form attachments later in life.

Some volunteers commit to performing certain therapies and interactions with specific babies, for example: baby gym, speech therapy and kangarooing. Professional volunteers (such as physiotherapists and occupational therapists) provide pro bono services to ensure the optimal development of babies.

Our focus is on the holistic well-being of the babies and this differentiates us from many other children’s homes.

- **Birth Mom Programme: Omamo Bethu (Isixhosa meaning “our mothers”)**

Goal: *To provide safety, shelter, emotional support, skills development and a healthier lifestyle to young pregnant mothers.*

PAAH is able to accommodate up to four pregnant girls who are in crisis or destitute. The girls are placed in our care by a JCW social worker who continues to provide them with professional counselling as they make what are often difficult life choices. The birth moms get involved in the daily life of PAAH and usually stay for about three months or until their gestation period has ended. We do not receive any funding for the accommodation of the girls.



- **Community Service: Ubuntu (meaning “humanity” in all local languages)**

PAAH provides trainee caregivers and nannies with practical experience in professional baby care. Our staff engages with schools and other community organisations in Gauteng, focussing particularly on workshops with teenagers addressing issues like sexuality, responsibility, teenage pregnancy and related topics.

We also host community service volunteers from numerous government and private schools, and universities.

GOVERNANCE

PAAH is a facility of Jo’burg Child Welfare and is a registered Non-Profit Organisation (000-566 NPO) and Public Benefits Organisation with Section 18A tax exemption (PBO No. 18/11/13/1110). The financial accounts are audited annually by KPMG.

We operate under the management of JCW’s Board of Management.

The home is BEE compliant and supports at least 75% black and previously disadvantaged communities as per the BEE codes.

IMPACT

Average no. of babies cared for annually	65
No. of babies cared for in 2011/2012	61
No. of new admissions in 2011/2012	35
No. of babies adopted in 2011/2012	23 (18 local adoptions, 5 inter-country adoptions)
No of babies placed in foster care	5
No of babies reunited with biological family members	9
No. of birth moms accommodated 2011/2012	9
Birth moms who consented babies for adoption	5

OUR DONORS

Significant donors in 2011/2012 included:

BoE Charitable Trust	Landrover Sandton
Kirkness Charitable Trust	JSE Limited
Dynamic Africa Projects	Omnimed
Lasher Tools	George Elkin Charitable Trust



BUDGET AND SUSTAINABILITY

PAAH actively appeals for donations-in-kind on a monthly basis. The donations amount to a significant cost saving and include all the nappies and basic toiletries required for both our babies and our birth moms.

Despite our cultivation of donations in kind and volunteer services, our operating budget for 2012/2013 is R 1 718 154.

A maximum of R792 000 will be received in the form of Place of Safety fees from the Department of Social Development during the year. Therefore, to sustain our programmes, we need to generate R926 154 from corporates, trusts & foundations, individuals and events.

CONCLUSION

The quality of care for our babies, as well as mothers, or mothers-to-be, requires time, effort, and of course, funds – each of which produces challenges on a daily basis.

As a charitable organisation, we rely on the kindness and compassion of companies, trust funds, schools, clubs and individuals to keep our doors open. Those who contribute to our Home know they have played a significant part in making little lives count positively and to keeping hope afloat.

We look forward to hearing from you and hope that our proposal will be given favourable consideration.

*For further information regarding the Home, or to arrange a visit, please contact the Manager:
Jo-Anne Schermeier, on (011) 646-5641 or email princess_alice@mweb.co.za.*

*J.Schermeier
May 2012*

