



STEP UP 4 AUTSIM

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REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF THE STEP UP 4 AUTISM THERAPY CENTER IN MATHARE, NAIROBI KENYA

INTRODUCTION

The steppers therapy center is an initiative by the **Step Up 4 Autism** a community based organization in Mathare slums Nairobi Kenya that seeks to bring the very expensive therapy services to children with autism and other disabilities for free. This program is running under volunteer ship of various young people in the universities and colleges with in the Kenyan education system under a nonprofit registered in Kenya as Ready Aiders Foundation

The main aim of the program remains making sure that children with autism and other developmental and physical disabilities get the necessary and basic therapy services to take them through life. These are children from poor backgrounds whose parents live below the poverty line and have other children also apart from these who are challenged; the implication of such a family setting is that the challenged children are often ignored as they are considered not productive to the family at any level.

As an organization our program is focused towards changing that and directing more attention to the special child and their special needs of therapy and favorable diet being taken into account not only by the families and community around them but also the government through its legislations and policies. So far we are educating parents and caregivers on the best way forward in terms of handling their special children and their needs.

This program also recognizes that parents with special children need counseling to help them handle frustration and stress and the stigma they face that's why our program also includes parents and caregivers counseling sessions.

The therapy center opens on; **Tuesdays, Wednesday, Thursdays and Saturdays** as from **9a.m to 4pm.**

METHODOLOGY

The therapy center space is a one room subdivided into two parts, the front room acts as an office and also the counselling room for the parents and care givers while the back room acts as the therapy place for the children with autism. Due to limited resources from the time we rolled out this therapy project in July 2017 we had been able to only offer behavior

modification therapy. But after receiving the donations from global giving we were able to expand the services to occupational therapy and added also play therapy which is also critical in the management of the autism disorder.

Each therapy session lasts for 45 minutes each child at a time. so that in a day we are able to serve six to eight children. For the regular children in our list we have created a system whereby they all come to the therapy center on a rotational basis so that each of them gets each of the therapy offered.

On Saturdays the team of the children in our therapy project and others also come to the therapy center for the joint play therapy.

The system we use for management is a volunteer system whereby professionals in the autism field each give 45 minutes of their time a week to one child at the therapy center. In return the therapy center offers them transport money and lunch as a sign of appreciation for their volunteer time.

BUDGET

This is the breakdown of how the money received from global giving has been put to use at the therapy center so far. The total amount we received from the global giving team totals to 31,674 Kenya shillings that is approximately (316.74) USD. As of this date we have spent 31,674ksh (316.74USD) to put up the basics that we require for a functional therapy center.

ITEM	UNIT	IN USD	KSH
Volunteers lunch and transport	12	180	18,000
Therapy wear(white coats)	3	60	6,000
Books and play toys	18	76	7,600
TOTAL	33	316	31,600

*Note: the exchange rate used in the figures is 1 USD is equal to 100KSH
All the figures with decimals have been rounded off to two decimal places*

SUCCESES ACHIEVED THROUGH THE GLOBAL GIVING DONATION

From the donation we received through the global giving fundraising where donors from all over the world each contributed a certain amount to the project, we have been able to do the following:

- Introduce occupational therapy before we could not have been able to do this since we did not have a means to facilitate more volunteer therapists in the occupational therapy field.
- We repainted the therapy room to colors that are autism friendly.

- We have been able to buy therapy equipment such as a therapy table, projector, white lab coats and toys among others.
- As a result of the above we have increased the number of children we serve per week from 15 to 30.

OUR CHALLENGES SO FAR.

Among the challenges we face in the implementation of the project, the following stand out.

- The therapy room is small and therefore cannot be portioned further to get more rooms for different kinds of therapy .With additional funding we will be able to rent an additional room which we will use to provide the crucial therapy of speech, we currently are not in apposition to give speech therapy due to the room challenge.
- Lack of employed professionals .Even though we have therapists who volunteer ,we still need some who the project can employ permanently to be able to serve anytime the children show up at the center.

CONCLUSION

The work that you support by donating goes a long way not only to improve the lives of the children in the autism spectrum but also in giving hope to their caregivers, parents and families. Very many children in the spectrum from poverty stricken homes all over Kenya cannot access services to improve their well-being and conditions of living, their parents carry the burden of the stigma that comes with having children with disabilities or disorders in the African setting.

Our services are purely on a charity basis and the need to make a difference, we invite you once again to support our mission by being a regular donor and when you have time and the resources to come and volunteer at the center as you serve the children whom many have neglected and abused.

We are looking forward to partnering with companies ,colleges, universities and churches so that we establish a strong volunteers network which will be coming to Kenya to help us in fulfilling this mission and calling that we respond to every day by dedicating time and resources towards children with autism and other disorders .If you can be the bridge between us and the partnerships or funding ,we would really appreciate and the children though not aware would be glad for the help you would have brought them.

Once again a big thank you for making this project possible through your time and contributions. We view you as a partner and a friend.



A photo of Titus Ngugi (clinical psychologist) giving therapy to Nancy at the center



Rukia Hassan (special needs teacher) taking her time with derrick at the center.



Lady in red jacket (Jane, a parent),young girl in black trouser and jacket(Faith, a child with autism),lady in blue jeans and black t-shirt(Florence, an occupational therapist),gentleman in red t-shirt (Kenneth Apopa, the project coordinator) standing outside the therapy room.

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