



MEDIA RELEASE

Girls and Boys Town defining a legacy after The 702 Sun International CEO SleepOut™ 2015

26 April 2016 – For 58 years Girls and Boys Town has provided refuge for children in need. Vulnerable, hurt, unloved, neglected, abused, homeless – the reasons are many, but their needs for help are similar.

Today some 15 000 children, young adults and families from disadvantaged schools and communities come into contact with the organisation each year, and all are aided in some way. Its work and the success stories GBT has drawn from situations where society has failed sparked a massive rallying cry for resources not only to continue this work, but also to build a legacy that will continue its impact into the future.

Last year a large gathering of South Africa's top CEOs spent the coldest night of the year on a Joburg street. It was their effort to identify with the plight of vulnerable and homeless children who spend nights out in freezing weather. Added to this – they all gave a significant financial donation.

Through these efforts The 702 Sun International CEO SleepOut™ – an international philanthropic call to action that engages business as a force for good – saw more than R26-million raised for Girls and Boys Town.

“This is a moment in our history that we will never forget. Through the one cold night, our children, those cared for by other similar organisations and those living on the streets – young and old – have become visible,” GBT's CEO Lee Loynes said in an emotional tribute to sponsors at the time.

As The Sun International CEO SleepOut™ 2016 gets underway, Ms Loynes explains that the 2015 funds have been collected and audited and the organisation is able to announce the Legacy Projects – the plans for how the money will be used. The projects aim to address needs across different areas to both build on what is currently being done and to expand the offerings to introduce new responses to children's challenges.

Some projects will be completed quickly, over a few months, while others are longer-term investments that will create structures for children's development and safety. All the projects will be completed by the end of 2018.

“We are sincerely grateful to have received the backing to achieve our many goals sooner,” says Ms Loynes. “The six dedicated projects are designed to fit in with our evidence-based methodologies and work seamlessly in order to strengthen our capacity in critical areas.”

The projects integrate well into GBT's S.H.I.N.E.™ goals and strategic approach through which work and energy is focused into five key areas: Significance, Home, Independence, Nurture and Education.

Says Ms Loynes: “The Legacy Projects will advance, and most importantly sustain over time, GBT's mission to support South Africa's vulnerable youth – and help them to shine.”

Plans for the six GBT Legacy Projects

Significance

Live Love Laugh: Therapy through relaxation and skills-building

The residents of Girls and Boys Town, unlike many of their peers who have a different family situation, are traumatised, guarded and stressed individuals who find it difficult to trust others, relax and experience joy. GBT's structured on- and off-campus therapeutic activities and holiday programmes aim to provide new and challenging experiences that enable children to build and retain a 'happy memory' bank they can draw on through their early

years and adulthood. This project aims to expose them to fun, teach them that life can be joyful, that they are safe and able to let their guard down and gradually trust the people around them.

Home

Buildings as foundations for life: Safe and loving homes

Many youth have never experienced a safe home environment and have no idea what a functional family looks like. Plans are to remodel the Gauteng-based GBT housing units away from dormitory-style living into smaller, home-living units that are more personal and nurturing. Upgrades will adapt six current residential environments into smaller family-style living residences where vulnerable and special-needs children will be cared for.

Independence

Preparation for life: Looking after personal and social well-being

Most youth come from damaged and damaging backgrounds and lack the foundation needed to fit in well with the society around them. They lack social skills, or are fearful of the outside world because of the harm they have previously suffered. GBT will further strengthen families and prepare for disengagement from in-residence care by drawing on community networks to offer children life-skills, empowerment programmes and independence. The end-goal is to transform the children from vulnerable youth into stable, resilient, functioning grown-ups, integrated into the society and ready to contribute to their community.

A research component will ensure that this legacy project results in a profound and sustained effect not only by informing GBT's own work but that through dissemination of research findings to colleagues across the country, it facilitates greater cohesion and cooperation. This will extend the beneficial effect of The 702 Sun International CEO SleepOut™ investment far beyond GBT campuses to the broader field of child-care work.

Nurture

Community outreach: Nurturing the personal journey

Partnerships and community service outings will provide GBT residents with opportunities to engage with others in the community – elderly, physically or mentally challenged people, those who work in environmental or animal-rescue initiatives. Nurturing the personal journey that enables a young person to become sensitive and empathetic is an integral part of psychological and physical care for self and others. Extending community-outreach activities to schools across Gauteng – including access to structured and accredited workshops on how to manage classrooms in schools and the use of GBT's hotline – are also elements of this project. At present there are 60 to 163 disadvantaged schools in Gauteng waiting for GBT workshops, 5 126 teachers and 139 632 learners.

Education

Home schooling: Meaningful and measurable progress in education

Many of the children in GBT's care have missed out on proper schooling, are disruptive learners or face other learning challenges. Some children are referred to GBT because of community-based schools' resistance to admit them as learners. On top of the needs GBT is meeting for the children currently in its care, the waiting list for those asking for assistance is long.

GBT ensures that home schooling is provided to young residents in an effort to help them catch up with others their age, or fill in the gaps where they have missed schooling. The ultimate purpose is to enable children to be re-integrated into regular school. While some youth require full-time home schooling when work with them starts, others need less in varying degrees. From the start, the goal is to transition each child to fully independent studies in accordance with her or his educational performance, abilities and needs.

Vehicles to get around

With The 702 Sun International CEO SleepOut™ funding, GBT is now able to transport larger numbers of its youth and staff safely. This legacy project is already completed: two 23-seater buses, two 16-seater combis and three sedans have begun to serve the needs of other Legacy Projects across Gauteng.

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About [The Sun International CEO SleepOut™](#)

The Sun International CEO SleepOut™ is part of a global movement, effecting positive social change for vulnerable and homeless communities. It asks current and future business leaders to spend a winter's night on the streets, raising funds and empathy for the homeless, and resulting in real change around the world. Founded in Australia 10 years ago, The CEO SleepOut™ is now a global initiative, with SleepOuts taking place in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom. It is leading the new wave of philanthropy and social entrepreneurship, where profits are being used for purpose, and leaders are inspiring others to find compassion and sustainable solutions for those who need it most. The inaugural CEO SleepOut™ in South Africa took place in 2015 when 247 CEO and C-Suite members raised more than R26-million for the Founding Beneficiary Partner Girls & Boys Town. In 2016, The CEO SleepOut™ is focusing on supporting education as a means to eradicate homelessness. On Thursday 28 July, C-Suite members, along with a colleague, a student and a matric learner with notable leadership qualities, will Rise To The Challenge and spend the night on The Nelson Mandela Bridge. The funds raised will be awarded to the 2016 Beneficiary Partners, namely ASHA Trust, Columba Leadership and the Steve Biko Foundation, all of whom work tirelessly to educate our youth. There is also a national call to action for the rest of the country to get involved; #SouthAfricaMustRise. Companies, universities and schools can SleepOut™ in solidarity at their own Sympathy, Student and School SleepOut™ events.

The 2016 CEO SleepOut™ Champions Line-Up

Founding Partner: The Philanthropic Collection. Title Partners: Sun International. City Host Partner: City Of Jo'burg. Media Suite Partners: Caxton Printing and Community Newspapers, CliffCentral, eNCA, Jacaranda FM, Kagiso Media, Moneyweb, Times Media Group. Stakeholder Partners: Adams & Adams, BDO, IQ Business, Nedbank. Primary Beneficiary Partners: ASHA Trust, Columba Leadership, Steve Biko Foundation. Secondary Beneficiary Partners: Homeless Talk, The Salvation Army. Influencers: Australia - The Vinnies CEO Sleepout, Canada - The Covenant House Sleep Out: Executive Edition, New Zealand - The Lifewise Big Sleepout, United Kingdom - The CEO Sleepout UK, United States - The Covenant House Sleep Out: Executive Edition. Ambassadors: Yusuf Abramjee: South African Goodwill Ambassador, HE Adam McCarthy: Australian High Commissioner. Contributing Sponsors: AIG, Elliot Mobility, KFC, Makro, Vodacom. Friends: ABCSA, Afro-IP, ASSA ABLOY, Boogertman + Partners, Campbell Consulting, Compass Group, Décor-D-Zign, Design Simplified, Empathy 1Work, ER 24, Eyethu Events, GI Consulting, MMG, Ornico, PayU, Shine Studios, Tribal Fish.

About Girls and Boys Town

Established in 1958, Girls & Boys Town (GBT) is a national non-profit organisation that runs proven and successful programmes to rehabilitate and strengthen youth and their families and communities in difficulty. Through a combination of interventions aligned to GBT's S.H.I.N.E.™ goals and strategic approach, on average it assists 15000 beneficiaries a year. In partnership with 800 schools and some 11000 educators, Girls and Boys Town assists 350 000 learners through training and supporting well-managed schools, learner retention and social and academic achievement. Contact GBT through its website, www.girlsandboystown.org.za and the national hotline 0861 58 58 58.

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