

Chrysalis Academy

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Chrysalis Academy is an initiative of the Western Cape Provincial Cabinet, established in the year 2000 at Porter Estate in the suburb of Tokai. Its foundation was a response by the Provincial Government to the high crime rate in the Western Cape, which is one of the highest among the provinces in South Africa, especially due to substance abuse and an active gang culture in Cape Town's mainly disadvantaged communities.

The result is a holistic and sustainable 5-year youth development program based on 3-month empowerment training that focuses on the individual's physical, emotional, mental, energetic and spiritual development, which is still unique to our knowledge. The Chrysalis Programme is a **preventative** initiative, as opposed to **rehabilitative.** It is registered as a NPO (Non Profit Organization) and mainly funded by the Western Cape Provincial Department of Community Safety.

At first the project only focused on young males aged 16 to 22 years, who were among the 'most at risk' to get absorbed by gangs, but since 2002 young females were also admitted. Since 2007, the age group has been expanded to 25 years, considering the deteriorating conditions of unemployed youth.

Since the project started 12 years ago, between **5,000** - **6,000 young people** from the different communities, reflecting the demographics of the Western Cape Province, were trained to be empowered for the challenges of life. As a result, the Academy has become one of the most successful youth development organisations in South Africa.

The need is so great in other areas of the Western Cape as well as other Provinces, that we were requested to train **11 young men from Kwa-Zulu Natal** who joined the 12 BRAVO Course from October-December 2012. These young men went through the same programme as the students but had to put in extra effort, as they graduated as **youth facilitators** on the 04th December 2012**,** to assist in launching a youth programme in KZN. Their first course consisting of **60 youths will graduate in May 2013.**

On the **22nd March** the Academy received a study visit from the **Gauteng Legislature**, in particular, the **Portfolio Committees** representing the Department of Social Development, Community Safety and Cultural Affairs and Sport. They had visited on a previous occasion and were so impressed with the Academy's holistic youth development programme that they wish to role out a similarly structured programme in Gauteng.

The Academy has also been approached by the **Eden District Municipality** to assist them in launching a youth programme to serve the needs of that region. On the 05th and 06th May we went through a rigorous recruitment process in George and of those interviewed, 35 students from the Eden District will be trained on the 13 ALPHA Course (04th May- 27th July 2013).

Some of Chrysalis Academy's senior staff and instructors have now been trained by Dr. Melanie Salmon, the South African co-ordinator of TRE and they will receive further practical experience over the next three months. In July 2012, they will be certified as TRE facilitators in a youth development context.

Chrysalis will be embarking on a pilot project with their students over the next nine to ten weeks where students will be taught the six exercises and will also do regular tremor sessions whilst completing their three-month programme. The results of the pilot project will be analysed by Dr. Berceli and his researchers in the USA.

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