

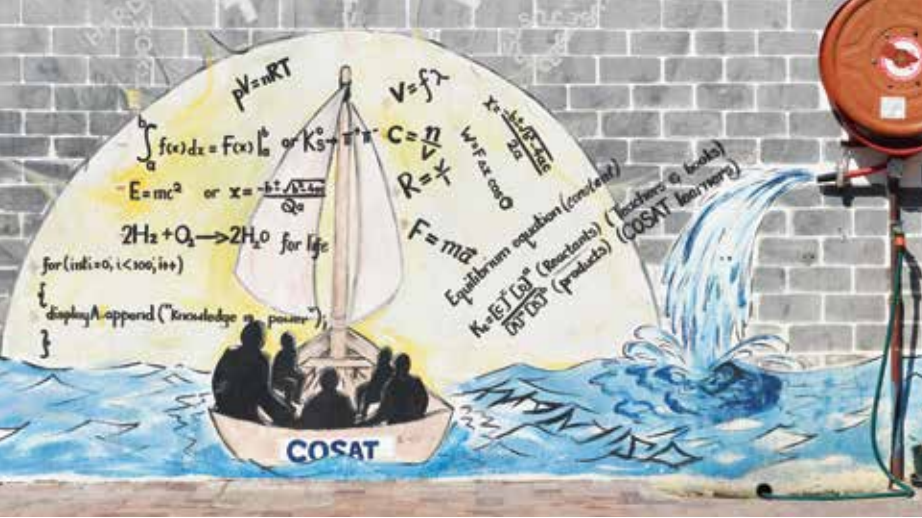


SCHOOLS WELLNESS CENTRE

In Khayelitsha things would be different if the Schools Wellness Centre didn't exist. Learners wouldn't get psychosocial support, parents wouldn't be assisted in how to support their kids and teachers would lose the professional wellness support provided by the social worker (and her supervised students) in developing learners for academic and whole-child excellence.

The University of Cape Town's Schools Improvement Initiative (SII), in collaboration with Metropole East Education District, the Khayelitsha-Eastern Substructure Metro District Health Services and COSAT (Centre of Science & technology) established the Wellness Centre as a pilot project at COSAT in 2015. In 2017 the Wellness Centre was extended to three more SII partner schools in Khayelitsha, thus becoming the Schools Wellness Centre





Vision

To be a model of excellence in school-based wellness through providing psychosocial support to learners in challenged contexts by deepening collaboration and community engagement.

Mission

We strive for excellence through a quality support structure that is integrated, holistic, accessible, sustainable and community orientated.



Objectives: 3 pillars of the Schools Wellness Centre



The three pillars are developed through individual counseling, group counseling and family reconstruction therapy.

Focus on 'wellbeing'

Our approach is integrated, holistic, and addresses systemic obstacles, which function to inhibit the development of the whole being within the system of the family, the school and community. Khayelitsha as place and space is a critical example of how systemic barriers come to life. The Schools Wellness Centre is the vehicle for learner wellbeing.

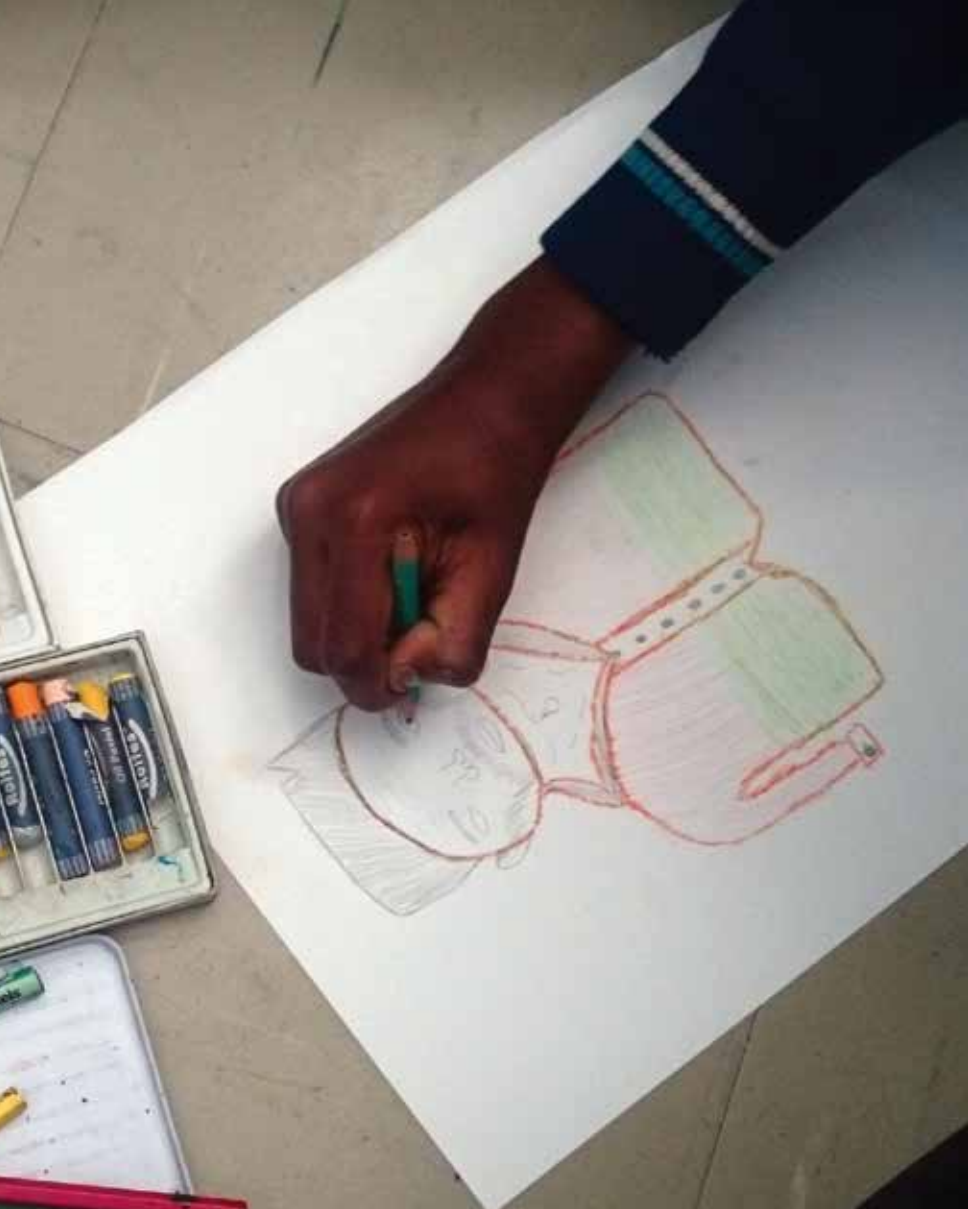
Because parents are key to the emotional health and wellbeing of the child, parent workshops and group therapy sessions are also offered to parents with a focus on supporting their children in understanding adolescent behaviour.

Aim of the Schools Wellness Centre

As the first of its kind, the Schools Wellness Centre helps learners build resilience, reduce socio-behavioural risks and deepen their understanding of themselves and others, thereby enabling them to manage their daily challenges and achieve optimal school performance. Ultimately the aim of the Schools Wellness Centre is to develop integrated, self-aware young adults who will become active, fully engaged members of their community and the broader South African society.

Ongoing psychological support, group interventions, topic-based classroom discussions and family reconstruction sessions are provided by a small yet dynamic team: a full-time social worker together with third and fourth-year social work students offers ongoing practitioner support and services. In 2017, a total of nine students were supervised, ten were supervised in 2018 and in 2019 this number grew to 15. The increase in student placements has allowed far more learners to receive direct and indirect support through a large number of community-based projects that have taken root at the schools.





What's offered

In addition to individual, group and family counseling, programmes address:

- Gender-based violence
- Addiction and substance abuse
- Depression and anxiety
- Leadership development
- Career choice and university admission processes
- HIV/Aids
- Pregnancy, sexual health
- Appropriate referral pathways

Partner organisations include

ChildLine: Capacitates learners by developing psychosocial interventions through peer support.

SANCA (South African National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence): Capacitates teachers, parents and learners by addressing substance abuse.

Khayelitsha Site B Youth Clinic and MSF (Medecins Sans Frontieres): Screening for pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS is administered by trained staff in mobile clinics.

Empilweni – place of healing. Capacitates learners to manage substance abuse and issues relating to mental health.



The benefit of the Wellness Centre

- Psychosocial and other support interventions are offered to learners from disadvantaged communities, who would otherwise not have received this support.
- Provides direct psychosocial support via social worker teams across four schools. In 2018, more than 500 learners were reached directly. Many more received indirect support via project participation. Already in 2019, between January and March - 134 learners received direct support and, indirectly, over 600 learners were reached.
- It actively brings parents and guardians into the wellness model through family reconstruction, thus facilitating outside-classroom support.



**WHAT
LEARNERS
SAY:**

**Amahle Mbetshu,
Grade 10:**

“Having the Wellness Centre is really good. There wasn't anything like this at my previous school. Life can be so hard, I like that I got someone to talk to as soon as I asked for help at the school and I did not have to wait”.

**Siyamthanda Satula,
Grade 12:**

“The Wellness Centre has really assisted me with many challenges. I feel really good after having spoken to someone and that makes me look forward to school sometimes because I can always share what is going on in my life”.

Azile Salman, Grade 10:

“I managed to connect to so many of my classmates through the classroom group sessions. I think I am understood better by the people around me because I was able to present who I was to everyone. Other learners were also sharing. I think it helps people not feel alone or judged, it made me feel free”.

The Schools Wellness Centre transforms lives. It makes a difference. It aids wellbeing. It changes the horizon of what's possible for every learner. Our goal is to make the Schools Wellness Centre an enduring feature of schooling in Khayelitsha



THE SCHOOLS WELLNESS CENTRE

Changing schools for good through psychosocial support

CONTACT US

TEMBEKA MZOZOYANA
SWC COORDINATOR & SOCIAL WORKER

Tel: +27 (0)21 361 9259

Cell: +27 (0)82 375 7728

Email: Tembeka.Mzozoyana@uct.ac.za

DR PATTI SILBERT
SII PROJECT MANAGER

Tel: +27 (0)21 6503570

Cell: +27 (0)83 789 2044

Email: patti.silbert@uct.ac.za

www.sii.uct.ac.za