



Empowering survivors of

Rape and Abuse

NEWSLETTER – SEPTEMBER 2013

Hi everyone

This is the very first newsletter of the EPIC Foundation! Therefore quite a long one ☺ For more info on our organisation please view our website: www.epicfoundation.org.za

Our Vision - Empowering survivors of rape and abuse.

Our Mission - We live in a society where people often find themselves in difficulty due to trauma, crime, unemployment and other circumstances beyond their control. Everyone has the right to be given assistance to help work through these hard times and to be empowered to uplift their lives. It is our mission to put projects and tools in place to make this possible for men, women and children.

The Beginning

After having done work in the Gauteng area for almost 3 years I decided to register my own organisation in an effort to better serve the Gauteng Community. I was born in Gauteng and have lived here all my life. I am very passionate about the Gauteng community and giving a helping hand where I can to those in need. The EPIC Foundation was registered on 24 April 2013 with the help of the legal firm of Webber Wentzel. We officially started operating on 1 June 2013.

My Story

I have myself experienced various traumas in my life and have an understanding of how lonely it can be if there is no one giving you a helping hand to work through these experiences. This has encouraged me to do the work I do and to register the EPIC Foundation as I would like to be that helping hand to those in need. I, quite unexpectedly, was nominated and selected **for Hero of the Month of June through Lead SA**. This was a huge privilege to me. Together with this I had the opportunity of sharing my personal story with the Gauteng community on Radio 702, 94.7, the Star Newspaper and Pretoria News. My story was not an easy one to tell, being a rape survivor myself, but I realised by talking about what happened to me I could be an encouragement and help to others out there who might be dealing with the same difficulties in their lives.

Details of my nomination and my story can be viewed on: <http://leadsa.co.za/?p=14131>





My story will also shortly appear on a blog being prepared by **Angelique du Toit**, which will be available as a link on her website soon: www.angeliquedutoit.co.za Angelique du Toit is a Speaker | Seminar Facilitator | Writer who encourages people to live with greater purpose, passion and productivity. Her focus is shaping hearts, shifting minds and sharing success. Angelique heads up Women, Arise!, a Personal and Professional Empowerment Company. She is a Founding Member of the Professional Speakers Association of South Africa. She received the award for “Outstanding Presentation” by the Dale Carnegie Institute. She is a Board Member of Marketplace Calling International and is co-owner and Director of Annique Health and Beauty and works with the sales force of 20 000 consultants. Angelique specialises in training on personal transformation, productivity, leadership and business excellence. Cell for Angelique: +27 83 702 1306 | Email: angeldt@iafrica.com

Angelique has been a huge inspiration and influence in my life.

Our first initiative

We were fortunate enough through the assistance of Primedia to have the public give donations for our Comfort Pack Project at all Timberland Stores after a request in the Star newspaper. Our first donation to the EPIC Foundation through this consisted of 26 boxes of bags and content items enough to fill 500 bags to be sent out to crisis centres! We have had continuous support from other organisations since then. **We are tremendously grateful to the Gauteng community for this lovely support.**

Supporters

Some of the companies/organisations/schools who have been supporting the EPIC Foundation:

- PricewaterhouseCoopers
- Standard Bank
- Sasol Polymers
- Law Property
- UCS Solutions
- BDO
- Yale Security
- Independent Newspapers
- Thaba Ya Batswana in association with the High Tea Society
- SOJO Business and Tourism
- Woman@Work
- Chantilly Networking
- Juicy Living
- Barlowworld
- Alberton Lions
- Elliott Mobility
- Medscheme
- FF Décor
- Sharonlea Primary School
- Marvan Services
- Dariel Solutions
- Edenvale High School
- King Edward High School via KESCO
- Crown Relocations
- St Martin’s Church
- Victory House Private School
- Warm the World
- Honey Fashion Accessories (Alberton Team)
- La Salon Leigh – who also supports the Fairy Godmother project with nails and make-up



Alberton City Mall Management adopted the EPIC Foundation as their official charity and is sponsoring us with a lovely shop space to run our projects from. This has been a huge blessing for us having access to the public, not just to get support, but also to be in a place where survivors have access to us for further assistance and referrals.

Our accomplishments so far

We have established a good network to distribute these comfort packs all over the Gauteng province to ensure that these bags get to as many survivors as possible. We also have systems in place where we keep track of the bag distribution via a numbering system, a bag register and a feedback form from centres to ensure that these bags end up in the right hands. Since registration we have been sending out on average **150 bags a week** to centres over the province. We are proud to announce that the donations from the firms and Gauteng community have enabled us to do this.

The feedback received from these centres on the impact of these bags has been tremendous. It makes a significant difference to the survivors at a point when they are at their lowest, especially so for the children.

I do **motivational talks** and have had several bookings during August for Women's month and have already received a few bookings for the 16 days of Activism period.

I have presented a few **awareness campaigns/talks** which has received positive response. There are so many people out there who do not know what to do if they are a victim of rape and abuse.



We have teamed up with Mark Grobbelaar (friend of Alison – rape survivor) of WomenInpowered to provide **self-defence classes** specifically for women. Our aim with Mark is that we might not be able to do anything about the rapist, but we can empower women with skills to help them get out of and avoid situations where they could be raped. Contact details for Mark – Cell: 082 881 6215 – email: mark@wip.org.za website: www.wip.org.za



Our total distribution since registration is 2700 comfort packs to the Gauteng Community

These are some of the centres we support:

- Childline
- Teddy Bear Clinic
- Women & Men Against Child Abuse
- Children's Sexual Assault Clinic on the East Rand
- OR Thambo Hospital
- Alpha Trauma Centre
- Lifeline
- POWA
- Ithemba
- Gauteng Department of Community Safety which includes the Green Door Project
- Thuthuzela Care Centres in Natalspruit, Soweto, Mamelodi, Thembisa, Laudium, Lenasia
- Ikaya Lethemba
- Daveyton Medico Legal
- Various smaller victim empowerment centres over the province who provides services to their local police stations



Step-up programme

First steps are in progress to set up the skills development programme for women in shelters. If there are any firms out there who would like to be part of this programme by sponsoring, assessments, training, etc. please let me know.

For training purposes we are looking for donations of the following:

- **Screen and projector**
- **Old laptops/desktops** you no longer need – will be used for basic computer training. A section will be set up in the EPIC office for this purpose.

Fairy Godmother Project

We have been receiving quite a few donations of dresses from the public to support this initiative. We were fortunate to receive a lovely donation of dresses from Nicole Laxton – Miss SA Teen finalist 2011, finalist for

Miss Earth SA 2013, youth ambassador for Casual Day and youth ambassador for Epilepsy SA. As most young girls know who she is, it made the receiving of dresses for them even more special! A huge thank you to Nicole for supporting the EPIC Foundation!!

We have assisted approximately 30 young ladies so far with dresses for their matric farewell. It has come to our attention that we should not only focus on the young ladies, but there is a need for suits for the young men as well. We therefore would like to put out a request for **suits for the boys**. We also link in with Princesses Project which was initially started by Leanne Strauss for this project.



Upcoming developments

We have teamed up with Lifeline Johannesburg to set up various **support groups**. If anyone wants to join a support group, please visit our website, fill in the form to indicate to us which support group you would like to join and e-mail this back to me. We will then be in touch.

More EPIC Offices: We are planning on setting up office in the Western Cape, with the help of the DNA Project, and in Windhoek specifically to run the Comfort Pack project. We are also looking at a possible option in Bloemfontein. Anyone interested in running these projects in these or other provinces please contact me.

I will soon be running my **Dare to Dream** Programme again. Proceeds of the attendance fee will go towards the EPIC projects. If anyone is interested in attending, let me know.

Volunteers

If you would like to become involved with volunteer work for the EPIC Foundation, please visit our website where you can obtain a volunteer application form. Complete and e-mail to me at info@epicfoundation.org.za. We need volunteers for:

- packing days
- sorting days,
- helping with deliveries of bags to crisis centres,
- collection of donations where people are not able to get to us
- counselling services by anyone who is fully qualified and registered and would like to offer their time
- providing training to shelter ladies as part of our skills development programme
- any other service you might be able to assist with



Campaigns/Fund raising

Please do visit our website if you wish to make a financial contribution.



Perfect Moments Charity Exhibition – is arranged by a group of students donating their “Perfect Moments” artwork to raise funds for the EPIC Foundation. The exhibition will take place on *24 October at Raceview Motors in Alberton from 18.30*. For more information contact Sanchi Leibach on 072 274 0491.

Join our **People Making a Difference Campaign** and donate R100 a month to help support a comfort pack per month for someone in need. Your monthly contribution can make a huge difference and have an impact on someone else's life. We will give recognition to each person who joins this campaign on our website. More communication about this will follow shortly.



We will also be running a **Bring a Bag Campaign** with the Alberton Team of Honey Fashion Accessories with Hannatjie Schafer, during the **16 days of activism**. More communications about this will also follow shortly.



Yale Security Stores are supporting the EPIC Foundation and our partner Mark Grobbelaar of Women Inpowered. Epic Foundation's collection bins are available in their stores over the province to contribute to the Comfort Pack Project. Yale Security Point will also be giving away some self-protection training courses with Mark from Women InPowered to 8 lucky ladies! Please look out for special discounts and promotions in their stores linked to the EPIC Foundation and Women Inpowered! These are the stores participating:



Your favourite security store

Brooklyn Mall, Carlswald Shopping Centre Midrand, Centurion Mall, Clearwater Mall, Fourways Mall, Hartebeespoort, Key West Shopping Centre, Menlyn Park Shopping Centre, Waterfall Mall shopping centre, Wonderpark, Woodmead Retail Park and Blairgowrie Plaza

Other exciting events are being planned more details to follow shortly...

Current needs of the EPIC Foundation

As always any donations of the items we use for the various projects will be appreciated – refer to the end of the newsletter for the lists of items used in our comfort packs. Financial donations are also most welcome. If you wish to make a financial donation, email info@epicfoundation.org.za, for the bank details.

Urgent needs

- We are in URGENT need of **underwear** for all women/men/children
- Crayons or colouring in pencils
- Surgical gloves and brown paper bags
- Small notebooks and pens
- Hair brush/combs
- Lip balm or small vaseline
- Wet wipes
- Small bottled water
- Shampoo (travel size)
- As sewing lessons are given at some of the shelters – we need someone who can help **service sewing machines**, and we need donations of **material** for the ladies to use.

We need the following items for the EPIC Office:

- **Plastic bins/containers** – we have wooden cupboards and am looking for plastic bins/containers to put in these cupboards to store the content items.
- **Office chairs** – we are in need of some office chairs for our office area – one main chair and two visitor's chairs and perhaps a couch will help us a lot.

Please also “like” our Facebook Page:
<https://www.facebook.com/theepicfoundation?ref=hl>

It is the goal of the EPIC Foundation to have the Comfort Pack Project and other initiatives functioning on an on-going basis in all the regions in South Africa to assist survivors where we can. Through these programs many lives have been touched and a real difference made.

With the help of the community we are in a position to continue making a difference. If you require more information about our Foundation, please let us know.

We hope for your continued support in the future

Best wishes



ALTA MCMASTER
CEO

DETAILS FOR COMFORT PACKS:

COMFORT PACK FOR WOMEN/MEN	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face cloth • Panties (<i>small, med or large – no G-strings and no writing</i>) or Underpants for men • Sanitary towels • Soap (<i>preferably bars</i>) • Toothpaste and toothbrush • Shampoo (<i>travel size</i>) • Deodorant (<i>spray or roll on</i>) for women and men • Comb or brush • Hairclips and hairbands • Body lotion • Small notebook and pen • Tissues (<i>small packs, not big boxes</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sweet – energy sweet i.e. SuperC or Glucose (<i>no chocolates as these melt in the bags</i>) • Small bottled water • Lip balm or small Vaseline • Note - words of comfort/care • Bag - to place the above items in <p><i>No used items please.</i></p> <p><i>Additional items to be handed to the Centres:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Tracksuit pants and T-shirts or gown and slippers or blankets</i> • <i>Small hand towel</i>
KIDDI PACK (FOR WHEN THE CASE IS REPORTED)	COURT BAG
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A4 sized fabric drawstring bag or kiddie backpack • Surgical gloves and plasters • Panties/underpants (<i>from ages 2 to 12</i>) • Pack of tissues (<i>small packs</i>) • Wet wipes (<i>small packs</i>) • Soap (<i>preferably bars</i>) • Face cloth • Toothpaste and toothbrush • Hairbrush • Hairclips and hairbands (for girls) • Lip balm • Sanitary towels • Small brown paper bag • Small notebook and pen • Colouring pencils/crayons • Colouring in book • Cool-drink/small bottled water • Snacks - chips /sweets/biscuits • Teddy/soft toy • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kiddie backpack • Sweets biscuits dried fruit • Cool-drink/small bottled water • Plasters • Notebook and Pen • Colouring in pencils / crayons • Colouring in book • Activity toy to keep the child busy i.e. small set of leggo's, small puzzles, etc • Teddy/soft toy • Tissues and wet-wipes <p><i>Additional items to be handed to the Centres:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Kiddie tracksuits and blankets</i> • <i>Small hand towel</i>

SHELTER WELCOME PACK – WOMEN	SHELTER WELCOME PACK – CHILDREN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toothpaste and toothbrush • Shampoo and conditioner (large bottles) • Hair comb • Deodorant Spray and roll on • Body Lotion (large bottles) • Bubble Bath • Soap • Face cloth • Sanitary towels • Razor • Lip balm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toothbrush and toothpaste • Baby Lotion • Baby Powder • Soap • Face Cloth • Nappies (if needed) • Any other baby products • Soft Toy
ABANDONED BABIES	CRIME SCENES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baby clothes • Baby bottle and dummy • Baby hat • Receiving blanket and baby grow • Formula mild • Gripe water • Nappies • Wet wipes • Bottle • Any other baby cleaning products • Basic meds (Panado, baby oil, Vaseline, antiseptic) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small tissues • Small bottled water • Pen • Small ring bound notebook • Chewing gum • Small packet of mints • Small pack of wet wipes • 3 pairs of surgical gloves