

Greetings from the Liggett's

WE APOLOGISE THAT IS HAS BEEN SO LONG SINCE YOU HEARD FROM US. TIME FLIES WHEN YOU HAVE TWO VERY BUSY BOYS TO RUN AFTER!

So here comes a very overdue update. With Mark Little just having been here we thought it would be appropriate to write a little bit more about what we do at NAG. We trust that Mark will complete the picture by filling in the gaps and sharing his experiences at NAG.

We very much enjoyed having Mark with us. It means a lot to have visitors from Legacurry, it makes us feel part of the family. The boys naturally loved having Mark around to play with. From our side we really appreciated just hanging out but also being able to share a little more about our life here.



Evenings spent in deep conversation, Ezra sharing his blanket. However, we are not sure Mark ever got used to the early bedtimes and mornings....

We have worked at NAG for 9 years now and still feel that it is where God has called us to be. What we value the most about NAG is that it is an organisation whose sole purpose is to support and capacitate grassroots organisations among the poor. We strongly believe that funding and resources should go directly to organisations that work to tackle the challenges right on the ground.

Here in South Africa these organisations lack funding from both government and donors despite the great work they do to serve their communities. Our focus at NAG is currently to catalyse investment in preschools. We decided to implement this as a 3-year strategy in order to make significant impact where it matters the most. Research shows that the first years of a child's life are crucial and that the effects of malnutrition and poor stimulation are impossible to repair. Our aim is therefore to support organisations that work with young children. This mostly involves improving infra-structure, resources and early learning programmes at locally run pre-schools.

NAG mainly operates in UGU district in KwaZulu Natal but this year our work with government has taken us to the Northern parts of Eastern Cape.



Brian facilitating a workshop with government to help them reach the neediest pre-schools.



Here is a typical example of a pre-school in a poor community in Eastern Cape.

A major reason why resources and funding don't reach preschools in poor communities in South Africa is that nobody knows that they exist. Having information about the preschools that exist is therefore key to a lot of what we do at NAG. We think Mark got a bit of an idea of the challenges we experience in this regard, it is very difficult to find local staff with sufficient skills to implement the data management systems NAG requires. We currently track information on everything from GPS co-ordinates and infrastructure to teacher qualifications and child attendance on thousands of pre-schools across the country.



Phumelele reading a story using resources mobilised through NAG partnerships.

This year we had to close down our youth programme due to lack of funding but we are very happy to see that many future leaders have become pre-schools teachers. Mark got to meet Phumelele who went on to work at a local pre-school after she spent 3 years on NAG's future leaders programme.

On the home front the boys have both enjoyed birthdays over the last few months as well as a visit from their grandparents.



Ezra got a bike for his birthday,



Aaron celebrated 1 year by starting to walk.

Brian's parents came to visit in July and offered much appreciated babysitting services during the school holiday. Aaron celebrated by starting walking a few days after his first birthday. He is now running and climbing and cause all sorts of chaos with his brother. Ezra insisted on a "Paw Patrol" birthday for turning four and invited all the neighbouring friends and a few others from further afield. We had lots of games, cake and fizzy drinks and by the end of the day Ezra had his next birthday party planned out!

We are forever grateful for the prayers and continued support from Legacurry church. Please feel free to contact us if you would like to sponsor a pre-school or support one of our ex future leaders to study to become a qualified pre-school teacher.

Love,
Brian, Maria, Ezra and Aaron