



UBUBELE

Engaging families in Alexandra, Johannesburg, South Africa

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The Genesis of Ububele

- **Established in 1999, as a training and service NGO on the outskirts of Alexandra Township, Ububele is a mental health organisation which aims to:**
- **Improve the emotional development and wellbeing of children, their parents, and other caregivers.**
- **Promote mental health and the development and advocating of low-cost models of preventative care and experiential training, which are suitable for low-resource environments.**
- **We strive to achieve the vision of a world where secure, physically and psychologically well-cared for children grow up to be emotionally healthy adults, competent parents and concerned citizens.**
- **If families are supported and strong, they are more likely to be able to meet the needs of their children. And well supported children are more likely to become active, contributing citizens in our beloved, though fractured, country.**



Alexandra Township



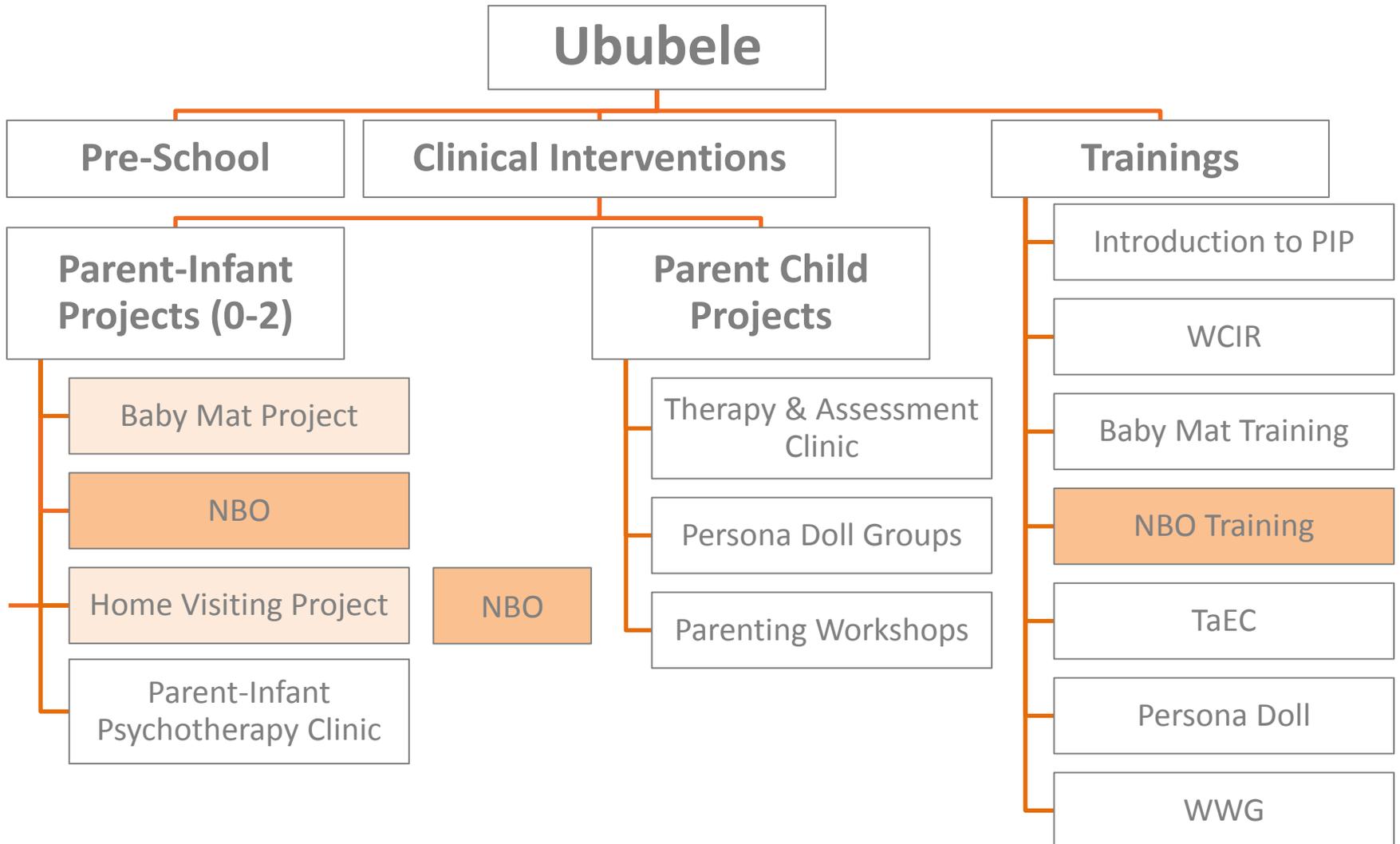


Alexandra Township





Ububele Programmes





Theory of Change

- Recent developments in the fields of early childhood development, attachment theory and neuroscience have shown that early childhood experiences are the biggest influencers on lifelong development and wellness.
- In addition to a key role of early nutrition, the quality of relational experiences and responsive caregiving during the earliest years of life has been shown to predict physical, social, and mental child outcomes. And by early - they mean **EARLY** - with research showing that the human brain is most susceptible to environmental influences during the first 1000 days of life. The research shows that responsive relationships and positive experiences during the first 1000 days of life are responsible for building sturdy brain architecture and healthy cardiovascular systems.
- Our first 1000 days basket of services



Some of our Early Childhood Practitioners





Home Visiting Project





Therapy and Assessment Clinic

- Our therapy and assessment clinic treats children who suffer from trauma, anxiety, maladjustments, depression, bereavement, challenging behaviour, eating disorders and complex needs.
- Additionally, we play a crucial role for schools and learners by providing psychoeducational assessments and assisting with appropriate school placements. Our psychologists are equipped to understand the diverse factors that impact a student's life and have the skills to address the range of difficulties while promoting resilience.
- Parents and caregivers have access to our clinic and are encouraged to take up their own therapeutic process



Parenting groups

- When things go wrong in families because children are being difficult it is necessary to change both the child and the parent's behaviour.
- The focus is on building/rebuilding good relationships.
- Ububele offers several parenting programmes to promote child and parent competencies and strengthen families.
- It has a strong focus on building a good relationship with the child through special time, giving children attention, and providing parents with tools to manage children who present with difficult behaviour.



Ububele Preschool

- **Ububele Preschool: therapeutic preschool with sufficient parent support**
- **Clinical Interview with teacher and class psychologist**
- **Parents and learners have access to all our therapy and assessment clinic offerings and parenting courses**
- **Each child is assessed – school readiness and developmental milestones**



Ububele Ubuntu Bus

- The Ububele Ubuntu Bus aims to bring mental health services closer to the people of the community of Alexandra, and to create opportunities for children and their caregivers to play and learn in a safe environment.
- One of the primary goals is to demonstrate the importance of play for the young child, and to encourage parents/caregivers to become active partners in their children's play. Through these interactions with children and parents, there is an opportunity to develop caregivers' reflective capacity with their children, and to assess and refer them for further interventions if necessary.



Supervision Heavy





COVID Learnings

- Impacted significantly by the pandemic
- At risk families – even more at risk
- Reframe and restructure our services – online offerings
- Clinic and hospital visits
- Adjust our material
- Demands on staff members



Engaging with Culture and Context

- **Constantly engage with appropriate cultural practices**
 - Umdlezane
 - Limited access – especially to men
 - The balance between offering emotional support and facing unbelievable levels of deprivation



Thank You!

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