



# DARLING WATCH NEWSLETTER

25 March 2023.

## **MOVING TOWARDS A REPRESENTATIVE COMMUNITY POLICE FORUM (CPF):**

Interest groups like businesses, associations, organisations, NGO's, schools, churches, etc must affiliate to the proposed new Community Police Forum (CPF) in order to be able to nominate representatives to serve on the CPF.

Thus far more than 30 interest groups already completed affiliation forms. The process of distributing affiliation forms amongst interest groups in Darling continues.

## **DARLING WATCH ACCREDITATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SAFETY (DOCS)**

The accreditation of Darling Watch to the Western Cape Department of Community Safety expires on 11th May 2023. The administrative process to renew the accreditation is underway.

The accreditation to DOCS gives Darling Watch the mandate to sit on the Community Police Forum with the SA Police, Law Enforcement, private security companies, Darling Rural Protection and the Darling North Neighbourhood Watch. At this forum, Darling Watch will liaise with the other organisations and voice the concerns of the community of Darling South and assist in making the whole of Darling a safer place.

## **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT: DRUG ABUSE AMONGST CHILDREN IN DARLING:**

Drug abuse in children usually starts off with sniffing glue. Sniffing glue is the first indication that a child is experiencing severe problems or that the child needs an escape from his or her problems. Sniffing glue causes hallucinations as well as dampening hunger pangs and wards off cold. "I forget everything. I won't feel cold or hungry and can sleep easily". (Source: [www.thenewhumanitarian.org](http://www.thenewhumanitarian.org))

From sniffing glue, children usually progress to smoking dagga or marijuana.

"Buttons" or Mandrax tablets are available in Darling from R20 for half a tablet. The Mandrax tablet is usually grinded until it has the same texture as Grandpa headache powder. Mandrax is used in combination with dagga. The dagga is heated in a pipe and the powdered Mandrax is then sprinkled on the glowing dagga and smoked / inhaled. The longer the breath can be held after inhalation, the greater the intoxicating kick that can be obtained from the Mandrax.

From Mandrax the young addict normally progresses to Tik.

Tik or crystal meth (methamphetamine) is an odourless, crystal-like substance. The common street names are ice or glass, or meth, crank, chalk and speed. It is a stimulant that speeds-up the functioning of the vital organs e.g. heart. It is highly addictive and harms the functioning of the Central Nervous System. It is commonly smoked in a light bulb or a glass pipe called a "lolly". The crystals are heated in the bulb/pipe and inhaled. It can also be swallowed, injected or sniffed for an immediate, intense high. The pattern of abuse is "crash and binge" (use a lot, go into withdrawal and then use more to stop the withdrawal symptoms).

Tik is associated with serious health conditions like memory loss, aggression, psychotic behavior (loss of contact with reality) and potential heart and brain damage. A person can become addicted after the first time it is used. Tik is available in Darling from as little as R5 per rock (lump of crystals).



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Any child can be lured to drugs through peer pressure or poor choice of friends. The most vulnerable group however is children who grow up without the necessary parental support structure.

Children with a good support structure grow up within a family where parental support is continuously available. The child is fed regularly and attends school every day. There is regular contact between teachers and the parents, and the parents show interest in the academic progress of the child. School homework is regularly controlled. The parents show interest in the activities of the child and support him or her. The parents know his/her friends and they know who the child is involved with during his/her leisure time.

Vulnerable children grow up in dysfunctional families where abuse and violence, alcoholism or drug abuse and lack of food are common. One or both parents may be absent or be disinterested in the child.

Vulnerable children should be supported by neighbours, relatives, teachers, coaches and by members of the religious group/church the family is affiliated to. The community must be aware which children are vulnerable and inform the school or church. Vulnerable children should be motivated to attend school where interested teachers can provide support. These children must be assisted through a school feeding scheme if necessary and should be assisted to be involved in a structured program after school where they can play or train under the guidance and supervision of coaches. Everyone who has contact with the child must show interest and should provide emotional support.

The drug industry is huge and the availability of drugs will not disappear. The solution is the improvement of support by the community to vulnerable children.



*Person smoking Tik with a lolly.*

We as citizens of Darling can play a role by assisting existing support structures for children like Darling Music for All, the Darling Football club, the Darling Velocity Athletics club, and support provided by “Ons Nessie” and the Darling Outreach Foundation.



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**The Underdog Project** in Cape Town is a registered NPO and PBO that works with vulnerable children and shelter dogs in Cape Town. The children are partnered with untrained shelter dogs and are taught positive reinforcement dog training techniques, as well as how to interact with and care for animals. The Underdog Project focusses on humane education activities that benefit both the animals and children.

Qualified facilitators and experienced dog trainers show the children how to teach dogs basic skills like sit, stay and paw, as well as some basic agility. Sometimes, all they do is cuddle, groom, and read to the dogs. The project is a genius program that attends to two huge areas of need. It's proved to be an effective therapy for both the children and shelter dogs. ([www.underdogproject.org](http://www.underdogproject.org))

Can a similar programme be launched in Darling?

**To summarize:** by reaching out to existing support structures in Darling we can help to assist vulnerable children. Every child assisted is an investment in a future peaceful and prosperous village with less social and drug related problems.

You are most welcome to speak with us on this topic. Mother Theresa said: "I cannot do everything, but I can do something."

**Outreach projects:** Riaan Neethling (Tel 082 553 2511)      **New members:** Lynn Daniel (Tel 083 288 4990)

Thank you for your interest and support.

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*In recognition of the cartoonist Jonathan Shapiro aka Zapiro.*