

April 2024

Whether it's the best of times or the worst of times, it's the only time we've got – Art Buchwald.
SAPPIN has been aware of time during the first quarter of this year. There are so many different things happening and so many incredible people working to make this country and the world a better place for children to grow up in.

Let's look at some of the exciting things that happened this year, so far.



Fatherhood Workshop – March 2024

From 18th – 19th of March this year, SAPPIN held an initiative called the SAPPIN Fatherhood Workshop, which aimed at introducing, developing, strengthening and empowering conversation in and around fatherhood as a role, in both a personal and familial environment.

The workshop engaged participants in personal and professional dialogue around the theme of “Has Fatherhood Been Abandoned in South Africa?”

Overall, it was agreed that the context is more complex than that, in that fatherhood has not been abandoned but historical, societal, community and gender assumptions have hindered its development. Many fathers understand the importance of being present in their children’s lives but feel that the spaces and interventions for healing and ascertaining a positive narrative for men, may not always be accessible. In addition, it was jointly acknowledged that gender needs to be removed from the parenting role and should be respected as an equal responsibility for both men and women. These conclusions, and more, will be shared in our report and research article.

We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all the participants, donors and SAPPIN members for their commitment, and incredible contribution, to this inspiring and challenging workshop!

Please access the full report below:

<https://sappin.org.za/fatherhood-community-of-practice/news/>



Welcome to SAPPIN's new members: Do More Foundation, Ikamva Labantu and Tales of Turning.

Three amazing new organisations have joined the SAPPIN family, which brings our current membership to eighteen organisations across the country.

We are excited to present **Jessica Ronaasen** from the **Do More Foundation**, which was started by RCL Food six years ago. The foundation, as a non-profit, works within the parameters of nutrition, infant and maternal health, early childhood development (ECD), and responsive parenting through capacity building and partnerships.

sappin.org.za/member/the-do-more-foundation/

Next, we welcome **Mejury Mushanguri** from **Ikamva Labantu**, which is based in Cape Town. Since 1963, this organisation's three key sectors of focus have been on senior citizens, ECD and child/youth/parenting. Their programmes include after-school initiatives, eighteen senior citizen support "clubs", and various ECD centres in Khayelitsha in Cape Town.

sappin.org.za/member/ikamva-labantu-organisation/

Tales of Turning, an organisation that has been revived by Jenna Lee Strugnell, and colleagues Rinchen van Rijswijk and Geoff Mamputa, is our last new member. This forward-thinking organisation focuses on violence prevention through technology and social media. Peacebuilding, provision during political unrest, ECD, climate change, non-violent parenting programmes as well as gender-based violence support and -prevention groups, are issues that Tales from Turning focusses on.

sappin.org.za/member/tales-of-turning/

Congratulations

One fact about SAPPIN is that the birth of a new baby is always a huge celebration. And rightfully so. A new life brought into the world needs to be acknowledged and honoured - even more so when the mom is part of the network and has been working hard as a member of the Driver Group. Congratulations to Kaathima and Horst with the birth of beautiful Nurah. Born on 20 February, an amazing 3,77kg.



Advocacy

SAPPIN, with the invaluable support from Patricia Martin, are focusing on an advocacy strategy for 2024 and beyond. We realised that there is no agreed policy statement in South Africa on the essential parenting support services required to fulfil the country's treaty and development commitments.

South Africa also lacks a universally agreed-upon policy and monitoring framework that spans global, regional, subregional, and national levels. This framework needs a global policy and monitoring system that defines parental support, specifies the necessary parenting services from universal to intensive support, sets success criteria and assigns responsibilities for monitoring, reporting, and system improvement at all levels.

The following objectives were identified to address the above-mentioned shortcomings:

1. Strengthen national policies/support systems to ensure sustainable support for all parents, to provide necessary care and protection to all children in South Africa.
2. Ensure a national policy for parental support in childhood care is developed and maps out the agreed scope, definition, goals and outcomes for essential parenting services, responsible role players, institutional arrangements to oversee and so forth.
3. Develop a national outcomes framework that aligns with the national policy framework, which will identify necessary indicators for programme improvements, amongst others.
4. Strengthen and contribute to both the global and regional parenting support frameworks.
5. Continuously grow an evidence base of established parental interventions to bridge gaps in essential services, which are measured against services already present in national policies.
6. Mobilise, inform, and support society to co-develop and advocate for stronger national parenting support programmes and policies.

Given the enormity of this progressive project but ultimately the necessity of it, SAPPIN calls on all civil society organisations (non-profit, community based, non-governmental), funders and individuals, to support this advocacy strategy to ensure change in SA.



Fatherhood Community of Practice

SAPPIN has launched itself as the proud incubator of the Fatherhood Community of Practice (COP). The idea was established while relevant key players brainstormed at a meeting in CT at the beginning of 2023. Sesame Workshop initiated the process but after consultations with the Families Indaba, the Fatherhood as a Role workshop and various other occurrences during 2023, it was decided that SAPPIN would facilitate the process going forward.

An initial step has been taken to establish a platform on the SAPPIN website, which will provide information about the COP. The registered and contributing members will be mentioned, as well as the different programmes, news updates and research instigated which may be of interest to members and other parties.

Please view the SAPPIN website and remark on the draft Charter and Statement of Commitment - <https://sappin.org.za/fatherhood-community-of-practice/charter/>

Email Wilmi – wilmi@sappin.org.za if you or your organisation would like to become a member of the Fatherhood Community of Practice.



SAPPIN: A legal entity

Last year SAPPIN registered as an NPO, and earlier this month we received a certificate confirming that status. We subsequently opened our bank account on April 12th 2024.

SAPPIN's board has met four times since the registration in October 2023. All board members have been checked against the National Child Protection Registry and have received police clearance.

Our board members are:

Duduzile Skhosana – chairperson

Thamsanqa Mzaku – vice chair

Wilmi Dippenaar – secretary

Rasigan Kander - treasurer

Katharine Frost - Van der Walt – additional member

ParentlineSA – New Service to Launch at the end of May 2024

We are excited to announce the launch of a referral system on ParentlineSA at the end of May 2024. All SAPPIN members have been loaded onto the system and the services that they offer are detailed and geographically catalogued.

Users will now have the option of finding in-person advice in addition to being able to access parenting content on the chatbot. A list of the different types of services offered in their area can now be found on the chatbot. From this list, users will select the service that best suits their needs. An email will then be sent to the relevant organisation with the person's name and contact number as well as the issue they need assistance with. Once the organisation contacts the user, they will then be able to provide the help required or refer to a more suitable option close to the user.

Initially, we will only have SAPPIN members listed on the chatbot during the testing phase in May but we would like to grow the list of participating organisations quickly thereafter. Current members will be able to recommend other organisations for inclusion and if they express interest, they will be added to the list of available services. Users will be able to rate the services that they have received, which will enable us to ensure user satisfaction and also fine-tune the system and give participating organisations feedback.

We are also growing the amount of content on the chatbot. Currently, we have content in three categories: Child Development, Child Behaviour and Parental Wellbeing. Research done earlier has guided our choice of additional topics and we will be adding nutritional advice over the next few months, with further topics being

covered as we grow. The content is currently limited to ages 0 – 6 and we will be extending this to cover further age groups over the year.

Should anyone in the network be interested in being included in the referral section of the chatbot, please contact SAPPIN for details on how to apply. Details of accessing the chatbot will be sent out to all participating organisations at the end of May 2024 and we encourage you to access the chatbot and publicise the contact details to your beneficiaries to try out.



Wellbeing Research

Parenting programmes aimed at reducing and preventing violence are a crucial component of the South African care economy, yet they are often taxing on the emotional well-being of those involved. Implementing such programmes requires emotional labour and the regulation of it.

Emotional labour encompasses the effort, skill and directive needed to express empathy, compassion and support to care recipients. Prolonged intensive emotional labour takes an inner toll and staff members are susceptible to indirect trauma, burnout, compassion fatigue and moral distress. It is understood to be particularly significant within South Africa's challenging landscape, which is characterised by strained healthcare systems, elevated child abuse levels and dysfunctional social structures. The efficacy and longevity of the delivery of these programmes throughout South Africa, depends on the ability to maintain a workforce of well-trained clinicians, lay-practitioners and community development workers.

Such organisations are, and should be, ethically bound to professionally cause no harm to staff and beneficiaries. Without adequate support mechanisms in place, facilitators may drive themselves to help even more despite severe emotional strain. This can compromise the quality and sustainability of service provision to families in need. Acknowledging, addressing and providing organisational support for staff wellness and self-care practices, is critical for programme organisers.

A research study involving SAPPIN members and other interested individuals, aims to investigate the implications of staff well-being within the violence-prevention care economy. It will focus on perspectives from member organisations of the South African Parenting Programme Implementers Network (SAPPIN) and associated organisations. The ethics approval of the study is currently awaited. The findings will be shared with the network and other interested parties, published in a journal and presented at different conferences.

