

Programme Report: December 2025



Introduction

The month of December was dominated by the holiday programme. Ninety-five of the 150 YOSA children attended the three-weeks long programme. We welcomed international visitors who also provided us with the provisions for our programming. The grannies attended their final meeting of the year. In this report we also present a summary of our successes during the year 2025.

Holiday programme

The December holiday programme was themed, 'becoming a diligent child'. Learners from Grades 6 to 11 attended the programme. The programme began in November just after learners finished writing year-end tests. Grade 12 learners were still writing their final matric examinations. We divided the children into four groups for effective programming and control. We had team-based activities to develop and encourage teamwork, accountability, and peer support, creating a structured supportive environment.

The programme activities promoted diligence in positive behaviour, responsibility, discipline, and prosocial decision-making to help the learners cope with the pressures of the long year-end holiday. The programme also addressed issues of resilient character, academic responsibility, leadership, service, and social awareness. The learners also took time out on community observation walks, inter-house sports competitions, and team-building activities.

The learners received their year-end academic results while still on holiday programme. One grade 11 learner who consistently participated in YOSA after-school homework support sessions achieved eight Level 7 distinctions. This achievement highlights the effectiveness of YOSA's integrated psychosocial and educational support in improving learner academic performance, motivation, and long-term outcomes. We held a prize-giving ceremony at the Centre upon realizing that all our programme participants passed and were progressing to higher grades. We are grateful to Donna, Karen and Trevor for sponsoring our prize-giving ceremony for learners with stationery and gadgets. The learners on our programme demonstrated improved cooperation, increased confidence, and a stronger understanding of diligence as a core value and life skills. On the final day

of the programme, two learners were recognised for excellence after creating and presenting posters summarizing the activities of the holiday programme. They were awarded iPads in acknowledgement of their creativity, effort, and participation. This holiday programme contributed positively to learners' psychosocial development, resilience, and a sense of identity.



YOSA staff at the beginning of the holiday programme and the first group of learners



Staff and learners during the holiday programme



Social workers Melissa and Rethabile with learners during the holiday programme



Grannies support programme

Grannies have been meeting every week for their income generating project. They ended their weekly meetings for the year during the first week of December. They were happy with their achievements during 2025. They sew, knitted and baked for sale. They enjoyed each other's company and attended group counselling sessions and conducted physical activities. They will resume with their project in February 2026. The grannies value YOSA for offering them economic opportunities and as the platform for them to support each other and conduct physical activities.

Karen Glass, our friend and regular visitor from Australia brought hundreds of woolen baby clothes from Australian grannies. The clothes were distributed to the babies of teen mothers in schools, our local children's home and the maternity ward of the local hospital. YOSA is grateful for the support from the Australian grannies to the needy children in South Africa. We are also grateful for the opportunity to help our local grannies to care for the grandchildren in their care.



Karen's mother with babies' clothes that were later handed to Bridgety and Astonishment by Karen



Grannies' support group in session at YOSA Centre

Staff retreat

After an intense holiday programme YOSA social workers retreated for a day to attend to their mental health issues. We packed our lunch and went to a picnic place where we hiked and had lunch together reflecting on our programmes and activities. Our social workers dealt with complex cases of abused and neglected children, substance use, violence and in some cases, they encountered resistance from the very people they sought to serve. They supported young people and their families even though they also had social challenges of their own. The reflective session was very helpful to our staff with debriefing and creating an opportunity for supporting each other. Staff mental health support is an essential component of YOSA programming.





YOSA social workers out for a social retreat

2025 Success stories

1. Vehicle

One of the items that was at the top of YOSA wish list was successfully fulfilled. Our board members in collaboration with YOSA well-wishers and the Rotary Australia World Community Service acquired a vehicle for YOSA a Mitsubishi X-pander 7-seater. We are truly grateful for this wonderful contribution to YOSA programming. The vehicle has been branded and is making huge contributions to YOSA programme implementation.

2. Third computer lab

We successfully established our third computer laboratory at one of the high schools we support in Soweto. The lab is effectively contributing to digital skills development for learners and educators. It is also contributing to learning support and psychosocial support programmes. We are truly grateful to FNZ for the computers and to Rachel and Ethan for the internet connection.

3. Scouts group resuscitation

One of our social workers has taken it upon herself to develop a YOSA scouts' group. The group has 40 primary school learners who are very motivated. The school management team and the parents are all excited about this development. We are looking for partners to help provide the uniforms and equipment required for the group. This programme develops discipline, resilience and leadership skills among learners.

4. Teenage pregnancy

Three of the high schools that we support had more than 30 learners pregnant each in 2018. The number of pregnant learners decreased over time until these three schools had no pregnant learners in 2024 and 2025. Another high school that we started supporting in 2022 had 64 pregnant learners then. The number of pregnant learners has decreased to 2 by the end of 2025.

5. Pass rates

All the 150 learners registered for long-term participation in YOSA programme have passed their grades. None of them have been held back due to failure to meet the requirements for progression to the next grade. This is due to the effectiveness of our learning support programme.

6. DBE recognition of YOSA services

The Department of Basic Education has awarded certificates of appreciation to YOSA for our services in school communities. Our learning support programme improves basic literacy skills and promotes learner participation in Maths and Science subjects.

7. Social Work interns

We had 16 social work interns from Wits, UP and SACAP universities who all successfully completed their field practice. They all passed and are proceeding to final years while others have completed their studies. Two of the students are returning to volunteer in YOSA in January 2026.



YOSA Wishlist

Provisions

YOSA operates on very tight budget. We rely on our friends and well-wishers to provide for most of our needs. Our daily challenges include provisions of necessities for the young people we support. These include stationary, food, clothing and school uniforms. Struggle for necessities interfere with learning for most young people.

Food parcels

We support child headed families with food parcels. 15 of these families rely entirely on YOSA support. With additional support from our nutritional garden, we provide groceries of household basics worth R1500 each to last them two months. Any support or contribution towards provisions for our child headed families will be greatly appreciated.

Dignity packs

A significant number of girls in the schools we support require supplies of dignity packs. A lot of them miss school for days each month. Consistent supplies of dignity packs will certainly help to keep our girls consistently in school, increase their pass rates and get them out of poverty. We are grateful to Karen Glass for the regular supplies of these packs to keep our girls in school.

Repairs 1

One of our meeting rooms require painting to preserve the wooden structure. The roof is also leaking hence urgent repairs are required. Any support to preserve our structure will go a long way in meeting our programming needs. The updated costs for the repairs are R7,500.

Repairs 2

The YOSA nutritional garden shed, and frame structure were destroyed by hailstorms. The nutritional garden is a valuable project for our programming. It provides meals for the children and some of the children living in child headed households, or with grandparents, take vegetables for consumption at home. The garden **plumbing also** requires enhancement to enable it to provide more vegetables. Any support to this project will contribute to YOSA food self-sufficiency. The updated costs for the repairs are R6,600.



Building requiring roof repairs and structural paint

Education and training

YOSA support and motivation is helping vulnerable young people to study hard and qualify for university. Some of those who qualify for university do not have money for initial registration and basic preparations. YOSA is looking for partners to help meet the initial costs of registration and basic preparations for entry into universities for the young people who go through our programmes. Any second-hand gadgets (phones and laptops) will also be greatly appreciated to help set up the young people into tertiary institutions. Most of these young people depend entirely on YOSA support for daily living.



Acknowledgements

YOSA is eternally grateful for the support from **FNZ**, a global financial services and fintech company supporting us from their Africa headquarters in Sandton. The support provides the back born for us to run our programmes. We also received donations in kind from **Donna and Jay. Karen and Trevor** bought large quantities of dignity packs for the girls in our schools. **Dr. Malatji, Karen and Richard Muller** also donated large quantities of new clothes to support the YOSA programme.



Donations of clothes from Karen and Richard and dignity packs from Karen and Trevor

Conclusion

The December interventions provided for the holistic development of learners through integrated psychosocial and educational programmes. The holiday programme promoted positive behaviour, diligence, leadership, and social awareness. We witnessed the value of our ongoing academic support that contributed to 100% pass rate for all the learners in YOSA programme between grade 6 and 11. Overall, the interventions reinforced YOSA's commitment to empowering young people with the skills, values, and support necessary for long-term personal and academic success.

