

# Proud Parenting Forum

## Introduction

We place great emphasis in our country on the safety, development and well being of children and this should be greatly applauded. After all children are our future, it is into their hands that we pass on the great beauty and diversity of South Africa. While we agree with all the efforts and initiatives that are being taken within this bill we feel that the major role players in a child's life are their parents. Yet, somehow in this intricate web of endeavoring to raise safe, well developed and educated children, we forget about the parents and what a vital role they can play, when and if they chose to.

### At present we are sitting with a situation where

- ✎ Parents have given up their **responsibility** as parents. Not because they want to but because they feel they have no other option. They are struggling to cope under tremendous pressure & challenges such as violence, crime, safety, lack of finances [and education thereof], education, abuse, drugs and many more.
- ✎ Parents are **loosing the authority** as primary guide & disciplinarian in the household. They feel unworthy of this important position and are stepping back hoping that our teachers & schools will step in and do this job on their behalf. It is not our schools responsibility!
- ✎ Government is doing more and more for our children, which is much needed and appreciated but we cannot forget about the parents of our children. It does not help empowering our children but not empowering our parents. **Government needs to assist parents to gain confidence so that they can earn respect.**
- ✎ Parents are scared of their children because children
  - Are in many cases more educated than their parents
  - The level of violence amongst our youth is very high
  - Parents feel they have no back-up system to help them

## Today we are here...

to emphasize the importance of a parent's [caregivers] role in any child's life. A loving, supportive, committed parent can single handedly change the destiny of their children. We cannot have a CHILDRENS BILL in this country without including and addressing vital & significant parenting issues, which need to be recognized by Government NOW. The first responsibility of parents is to POSITIVELY GUIDE, LOVE AND CARE for their children.

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## We believe that:

- 👏 Happy parents bring up happy children
- 👏 Informed parents bring up informed children
- 👏 Balanced parents bring up balanced children
- 👏 Disciplined parents bring up disciplined children
- 👏 Healthy parents bring up healthy children
- 👏 Positive parents bring up positive children
- 👏 Parents with good self esteem bring up children with good self esteem
- 👏 Responsible parents bring up responsible children
- 👏 **Non-violent parents bring up non violent children**
- 👏 Parents with values bring up children with values

**The best gift you can give a child is a healthy, informed, committed, responsible and positive parent/carer.**

**Purpose: Who are we and why do we exist?**

## Who we are

The Proud Parenting Forum is a group of people who share a common purpose; to inform, enable and encourage parents and ultimately help to contribute to creating a safer, more integrated and non-violent society in South Africa.

By 'integrated' we mean;

- Re-integration of parents with their children - to help bridge the divide between youth and their parents
- Resumption of responsibility for our own children, "my child, my responsibility"
- For parents and children to reconnect and touch each others' lives
- Re-integration of parents with other parents - a strengthening of community bonds to encourage an extended family approach to parenting

Ultimately resulting in loving cared for, capable and independent children as the next generation.

We are mothers, fathers, grandparents and spouses who are passionate about empowering and equipping parents in South Africa with the tools they require to be effective parents.

## Our vision

In order to achieve the above outlined purpose, we are seeking to run...

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- 👉 Phase ONE: A national communications campaign, which begins the process of starting a conversation about what it means to be a 'Proud Parent', for parents to resume responsibility for their function as parents, and begin to develop a common national parenting identity.
- 👉 Phase TWO: We hope to support this campaign with the development of an educational module including the practical training and development of parents which can be implemented through already existing NGOs and structures who are already working to uplift parents and children in their communities.

## Our responsibility

We see ourselves responsible for the

- 👉 Development of parenting educational modules
- 👉 Implementation of these modules
- 👉 Training trainers to train trainers to train the community
- 👉 Expanding the network & business partners throughout South Africa

## Funding

We are looking at

- 👉 Government funding
- 👉 Private funding [local & international]
- 👉 Initiative Funding [adopt a parent]

## Distribution Channels

- 👉 NGO's [existing]
- 👉 Churches
- 👉 Schools
- 👉 Government Programmes

## Target Categories

Considering that

- 👉 There are parents in every part of society, and no group of parents should be ignored
- 👉 Different target groups may well require different approaches and we will certainly need to use several languages
- 👉 Parents come in many age groups and therefore different life experiences

### Categories:

- 👉 Teenage parents, including schoolgirl mothers

[www.intouchparenting.co.za](http://www.intouchparenting.co.za)

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- 👏 Parents sharing a house with grandparents
- 👏 Urban unemployed single parents
- 👏 Urban employed single parents
- 👏 Rural unemployed single parents
- 👏 Rural employed single parents
- 👏 Rural couples
- 👏 Suburban couples
- 👏 Cross-cultural couples
- 👏 Couples with nannies/au pairs/caregivers
- 👏 Adoptive parents
- 👏 Parents of special-needs children
- 👏 Older first-time parents
- 👏 Gay couples
- 👏 Urban parents of school going children
- 👏 Rural parents of school going children
- 👏 Traditional parents of teenagers
- 👏 Western parents of teenagers
- 👏 Parents in violent situations
- 👏 Grandparents raising orphans
- 👏 Children raising siblings
- 👏 Step parents
- 👏 Domestic workers
- 👏 Institution staff

## Our mode of operating

Currently we operate on an ad hoc basis, meeting in coffee shops and developing our programme as time allows. All of the forum members are self employed, or full/part-time employees and no one is currently remunerated for their efforts on the forum. It is our shared purpose, which drives us, but in order to sustain our momentum, we are looking to a sponsor to fund some of our day-to-day operating costs. We are in the process of registering as a NGO & Section 21.

## Our modules



Our modules will draw from the **P A R E N T I N G** workshops that have already been presented countrywide.

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- 👉 In Touch with POSITIVE PARENTING [Positive parenting - a look at the strategies and skills needed for the Millennium child]
- 👉 In Touch with FAMILY FINANCES
- 👉 In Touch with ROUTINE
- 👉 In Touch with SLEEP
- 👉 In Touch with LIMITS & BOUNDARIES [The vital importance of limits and boundaries. No matter what age - we all need the safety and security of knowing our boundaries - how to discipline positively and effectively]
- 👉 In Touch with your FAMILY NUTRITION
- 👉 In Touch with SELF ESTEEM MATTERS
- 👉 In Touch with COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS within your home
- 👉 In Touch with MOM & DAD'S RELATIONSHIP
- 👉 In Touch with the losses involved in becoming a parent. This exciting and longed-for event also involves losses - awareness and preparedness can assist with the adjustments required.
- 👉 In Touch with "And child makes three": The adjustments to lifestyle, role expectations, and communication patterns - having a child are a major traumatic event! Coping strategies for survival!
- 👉 In Touch with the balancing act. - How to get the balance between their needs and yours. Also takes a look at the needs vs. demands issues of the first year.
- 👉 The world through your child's eyes. Understanding their need to control their environment - early identity formation. Developing an age-appropriate and positive mindset
- 👉 Reclaiming your space. A guide to help parents reclaim their sanity - and their identities and adult relationships
- 👉 When the beginning has not been positive. There is hope for those who have battled to bond - due to postnatal depression or other crises during the early months. A look at parenting skills which will maximize bonding
- 👉 In Touch with Discipline - how to be a democratic, assertive parent. Why the old, autocratic methods do not work - and how to be a good disciplinarian without resorting to violence!!
- 👉 In Touch with Self-esteem [yours and theirs] - the cornerstone of healthy emotional development. A close look at parenting skills that will maximize this aspect of a child's growth and development
- 👉 How to talk so kids will listen and listen so kids will talk. An outline of open, positive communication skills for today's stressed and busy families
- 👉 Helping children & parents cope with the effects of divorce. Sadly, statistics show that in S.A today about 7 out of 10 marriages will end in divorce - there are positive ways in which parents can assist their children to cope with this crisis in their lives
- 👉 In Touch with Step-parenting. Discussing the common pitfalls and recognized coping skills can make the difference between "wicked step-parent" and a positive "other adult" in your child's life

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- ✎ In Touch with 'going at it alone'. Many parents are either choosing single parenthood - or find themselves in this challenging position due to circumstance - a look at the challenges involved - and the possibility of positive outcomes
- ✎ In Touch with coping strategies for working moms - getting the balance right [self, relationships, work & social]

...and more!

## We want from this submission...

1. We are urging that the Children's Bill supports PARENTS by acknowledging & accommodating this forum and others like it, so that parents can start to get the support they need to become effective parents, by raising happy, well adjusted and healthy children. This ultimately to assist South Africa in creating a safer more integrated and non-violent society.
2. Although the vision for The Proud Parent Forum is a national one, we would like to start a pilot campaign in Western Cape, assisted by local government.
3. Allow us to take parents back to the basic and simplistic principles of raising children to be good citizens- things like honesty and truthfulness, knowing right from wrong, keeping the law and accepting authority etc.

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