

MEDIA RELEASE – 15 December 2003

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KNP GIVES HOPE TO ORPHANS

A message of hope for the future was given to 30 teenagers from the Amazing Grace Orphanage Home in Malelane last week (Friday December 12, 2003) when they were shown a selection of the different careers available in the Kruger National Park (KNP).

This career guidance initiative forms part of the KNP's People and Conservation effort to spread the message of conservation by involving the people that live on the boundaries with the Park's operation.

"You must be proud and hold your head up high because you are the future generation. You will become the next teachers, lawyers and, perhaps more important, mothers of children and your purpose is to make a difference," said Mr Rob Janish from My Acre Of Africa.

Berg-en-Dal duty manager, Mr Gordon Ramsden spoke to them about possible careers in the tourism industry.

"Tourism is important for South Africa as it brings in foreign currency and, because it is such a demanding career, dedicated people are needed."

The owner of the Orphanage Home, Ms Grace Machaba, then spoke about her experiences as a victim of rape and her decision to open a place of shelter for abused or abandoned street children.

"I didn't have any money but I had plenty of love and understanding and I realised that most only needed a shoulder to cry on," she said.

The first group of seven abandoned children that Ms Mashaba cared for when she started the home early in the 1990s are now grown up and all of them have jobs.

After presentations by the children in which they impressed KNP officials with their talent and knowledge of the importance of conservation, the children were given an opportunity to find out more about various careers on offer in the KNP, including conservation, tourism, technical services and catering.

The Amazing Grace Orphanage Home now looks after 99 children, many of whom have been abandoned, abused and perhaps even suffer from HIV/Aids.

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Ms Veronica Bothma tells a group of children from the Amazing Grace Orphanage Home all about tourism.



Conservation student Mr Thandekile Nelani tells some of the children all about the KNP's conservation effort.

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