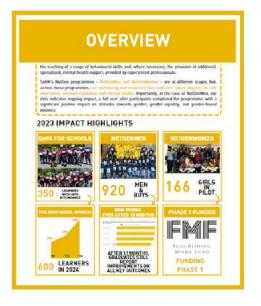


# **ANNUAL REPORT: 2023**

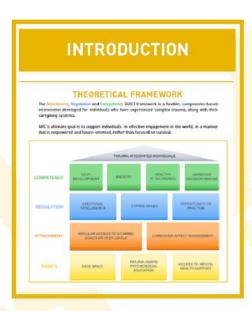


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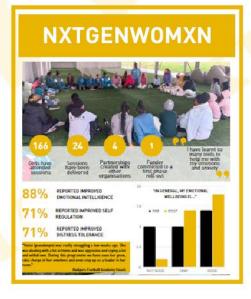


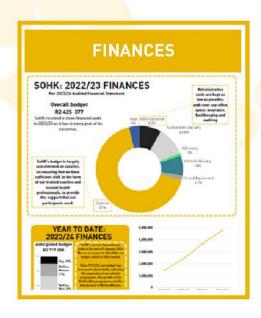




















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## **OVERVIEW (2023 IN A NUTSHELL)**



In 2023, the School of Hard Knocks has worked with over 1 400 people, and has been able to create real impact with these individuals and with their communities: Through SoHK's programmes, which combine sport and mental health interventions, our team has helped our participants be better placed to realise their potential.

In 2023, SoHK's flagship programme, SoHK for Schools, reached more learners, more often, working with 350 high school learners on a weekly basis. Over the course of the year, SoHK's coaches formed trusted relationships with these learners. These relationships underpinned the teaching of a range of behavioural and coping skills and, where necessary, the provision of additional, specialised, mental health support, provided by experienced professionals.

SoHK's NxtGen programmes - NxtGenMen and NxtGenWomxn - are at different stages, but, across these programmes, our monitoring and evaluation data indicates robust impacts on self awareness, emotion regulation and mental health. Importantly, in the case of NxtGenMen, our data indicates ongoing impact, a full year after participants completed the programme, with a significant positive impact on attitudes towards gender, gender equality, and gender-based violence.

#### **2023 IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS**



LEARNERS WITH >87%



NXTGENMEN WORKS
EVEN AFTER 12 MONTHS

Size doing the NationAvery programme, 12 months ago, would you say the following has got worse, stayed the same, or improved?

The same of tensor

AFTER 12 MONTHS,

**GRADUATES STILL** 

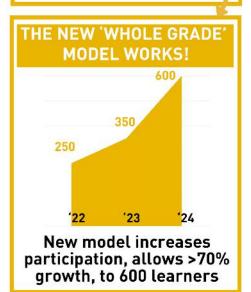
REPORT

**IMPROVEMENTS ON** 

ALL KEY OUTCOMES



66 GIRLS IN PILOT









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#### **HELLO FROM THE TEAM**





Our annual report pays testament to the impact that the hard work and commitment of the SoHK team have realised in 2023. Across our three programmes, SoHK's coaches work with boys and girls, men and women, helping these participants to be better placed to realise their potential, to be better placed to address the trauma and mental health challenges that they face. Personally speaking, it is a great privilege to be part of our work with our participants, and to be part of this empathetic and dedicated team, a team that inspires me daily.

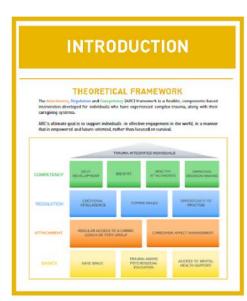
While we are proud of what we have been able to realise this year, we recognise the increasing need for mental health support in South Africa, and that this requires that we expand our programming, while maintaining the high standards that we have set - or, hopefully, by raising the bar even higher. We intend to grow sustainably in the coming years and ensure that, however many people we are reaching, our organisational values of excellence and empathy shine through.

The SoHK delivery team is fortunate to have been supported by a dedicated and thorough Board of Directors, each of whom willingly volunteers their time. This commitment is deeply appreciated. And, of course, none of work would be possible without the support we receive from our partners and funders. We are appreciative of every contribution, and we take seriously our obligation to use the donations that we receive efficiently and effectively, to realise real change in our societies.

Jon Hunter-Parsonage







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#### INTRODUCTION



The School of Hard Knocks seeks to use sport and mental health interventions to improve the life outcomes of people in South Africa. We seek to help people, particularly those who would not otherwise have access to mental health resources, address the trauma that they have experienced, aiming to bring about meaningful social change and to help people to be better placed to realise their potential.



SoHK seeks to address trauma by:

Creating a safe space that encourages sharing, learning and support Providing access to mental health resources

Deconstructing gender norms that contribute to harmful behaviours

## **OUR VISION**

A South Africa where people are better able to fulfil their potential and be active citizens, by understanding and addressing trauma.

### **OUR MISSION**

Our mission is to increase access to evidence-based mental and emotional wellbeing interventions through sport, with the intention of bringing about meaningful social change.



trialogue

The MTN Awards for Social Change 2021



**WINNER** 



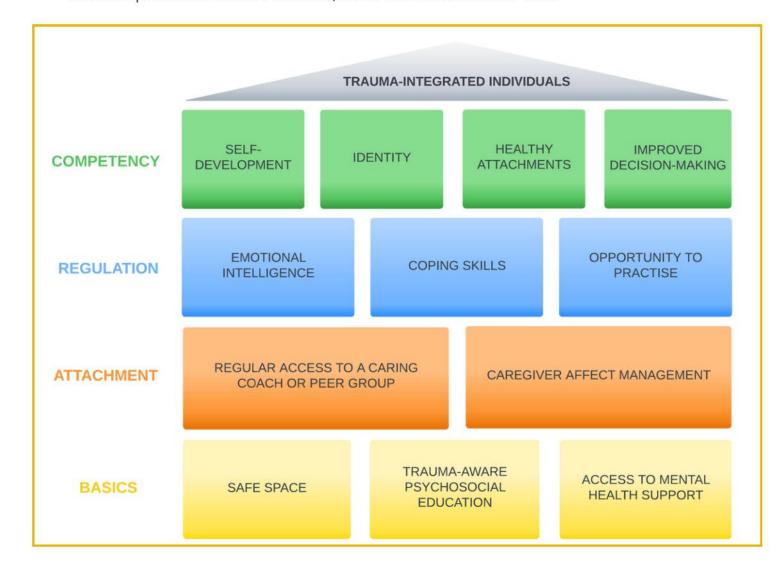


## "TACKLING TRAUMA TOGETHER"

#### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Attachment, Regulation and Competency (ARC) framework is a flexible, components-based intervention developed for individuals who have experienced complex trauma, and their caregiving systems.

ARC's ultimate goal is to support individuals in engaging effectively with the world, in a manner that is empowered and future-oriented, rather than focused on survival.



### INTRODUCTION: OUR PROGRAMMES



## SoHK for Schools

A year-long programme embedded in no/low fee schools, aimed at providing underserved learners with adult support, lay-counselling and behavioural interventions, all of which are intended to improve their mental wellbeing



In 2023, SoHK for Schools partnered with 5 schools based in Cape Town CBD

## **NxtGenMen**

NxtGenMen is a 6-session intervention aimed at reducing violence perpetrated by men and, in particular, to reduce violence against women. Aimed at men and boys, the programme promotes healthy masculinity and introduces coping strategies to improve emotional distress tolerance.

In 2023, SoHK delivered NxtGenMen in 3 ways:



Training partner organisations to deliver NxtGenMen Overseeing partners delivering NxtGenMen



## **NxtGenWomxn**

NxtGenWomxn is our new programme, currently in its pilot phase. The programme provides adolescent girls and young women with the mental health resources to better deal with the challenges they face. To date, the programme has worked with 160+ women and girls.





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"The grade Freachers all comment on how the whole ribe of the grade has changed, they are calm and more in central of themselves." Hr haars, Principal,

"We have seen a remarkable difference acreer the entire grade, and the teachers agree, undoubtedly, that is all due to SelfK."

Dearn was always early to sections, and made sure to occurage her friends to attend. After Isoming about foci principle supports the property of the property





Describe joined the programme just warring to play touch rugby. He was not interested in any of the emotional well-being or life skills appears. He filled good was to become a "drug lard". Throughout the year, he became more engaged, cereatually society and coaches to have pitchelde therapy to discuss difficult

## NXTGENMEN

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#### Sohk For Schools





SoHK for Schools is SoHK's flagship project.

Through a 26-week programme, spanning the school year, SoHK's trained coaches build relationships with the learners at no-fee or low-fee schools located in and around the Cape Town CBD, providing psycho-social support and a range of coping strategies to improve the mental health and long-term outcomes of SoHK's learners. The programme provides additional professional support to participants in acute mental health situations.



## THEORY OF CHANGE

#### **ASSUMPTIONS**

Based on research we have conducted or have incorporated from other programs we make the following assumptions:

Treatment or healing for young people suffering high levels of trauma usually takes place in positive relationships provided by a caring adult

SoHK provides a safe space for these relationships to flourish with rugby and life skills coaching that equip our participants with critical soft skills such as initiative, empathy, and conflict management that enable us to deal ethically and effectively with daily tasks and challenges

Learning a new
sport is a
challenge that,
when
mastered,
helps
improve selfesteem

When our participants are physically challenged, and emotionally supported, they are better able to learn new information and explore new ideas.

Sport acts as a laboratory for feelings, allowing participants to test out new behaviours that transfer into the other life spheres, like discipline, time management, and conflict management.

#### OUR ASSUMPTIONS UNDERPIN 3 PILLARS OF THE SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

#### THE SAFE SPACE

SoHK seeks to create an emotional safe space that is supportive, fun and gender sensitive, where people are heard, and are treated with respect



#### THE HARD KNOCKS

Physical challenges create the platform for behavioural change - when physically challenged, and emotionally supported, our participants are better able to learn new information and explore new ideas.

#### THE CARING ADULTS

When children feel cared for, it enhances feelings of safety, well being and belonging. At every session, there are five coaches, who, over the course of the year, build deep relationships with the learners.

#### THESE PILLARS HELP US TO REALISE THE GOALS OF THE PROGRAMME



- \* Improved emotional intelligence
- \* Increased understanding of gender equity
- \* Improved relationships
- \* Improved emotional wellbeing
- \* Able to make better decisions



REDUCED DROP OUT RATES

#### Sohk for schools: Testimonials





"The grade 9 teachers all comment on how the whole vibe of the grade has changed, they are calm and more in control of themselves."

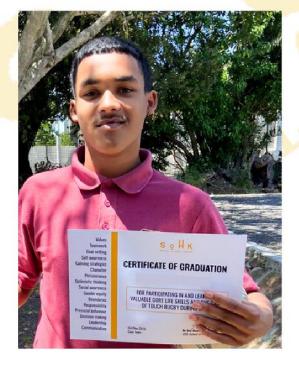
-Mr Isaacs, Principal, Harold Cressy High School

"We have seen a remarkable difference across the entire grade, and the teachers agree, undoubtedly, that is all due to SoHK."

Ms Monnig, Acting Principal,
 Good Hope Seminary High School

Oka (pseudonym) was always early to sessions, and made sure to encourage her friends to attend. After learning about "box breathing" as a coping mechanism, she became very outspoken about how she has used it successfully to counter many anxiety-provoking situations. This led to more and more participants trying it out, and also reflecting on how it was helping them to be more calm. At the beginning of the year, she did not have any school accolades, but at the end of the year, she proudly came to tell the coaches how she had been awarded various awards and badges.





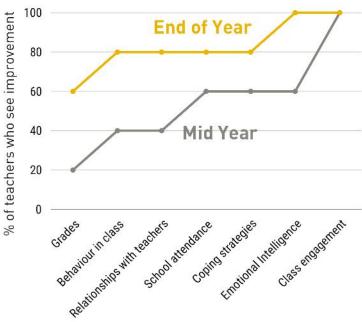
Kai (pseudonym) joined the programme just wanting to play touch rugby. He was not interested in any of the emotional wellbeing or life skills aspects. His life goal was to become a "drug lord". Throughout the year, he became more engaged, eventually seeking out coaches to have pitchside therapy to discuss difficult things he was dealing with. He also showed strong leadership potential and became a motivator and ambassador for the SoHK programme in his school, assisting us in transitioning the school to the new model in 2024, where SoHK will work with the entire grade 9 cohort. He is now determined to finish school and is no longer interested in becoming a drug lord.

#### SoHK FOR SCHOOLS: RESULTS



2023: 71% 2022: 35%	2023 vs 2022
# of learners	350 44%
# of sessions	278 4 <mark>7%</mark>
dosage	87% 3 <mark>6%</mark>
1:1s	<b>8023</b> 1 <del>0</del> 00%
Teachers Trained	74
Parents reached	213

## "As an educator, have you noticed improvements in any of the following?"



## "Describe yourself/your life in 3 words"

Participants were asked to describe themselves in 3 words.

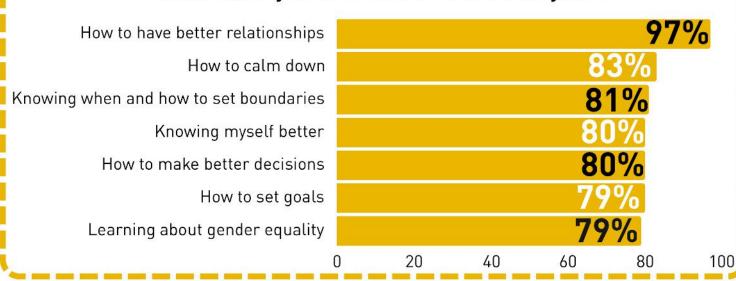
At the beginning of the year, in the TOP 20 MOST FREQUENT WORDS, 7 were inegative.

At the end of the year, are all positive.





### "What have you learned at SoHK this year?"



#### Sohk for schools: Learnings





Offering SoHK for Schools to all learners in a grade reduces stigma and improves attendance and engagement. Previously, the sessions were 'opt in' or participants were placed in the programme by educators.



Educators are eager to have the opportunity to learn more about trauma and its impact on learners, and more opportunities for this should be created.



The ongoing and reliable presence of SoHK coaches across the entire school year encourages learners to share more deeply - many important disclosures were made in the second half of the year.

#### SoHK FOR SCHOOLS: 2024 TARGETS



Caregiving systems:



growth in active engagement with participants' caregivers



Teacher trauma awareness workshops, aiming to reach at least 80 educators



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## **PROJECT INSIGHTS: NXTGENMEN**





#### **NXTGENMEN: AN INTRODUCTION**





Across the world, narrow notions of masculinity present an obstacle to the realisation of gender equality, and harm both males and females. The present-day crisis of masculinity manifests differently across different societies, but is clearly observable in South Africa, where there is a vast chasm between some of the most progressive gender legislation in the world and the violent reality on the ground - a reality that has traumatic, and often fatal, consequences for individuals (male and female), families, communities and society:



>50% of murders of females in South
Africa are committed by intimate partners

85% of murder victims in South Africa are male, as are 70% of assault GBH victims

Studies indicate that 1 in 4 men in SA has admitted to having committed rape

In 2019, 13 774 people in SA were recorded to have taken their own lives - 10 861 of these were male

Theories as to the particular dimensions of the crisis in South Africa are multiple, but many of these theories engage the deep-seated, ongoing gender inequality and an enduring 'hypermasculinity', which prizes aggression and strength, and which has a strong presence across communities in South Africa.

#### **NEED**

Men, in South Africa and around the world, need to be exposed to an approach to masculinity that enables men to engage with women as equals, and with programming that provides men with cognitive and practical skills that equip them to stand against violence. NxtGenMen seeks to answer this need.

NXTGENMEN AIMS TO ENGAGE MEN, INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY, TO BRING ABOUT CHANGES IN ATTITUDES TOWARDS GENDER AND MASCULINITY.

THE PROGRAMME AIMS TO HAVE A DUAL IMPACT:

1) REDUCING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS; AND 2) IMPROVING MALE MENTAL HEALTH.

#### **NXTGENMEN: THEORY OF CHANGE**



#### **Assumptions**

- By creating a safe space where men can engage with sensitive and difficult topics, NxtGenMen allows men to challenge themselves and each other.
- By working through difficult material together, men create connections within a group, enhancing trust and the willingness of participants to be honest and vulnerable with each other, able and willing to provide support for one another, and to talk about feelings that they would not normally express.
- They feel heard and can exchange resources on how to cope better with life challenges.

#### **Activities**

NxtGenMen, a rigorously tested gender transformative programme aimed at promoting more positive masculinities and coping strategies, led by trained facilitators.



IMPROVED COPING STRATEGIES



IMPROVED RELATIONSHIPS WITH SELF AND OTHERS



REDUCTION IN PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY VIOLENCE AS A RESPONSE TO CONFLICT

Improved physical, mental and emotional wellbeing Greater support for gender equality and non-violent attitudes Positive change in the adoption of equitable gender roles. NxtGenMen act as allies and actively stand for gender equality and against VAW/GBV



#### **NXTGENMEN: DELIVERY MODELS**



#### **DIRECT DELIVERY**

OVER THE YEAR THE
SoHK TEAM
DELIVERED
NXTGENMEN TO
VARIOUS GROUPS OF
MEN AND BOYS, OVER
MULTIPLE DAYS







#### **NXTGENMEN LITE**

A ONE-DAY SPORTS
TOURNAMENT WHERE
EACH TEAM IS
ACCOMPANIED BY A
NXTGENMEN
FACILITATOR WHO
RUNS THE NXTGENMEN
SESSIONS BETWEEN
MATCHES

#### TRAIN-THE-TRAINER

IN APRIL WE TRAINED
33 MEN FROM 15
ORGANISATIONS TO
DELIVER NXTGENMEN
TO THEIR OWN
BENEFICIARIES





















## INDIRECT (PARTNER) DELIVERY

THE PARTNER
ORGANISATIONS WHO
ATTENDED THE TRAINTHE-TRAINER
PROGRAMME IN APRIL
DELIVERED THEIR
OWN NXTGENMEN
PROGRAMMES

#### **NXTGENMEN: TESTIMONIALS**





To embed the NxtGenMen programme in the teams with which we worked, and in the surrounding communities, we ask the teams to nominate Champions. These are men who are willing to attend additional training on conflict resolution, community resource mapping, and lay counseling. Champions then act as a local resource who community members can reach out to in times of crisis.

The Champions are also invited to attend SoHK's 3-day facilitator workshops, after which they are eligible for part-time employment as SoHK NxtGenMen facilitators. To date, 15 of the original NxtGenMen cohort, from 2022, have become trained facilitators and have assisted on our NxtGenMen Lite and School Holiday programmes.

Bavuyise Pingo, a NxtGenMen Champion and trained facilitator was invited to discuss his NxtGenMen journey from participant to facilitator on Zibonele FM, reaching more than 140 000 listeners.

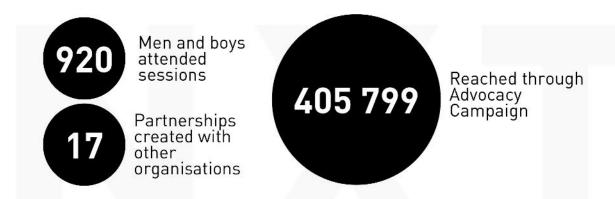
Bavuyise is an example of a young man, dealing with a lot, who needed a safe space to explore alternative ways to cope. He grew from a frustrated young person, with violent tendencies, into a true ambassador for the NxtGenMen programme.

Bavuyise has been able to earn money working as a NxtGenMen facilitator in Khayelitsha and surrounding areas.

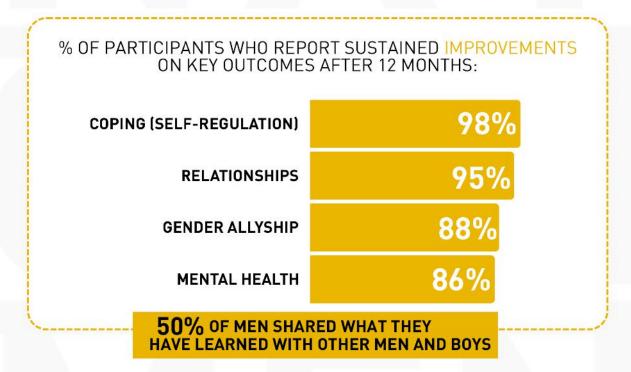


#### **NXTGENMEN: RESULTS**





#### NXTGENMEN HAS PROVEN EFFECTIVE IN A RANGE OF COMMUNITIES



#### WE SEE REDUCTIONS IN KEY ATTITUDINAL STATEMENTS IN PRE VS POST DATA:









100%
OF PARTICIPANTS
WOULD RECOMMEND
THE PROGRAMME TO
A FRIEND





#### **NXTGENMEN: LEARNINGS**





Men engage deeply on ideas of gender, gender equality and behavioural change when they feel they are in a safe space.



The success and growth of the NxtGenMen programme is reliant on ensuring that the programme is located within people's communities - in terms of physical location and in terms of the NxtGenMen facilitators deployed.



Potential NxtGenMen delivery partners may be formally affiliated with other organisations, or may occupy informal positions of influence in their communities - SoHK should be open to working with a range of partners.

#### **NXTGENMEN: 2024 TARGETS**

1200

Participants in SoHK's NxtGenMen programmes

40

Partner organisations trained



Boys and Men reached through partner organisations



Through its own programming and by training partner organisations, SoHK aims to have nearly 3000 men and boys attend NxtGenMen programmes in 2024

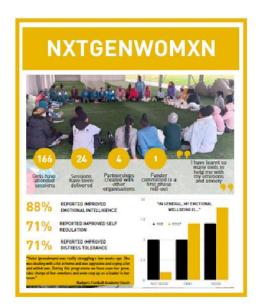


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# PROJECT INSIGHTS: NXTGENWOMXN S . H K





## **NXTGENWOMXN: THEORY OF CHANGE**



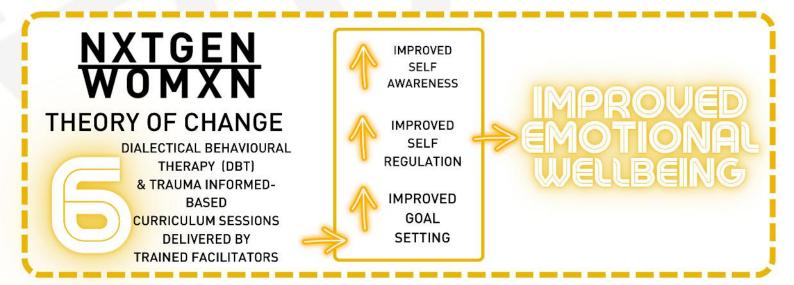
Findings from a recent study, led by researchers from the University of Cape Town (UCT) and the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) showed that the COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictions severely impacted the mental health of adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) in South Africa. Half of all mental health problems have their origins before age 14 and 75% by age 24, making early prevention and promotion essential. In the latest UNICEF South Africa U-Report poll, 65% of young people stated that they had a mental health issue of some form but did not seek help and even if they wanted to seek help, the treatment gap in South Africa is 92%: fewer than 1 in 10 people living with a mental health condition in South Africa receives the care they need.

In 2022, our partner schools were reporting to us that they were experiencing higher levels of self-harm, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, and suicide attempts than ever before. There was an urgent need to develop a shorter, focused intervention for adolescent girls. After consultations and focus groups with topic experts, the School of Hard Knocks created a 6-part, evidence-based curriculum - NxtGenWomxn.

## NxtGenWomxn is a trauma-informed programme centred on dialectical behaviour therapy

Trauma-informed programmes, organisations, and systems realise the widespread impact of trauma and understand the potential paths for recovery; recognise the signs and symptoms of trauma and respond by fully integrating knowledge about trauma. Trauma-informed interventions have been shown to effectively reduce symptoms of PTSD, depression and anxiety.

Dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) is an evidence-based form of cognitive behavioural therapy for children, teenagers and adults who experience significant trouble managing their emotions, thoughts and behaviours, with proven effectiveness in numerous RCTs.



#### **NXTGENWOMXN: PILOT PHASE**



For the pilot phase we trialled a range of delivery models with different partners.



6 x weekly workshops





3 x monthly workshops





3-day holiday programme





2-day holiday programme



## **NXTGENWOMXN: RESULTS**





88%

REPORTED IMPROVED EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

71%

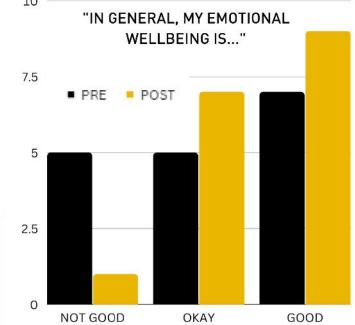
REPORTED IMPROVED SELF REGULATION

71%

REPORTED IMPROVED DISTRESS TOLERANCE

"Violet (pseudonym) was struggling a few weeks ago. She was dealing with a lot at home and was aggressive and crying a lot and withdrawn. During this programme we have seen her grow, take charge of her emotions and even step up as a leader in her team."

Badgers Football Academy Coach







#### **NXTGENWOMXN: LEARNINGS**





Education about mental health needs to start with education on emotions. To date, at the start of the programme, participants frequently struggle to identify basic emotions.



Be cautious not to pathologise normal emotional processes and responses. Not every emotional reaction warrants professional intervention. Use terms like anxiety and depression sparingly. Content needs to be age-appropriate.



Facilitators need to be trauma-aware and the delivery team should be supported by a mental health professional, as sensitive disclosures, that require specialist knowledge, do occur.

#### **NXTGENWOMXN: 2024 TARGETS**

500

Participants in SoHK's NxtGenWomxn programmes

10

Partner organisations trained



Girls and Women reached through partner organisations





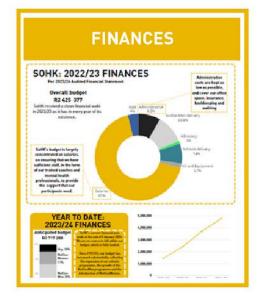
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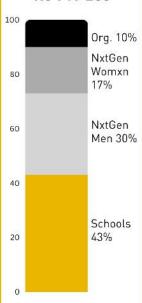
#### **2022/23 FINANCES** Administration Per 2023/24 Audited Financial Statement costs are kept as low as possible, Overall budget and cover our office space, insurance, R2 425 377 bookkeeping and SoHK received a clean financial audit M&E Administrative auditing in 2022/23, as it has in each year of its 8.2% NxtGenMen delivery existence. 10.8% Advocacy 1% SoHK's budget is largely Schools delivery 7.4% concentrated on salaries, on ensuring that we have sufficient staff, in the form Kit and Equipment

# YEAR TO DATE: 2023/24 FINANCES

#### Anticipated budget R3 717 200

of our trained coaches and

mental health
professionals, to provide
the support that our
participants need.

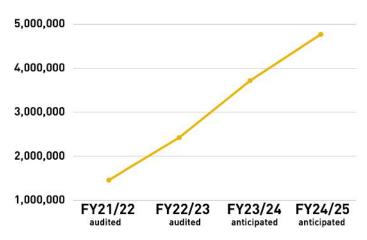


SoHK's current financial year ends at the end of February 2024. We are on course to fall within our budget, which is fully funded.

Salaries

Since FY22/23, our budget has increased substantially, reflecting the expansion of our schools programme, the growth of the NxtGenMen programme and the introduction of NxtGenWomxn.

This growth in organisational budget has not diluted our commitment to realising impact with each intervention, or to making effective and efficient use of our financial resources – at approximately R4000/per participant annually in our schools programme, and R600 per participant per programme in the NxtGen programmes



1.7%

FY24/25 will bring an additional growth in our budget, as we seek to expand our footprint even further - we expect to realise the same, or greater, impact, and to reach more than 6000 people across our 3 programmes.

Efficient approaches to the rollout of NxtGenMen, working closely with partner organisations, will significantly reduce the per person costs, while our increased understanding of the Schools and NxtGenWomxn programmes will realise additional efficiencies, helping us to reach more people, at a lower per person cost.

### FINANCES: 2024 COSTS PER PROGRAMME



#### SoHK for Schools: Costs

#### R2 178 800\*

Total cost to provide a full year of mental health and sport programming to 600 participants at no/low fee schools in Cape Town

R140

cost per participant per session

R3631

the cost of one year of programming and additional support for one participant

R4200

the cost of an hour-long session, for thirty participants, covering all overheads and staffing



the total amount to provide a full year of programming to one squad (30 participants)

#### NxtGenMen: Cost

#### R1 402 800\*

Total cost of the NxtGenMen programme (providing mental health support and gender transformative anti-GBV programming to 3000 men and boys)

R78

cost per participant, for each session (5-6 sessions per programme)



a one-day NxtGen<mark>Men</mark> programme, for 80 men or boys

#### NxtGenWomxn: Cost

#### R849 200\*

Total cost of the NxtGenWomxn programme (providing mental health support and tools to 1000 girls and women)

R849

cost per participant per programme



a one-day NxtGenWomxn programme, for 80 women or girls

Note: per person costs in NxtGenWomxn are higher, as the programme is in its pilot phase for 22/23 - scaling will increase efficiency after the pilot phase, and costs will be similar to those of NxtGenMen



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### **HOW TO DONATE**



Many elements make our programmes work; from providing sanitary products to paying our valuable coaches. Here are some ideas of how you can help us keep making mental health support accessible.



SPONSORS ONE CHILD FOR ONE SESSION OF SPORT & MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TALK TO YOUR COMPANY ABOUT SUPPORTING US AS A CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY INITIATIVE. WE PROVIDE 18 A TAX CERTIFICATES SPONSORS A
CHILD'S SPORT
COACHING &
MENTAL HEALTH
SUPPORT FOR A
YEAR





SoHK has been assessed and approved by

America

https://www.givengain.com/cause/schoolofhardknocks



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WE ARREST STREET

WO are able to continue making a valuable difference because of many local and international denors and partners.

Thank you to everyone who supports us, trusts us, work with us, and believe in what we do!

Thusk you to Bard Blough for sharing pholographs of sessions on his recent vail.





























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Thank you to David Blough for sharing photographs of sessions on his recent visit.



2017/084112/08 NPC 268-627 NPO





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www.schoolofhardknocks.co.za

