Last but not the least, SVSG would like to acknowledge the belief, the heart and the support from its established partners. Thank you for supporting SVSG, and thank you for being engaged with our work:

Mari’s Bakery

Ola Fou Clinic

Saleufi Medical Clinic

THE POSITIVE MOVEMENT
WE CAN - YOU CAN

JANUARY 2020
LetTeine Polynesian Dance Group
Monetary donation of ST1,200 was presented to the SVSG President in January from representatives of the LetTeine Polynesian Dance Group from Melbourne Australia.

The donation was specifically to assist with SVSG’s Measles Outreach Program.

Donation Box (Faleolo Airport)
Thank you to all our families, friends and visitors to Samoa who donated towards SVSG through this donation box. The Faleolo Airport donation box is specifically our fundraising drive to finance the maintenance of the Campus of Hope compound as well as allowance for the security guards manning the Campus gate 24/7. ST3,743.60 was collected from the donation box in January.

Burwood Girls High School Donation
SVSG received a telegraphic transfer of ST872.90 into our Account bearing the message ‘Bathurst FT Service’. SVSG acknowledged this donation during its November-December 2019 Newsletter. However, in the beginning of the year, we received an email from Patrice Simpson of the Burwood Girls High School in New South Wales Australia, following up if SVSG had received a donation put together by the girls for the Campus. Thank you and God bless!

Staff Lunch with Travellers Point
SVSG’s management and staff were all smiles when Tuala Joe & Sarona Ponifasio of the Travellers Point treated us to a good meal early January, to start off work for this year. Thank you Tuala & Sarona for your annual treat for the staff. Greatly appreciate it. God bless!

Volunteering Support
Ms. Tanya Timu all the way from Melbourne spend a couple of weeks volunteering at our main office in Apia, while visiting families and friends in Samoa.

Thank you Tanya for filling in for some of our team members involved in the Measles Prevention Program at the time. We wish you all the best with this year’s work and we look forward to seeing you again when you next visit home.
FINANCIAL & IN KIND DONATION

We acknowledge with gratitude and appreciation the generosity of our supporting community here and abroad, without which, we will not be able to be of service to our people in need. Faafetai! Faafetai ava.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Donors</th>
<th>Donation for:</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peace Chapel Christian Fellowship</td>
<td>Court Office</td>
<td>300.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. Reda Rebbah</td>
<td>Campus of Hope</td>
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<td>Wellington Housing (NZ)</td>
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<td>250.00</td>
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<td>Moana (NZ)</td>
<td>Measles Outreach</td>
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<td>Te Runanganui o Ngati Porow</td>
<td>Measles Outreach</td>
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<th>In Kind Donors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCK Trading Limited- 2 ½ bags of clothes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wellington Housing – 7 boxes of diapers, 4 beauty cream bar, 14 baby pips, 5 dozen baby face wash, 14 packets of coloured pencils, 10 pkts of pocket tissue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mika Smith – 2 boxes clothes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A special thank you to SVSG’s ongoing partners assisting with the children’s caring:
- To Toleafoa Elon Betham and the team at the Le Aute Gas for 2 x monthly gas refills for the House of Blessings;
- To Felise Sam Chong and the team at Origin Energy for the gas refill for the House of Hope and your prompt response for our call for assistance;
- To Greg & Maria Meredith for the children’s daily supplies of bread;
- To Epi Smith for the children’s bread supplies twice a week;
- To Tuato & Anna Ryan for the children’s Sunday toanai & bread supplies;
- To Luamanuvaue Dr. Kapuana D Ainuu, and the LDS Office for coordinating the regular donations of food, the ongoing maintenance of the Campus and the volunteer support for the children’s rehabilitation programs;
- To Uncle Johnny for the children’s ice cream supply every Sundays;
- Maurice & Elanit Mitry of Australia for the monthly donation towards the Campus water rates. Thank you for the ST600.00 received in January;
- Motuipuaa Dr. Aisoli Vaai of the Saleufi Medical Clinic and Taulealeausumai Dr. Titi Lamese of the Ola Fou Clinic, for the children’s free medical consultation;
- Zhenna Chan Mow-Fa’auiga of Niu Pharmacy for the free medication supplies;
- To the Fatima Apostolate Fellowship of Mulivai Apia for hosting the children every Tuesday for Rosary and their evening meal; and
- To the churches, villages and individuals that donated food and miscellaneous supplies to assist with the children’s daily needs;

Talofa lava

It is a new year! And we thank God for His blessings upon us all. We are revitalized with renewed strength to start afresh following a depressing end to 2019, where we mourned the loss of our dear children to the measles.

We have a set Workplan for what we want to achieve this year together as a Family such as:
- Advancing our child protection work through digital tools and changing behaviour in relation to violence;
- Addressing violence through the lenses of a Gender Based approach;
- Improving the sustainability of the economic empowerment of thenofotane women; and
- Enhance community understanding of climate resilience measures necessary to lessen the effect of climate change to our daily lives.

We are also taking into consideration the effect of natural disasters and epidemics on the progress of our work, as the lessons learnt from the measles outbreak remains afresh with us.

Nevertheless, we believe in God’s good timing always. We merely have to position ourselves accordingly to ensure that we are able to reach out and lend a helping hand, whenever we are called upon.

We therefore acknowledged the partnerships with the development partners we have established thus far such as the UNICEF Pacific, the US Embassy Apia Office, the Australian High Commission’s Direct Aid Program and the University College of London (UCL).

We continued to better equipped ourselves to bring you quality support services. All that we ask of you is to speak out, be the voice for someone silenced by fear, while becoming an agent of change for the betterment of our community. Wishing our SVSG Family all the best for the year ahead.

God bless!

__________________________
Georgina Lui
Chair, SVSG Board
1. **SVSG ROAD TO RECOVERY**

With a total of 1,216 people from 140 families who have lost 70 children to the measles outbreak in November and December 2019 assisted by the SVSG Measles Outreach Program, SVSG knew that the road to recovery to rebuild our affected families required kindness, generosity and hard work.

The Monitoring & Evaluation forms part of any program undertaken by SVSG, to follow up on work being done and most importantly, to ensure that we are not one-off visitors to our families in the village communities. For the Measles M & E, we had accorded it the ‘Road to Recovery’ title.

The staff and volunteers were properly trained on the basic psychosocial aspects of trauma and mental health affecting the families who have lost children to the measles.

Despite the anticipated challenges, the most notable observations from the Road to Recovery have blessed us in our work. First, we have seen how death had brought families closer together. There was an appreciative feeling towards life in general amongst the members of families who have lost loved ones to the measles, especially knowing how precious life is when seeing loved ones taken way too soon. SVSG will closely monitor the effect of this on the level of family violence reported from hereon as it is a very interesting trend being observed.

For other families, there remain to be too many children not in school as the parents were not yet fully recovered from the loss of their other children. Even the children who were affected by the measles and have recovered still looked weak. SVSG’s Psychosocial Team worked with these families and follow up visits have been scheduled.

These short term solutions also form part of the youth’s long term initiatives to the problem of poverty and the effects of climate change – by planting our own food supply and being mindful of what we dispose in our environment.

6.2 **Start with the Men Campaign**

For the young men in the SVSG (Juniors), they took their responsibility as role models for other young men very seriously.

Before the new school year started late January, young men from colleges around Apia put on their working gears and joined the SVSG village representatives in cleaning and educating our grassroot communities on healthy living.

The young men volunteered their time while donating cleaning supplies required for this community work.

It is encouraging to see our sons becoming responsible young men, as we continued to nurture the seed of being responsible towards others, of being kind and generous, and above all else, of being good citizens for tomorrow.
In January, gifts for the returning health professionals that volunteered here in Samoa during the measles outbreak were bought from the nofotane women’s stall within the SVSG office.

Thank you so much to our families and friends for buying the nofotane brand, thereby supporting the sustainability of the self-employed nofotane women.

6. **SVSG JUNIORS**

6.1 **Young Climate Resilience Action Group**

For every problem, there has to be a solution. At SVSG, the youths have been part of that solution which strengthens the sustainability of our programs for years to come.

Since the SVSG Measles Outreach program, our youth volunteers have been actively involved.

They have not only provided the short term solution to the hygienic problem faced by most of the underprivileged families affected by measles, through community programs they have rolled. The youths have been cleaning plastics while educating our people on natural composts and on maintaining basic hygiene in their daily lives.

SVSG’s child protection work in general continues, to look at the best interest of the child during this recovery period. It surely is a long road to recovery.

On a more positive note, we have 14 unemployed nofotane women from the villages of Leauvaa and Luatuanuu who voluntarily registered with SVSG’s economic empowerment program for nofotane women. SVSG will work with these women to assess their existing livelihood skill level for product development and linkages to market opportunities.

At the same time, the SVSG (Junior) continues with its basic hygiene awareness and well-being assistance for the affected families.

1.1 **Measles Outreach Continues**

While the Road to Recovery rolls out, the measles continue to claim the lives of our children. In January, parents sought SVSG’s assistance for the funeral expenses of their children.

For this particular family, the Salvation Army Samoa assisted with $500 donated to help with their daughter’s funeral expenses.

Thank you to the Salvation Army Samoa Regional Leader Lieutenant-Colonel Rod Carey for coordinating this support.

Another family required financial assistance to transport their 4-year old daughter’s body from Upolu to Savaii for burial.

Again, a donation of $500 from a local company assisted the family with the interisland transportation costs.

Thank you Toleafoa Elon Betham and staff of the CMN Company Limited for your donation which had assisted with this family’s request.
As for Levi and Fia Taito of Seattle Washington, they accompanied their parents, children and family members to give out food and toiletry supplies for the affected families under SVSG’s Measles Outreach Program.

Pictured here are members of the Taito Family Ministries: Lend a Hand, giving out donations to the affected community at Leauvaa.

Thank you so much Levi and Fia Taito for supporting our Measles Outreach Program for our people in need.

2. GENDER BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)
Over the years, this section of the Newsletter details ‘Family Violence’ and its effect on our people’s daily lives. Family violence is when a family member threatens, harms, controls or abuses another family member.

However, recent incidents of violence reported to SVSG involved men, women and children who are not related, but is derived from gender norms and roles as well as from unequal power relations between women and men.

It includes but not limited to, physical, sexual, and psychological harm (including intimidation, suffering, coercion, and/or deprivation of liberty within the family or within the general community). It includes violence perpetuated by the state. As such, to get a holistic view of violence as reported to SVSG, we will report on gender based violence.

2.1 Casework Assistance
January started with a total of 69 new cases lodged with SVSG; 48 with the Apia office and 21 at the Tuasivi office in Savaii. Gender based violence accounted for 30 of these cases or 43%, categorized as:
   - Sexual – 7
   - Domestic – 8
   - Intimidation – 15

Close to 4,000 men, women, youths and their families have been influenced by Susi’s frankness, her motherly advises and her commitment to be of service to others. Rest in love dear Susi.

The Courts were officially opened mid-January. There were 22 men and 10 women continuing with the Program from 2019. In January, an additional 10 men have been admitted into the Program here in Upolu with 8 men to the Program in Savaii, as referred from the Family Courts.

New facilitators from the churches have come on board to coordinate the Programs. And due to the increase in the number of participants to the Perpetrator Program in Upolu, new classes have been set up specifically for the men, to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to benefit from the counseling sessions.

5. WOMEN’S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT - THE NOFOTANE WOMEN
The sustainability of the economic empowerment of the self-employed nofotane women remains a challenge for SVSG following the successful completion of the 2-year project with UN Women Fund for Gender Equality in 2018.

With small scale grants in 2019, SVSG was able to improve on the products while sourcing out additional markets for the nofotane women.
From a pile of wheelchair flat tyres of, the young boys worked on building pot plant holders and garden displays.

With the donated paints that the Campus received in January, the boys transformed the dirty flat tyres to colourful garden ornaments.

As the country recovers from the measles outbreak, January saw the SVSG youth on a scoping exercise to identify child vendors who are interested in the program, while getting the consents from their parents for the children to leave the streets and be empowered with livelihood skills at the SVSG training program.

SVSG therefore acknowledged the grant awarded from the US Embassy of Apia late 2019, to finance the program for child vendors.

4. PERPETRATOR OF VIOLENCE SUPPORT PROGRAMS

A few weeks into the resumption of the counselling programs for the perpetrators of violence referred from the Family and Youth Courts in January, the SVSG family was caught off-guard when news of the passing of one of its long serving family member, Mrs. Susitina Lene reached us.

Susi as she was lovingly known by; was a vocal and proactive SVSG village representative from Leauvaa since 2012. In 2013, Susi assisted the women offenders of violence from the Courts with anger management counselling as a Facilitator.

It was a responsibility she carried with her to heart, up until her passing in January 2020. Susi had served the community as an SVSG village representative for 7 years.

Of the 7 sexual cases, 4 were committed by non-family members while 3 were incest rape. Two of the sexual abuse cases are twins age 10 who were indecently assaulted by their family’s landlord. One of the incest rape victims got pregnant from her own biological father. The victims age range from 7 – 14 years old. Six of the sexual abused victims are now residence of the Campus of Hope while their cases are now with the Police.

The domestic violence cases involved 7 women and 1 child age 10. Four of the abused mothers plus the child are now under Court protection orders. The child is now cared for at the Campus of Hope shelter facility. The 15 intimidation cases involved families affected by village council decisions, unfair treatment by the authorities or extended family members.

Highlighted below are some of these cases to give you more insight into the magnitude of the suffering endured by the victims of abuse and neglect in our community:

06.01.20: Abandoned Children

Three siblings age 2, 3 and 5 years old were referred to SVSG for shelter assistance, in one of the first cases we handled for the year. There were 2 brothers and 1 sister. Seeing them at our office was heart breaking. Apparently, the father has been in prison since July 2019; the mother left the children with a relative in October 2019 and never returned. The children were immediately referred to the Ola Fou Medical Clinic for check-up before they were brought to the Campus of Hope. Thank you Dr. Titi Lamese for supporting our work through free medical check-ups for the children. The children have adapted well with their new home, while SVSG continues to gather information on the whereabouts of their mother.

14.01.20: Indecent Assault

It has to take a neighbour who was suspicious of wrongdoing against two young girls, to become the voice of twin girls age 10 who have been indecently assaulted by the family’s landlord. The twins confided to the neighbour about the abuse. The neighbour’s daughter is the twins’ friend. The twins’ mother left her husband and 4 children at a rented property in urban Apia while she goes out; and sometimes, she returns after months or even up to 3 months. It is during these times that the landlord indecently assaulted the twins. The matter had been referred to the Police; the twins were evacuated from their home for the safety of the Campus of Hope.
17.01.20: Sexual Violation
At 7 years old, this child had experienced ugliest at its worst. First she was sexually violated by her step-father and while she was still silenced by fear of being killed if she tells anyone, the step grandfather did the same to her. The biological grandmother who looked after the child relocated the child for her safety. It was at this place that staff who carried out community outreach for the Ministry of Women, were made aware of the situation and immediately, they connected with the Police and SVSG for assistance.

The child was immediately evacuated to the Campus of Hope while the matter is now under the Police investigation. Under the care of SVSG, the child confided to the Child Protection Team about her younger sister at 5 years old, who she feared might be another victim of her stepfather and step grandfather’s evil. Before the end of January, the younger sister was also brought under the care of SVSG. An Interim Protection Order was applied by SVSG for the protection of the girls.

24.01.20: Incest
Attentive to his congregation’s wellbeing, this church leader observed a strange relationship between a father and daughter while the mother is away at work. It has been the topic of conversation in the village, but no one took up the responsibility seek assistance for the girl child. Even the mother of the child had confided to her employer about her daughter being sexually abused by her husband, yet, she was scared of her husband.

The church leader and his wife alerted SVSG of the need for assistance and immediately, the girl child was evacuated for her safety. The matter was referred to the Police for their normal investigation while SVSG applied for an Interim Protection Order against the child’s biological father. One-on-one counselling is continuing for the girl child while under SVSG’s care at the Campus.

27.01.20: Domestic Violence
A 35 year old mother lodged a complaint with SVSG against her husband for physical and mental abuse. According to the woman survivor, she has been mistreated by her husband even before they moved to Samoa to work. She had suffered mentally and physically, and the scars on her body remain to remind her of husband’s abusive behaviour. SVSG applied for an Interim Protection Order for the mother while the Police is handling the matter through to the Courts.

Over the years, the Samoa Council of Churches in Wellington New Zealand had been assisting SVSG and its work where possible, from fundraising events to monetary donations.

Thank you to all the families of each congregation under the Samoa Council of Churches in Wellington for donating towards the work of SVSG. Thank you also to the church leaders for continuing to work in partnership with SVSG for the abused children in Samoa.

3.4 School of Hope

The excitement to start a new school year was evident around the Campus as the colorful products created by the children were put on display.

Handicrafts and furniture were amongst some of these innovative products, visibly displayed inside the shelters and around the compound.

With funding support from the Ministry of Education through the government’s school grant scheme, SVSG is able to pay salaries for the teachers and trainers at the School of Hope.

3.5 Child Vendors – The Hot Soup Skill Building Training

Turning trash into cash is one of the inspirations behind the child vendors opting to stay away from the streets while attending the skill building training by SVSG.

In January, 4 young boys who were trained under the Hot Soup Skill Building in 2019 excitedly returned with new ideas.
Lazy Sneakers

Through working in partnership with the Salvation Army Samoa, reusable good conditioned sneakers collected by Ms. Maia Marianer of New Zealand reached the children at the Campus of Hope in January.

The children of hope as well as some of our young volunteers looked really smart in their sneakers.

Thank you Rod Carey, Lieutenant Colonel/Regional Officer for the Salvation Army Office in Samoa for continued to work in partnership with the SVSG.

Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints

2020 started with the leaders of the Upolu Malie Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints representing their congregation in presenting their usual donation of food and toiletry supplies for the children of hope.

Thank you so much President Pulotu Lyndon Chu Ling, President Tema Siaunuua and President Sikuava Ajawas for coordinating this timely sharing of God’s blessings to your families, with the children of hope. We look forward to a successful year ahead for us all.

Samoa Council of Churches, Wellington New Zealand

Two members of the Samoa Council of Churches in Wellington New Zealand, accompanied the Chair of the Samoa Council of Churches in Wellington New Zealand, Reverend Muaiva Malaki, to officially handed over the donation of ST20,000.00 to the Samoa Victim Support Group (SVSG).

The donation came at the beginning of the new year while SVSG was working on sourcing out finds to finance its annual budget.

27.01.20: Child Abuse

As an adopted child, this 12 year old have been abused and at times, been discriminated within his own home. He gets blamed for everything while his siblings mocked him whenever he gets beaten up by his father for it. His body bears scars and injuries from these beatings, including the one which resulted to his being referred to the Campus of Hope.

Thankfully, there is a family that he always ran to for help, and it was this same family that referred the child to SVSG for help during this recent abuse. SVSG applied for an Interim Protection Order for the child; and he is undertaking counselling assistance.

The Police is investigating the matter further.

Observations:

We have heard, and we have seen the ugly reality of gender based violence on the survivors who had the courage to speak out.

Unfortunately, the majority continued to tolerate violence as the norm while others are silenced by fear.

As such, ongoing awareness programs in the villages as well as the operation of the 24 hour free Help Line, are the means by which we can be there to support, to help and to care for you.

For immediate support, please call the 800-7874 Help Line.
It is FREE and it is a 24-hour service.
3. CHILD PROTECTION

The dawn of the new-year brought with it a sense of new beginning, and such is positive mentality we have towards SVSG’s child protection work for 2020.

This is especially given a record number of 11 abused and neglected children admitted as residence at the Campus of Hope within a month.

And from SVSG’s casework assistance, 6 out of 69 new cases lodged in January directly affected children; from sexual to child abuse, neglect, discrimination and intimidation. For the Campus admission alone, there were 3 sets of siblings:

- A 7 and 5 year old (with one being a victim of sexual violation);
- A 10 year old twins (both are victims of indecent assault); and
- A 2,3 and 5 year old who are victims of child neglect.

For the rest of the 69 new cases lodged, a total of 130 children were indirectly affected by the violence committed against their mothers and fathers.

From the total of 10 Interim Protection Orders SVSG applied for in January, five were for children while the rest were for the protection of five mothers age 31 – 35 years of age and their 16 children.

With this many children whose rights have been violated, SVSG is grateful of the legal systems we have in place such as the Family Safety Act and the Crimes Act, which is pursued to ensure justice for these children is achieved.

And with the measles outbreak of 2019, SVSG has identified the need for trained Field Officers to carry out assessments, monitoring and evaluations of the children who have gone through SVSG’s child protection program to ensure that they will never be left behind in the whole child protection process.

The partnership with UNICEF Pacific is therefore provides a valuable support towards SVSG and its child protection work for the children of Samoa. Thank you so much Tupe Esera-Aumua, the UNICEF Child Protection Officer for Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa and Tokelau for always being on the look-out for opportunities to support us further with our work.
Taito Family Ministries: Lend a Hand

Following a visit to the Campus in January by Levi & Fia Taito of Seattle Washington and of the Taito Family Ministries: Lend a Hand, a container load of donation was received from the family, courtesy of supporters in Seattle.

Thank you so much Fia for your heart to help out with our work. Thank you for the donation of ST3,000 presented during your visit. We look forward to the beginning of our construction project for the youth later this year.

Mauigoa Family

The Campus is now under CCTV surveillance thanks to the kind donation from a family a few blocks down the road from the Campus.

SVSG acknowledges the generosity of Sai & Sina Mauigoa and family, who kindly donated a complete surveillance system for the Campus, tables, gallons of paint and many others before moving back overseas.

We wish you well in your returning home and God bless.

Miscellaneous Donors

During January, SVSG cleared a few donations from the wharf put together by our supporting partners overseas. As per our normal accountability procedure, we acknowledge herein your generosity.

Tranche payment of ST28,971.00 was received in January from the UNICEF to finance SVSG’s child protection work for the 3-months period from January to March 2020.

3.1 Court Support

Nine children were provided with court support during January.

For one rape victim, the Court Support Officer accompanied her during the week long court hearing. The victim had to face her aunty, whose husband alleged raped the child in 2016 at the age of 9. But SVSG had prepared the child well while under our care as part of SVSG’s child protection work. We observed how she stood tall in the witness stand as she fought for justice. The perpetrator pleaded not guilty to the charges; and we are awaiting a verdict on this case.

A 14-year old rape victim referred under SVSG’s shelter care in 2019 also had her case heard in court in January and the perpetrator pleaded guilty to the offence. The matter was adjourned to February 2020 for sentencing.

Lastly, a 16 year old who was allegedly raped by the then church minister of her village was spared from facing the perpetrator in Court in January, when the church minister pleaded guilty to rape and sexual violation.

Again, the matter had been adjourned to February 2020 for sentencing. And as we go to print, it has been confirmed that the church minister is now serving 4 years imprisonment for the offence.

Thank you UNICEF Pacific for extending your support to include assistance for the children through to court.
3.2 The Reintegration Program

SVSG successfully reintegrated two children into the community and their families during January. There was an 18 year old survivor of rape and a 14 year old abused child.

For the 18 year old, she was previously reintegrated in 2018 following her court case. However, the young child ran away from home and sought refuge with SVSG late 2019 due to the physical abuse she endured in the home. During the reintegration assessment, SVSG worked with the SVSG village representatives in locating another suitable member of the child’s extended family to take up the responsibility for the child. Late January therefore saw the Police accompanying the child across the island to her biological family, who received the child with open arms upon her return home. The SVSG village representative in this village is now tasked with monitoring the progress of the child while settling back with her family.

For the 14 year old abused child, his father had completed anger management sessions with the SVSG Perpetrator of Violence Program following his referral from the Family Court. An assessment of the child’s family was carried out to confirm his safety upon returning home. A follow up visit by the Child Protection Team will be carried to ensure that the reintegrated children are well and safe within their own homes.

3.3 Campus of Hope

There were 11 new admissions into the Campus in January.

There were 86 children in residence since the beginning of January, less the 2 children who were successfully reintegrated. With the 11 new admissions, this takes the total number of children cared for at the Campus in January, to 97, inclusive of children with disabilities.