

COPING MECHANISMS AT TCH AFTER THE CORONA VIRUS EPIDEMIC:

Since the Corona epidemic struck Kenya in early March, the home has seen various changes.

CHANGES:

1: The children are no longer in school. This measure was taken all over the country for this would have been a means of spreading the virus so fast. Different children attend the school using different means thus they would have been exposed posing more risk to the TCH children some of whose immunity is already low.

2: Learning for the children is via whatsapp where the teachers send the assignments and exam papers and they are downloaded and the children are supervised while they do the assignments and then the teachers send the mark list and we send the results back via whatsapp. In essence we have become teachers also.

3: Leah who is our social worker cum mother is also assuming the role of the matron. This is so because we are minimizing contact with the clinic people in case of any person infecting them so that they don't spread to the home. We are giving out their meals and all to the clinic so that they don't come to the home side, In case of a child getting sick, one care giver takes the child to the clinic and after being attended to, they sanitize before coming back to the home.

4: Visitors are not being allowed to the home. This was a directive from the children's department but after further consultation with various home managers and the Kisauni Children's officer, we agreed to set aside an area where the donors can bring the donations and we receive. The parking has been set aside to receive the donations which are scarce since the economy is also being affected thus people are not bringing donations.

PRECAUTIONS TAKEN:

Since the children are at home and they are in need of care and protection, their safety has to always be considered thus we have opted to:

1: Buy stock to last the whole month to feed the children in the home. This will limit travel every week to buy provisions and also ensure enough food in case of a lock down.

2: All staff members before coming to the home are to change clothes and sanitize then attend to their normal duties. Each member is carrying an extra pair of clothes to ensure this rule is followed.

3: The reception area i.e. the two front offices are out of bounds for all and in the event that the children need anything, either Naomi or I attend to them from the playground area or dining hall. This is to prevent the children from crowding in one area and we need to obey the social distance rule.

4: Since the public sector is more liable to spread the disease for many people are coming into contact with the surfaces, we have opted to be using the van for any official duties instead of exposing the children to the virus. For personal errands, we are advising to take precautions inclusive wearing of masks and sanitizing properly.

5: Surfaces are being wiped frequently with soap and water and we have taken 0.5% chlorine and are spraying surfaces especially the gates to sterilize them. We are hoping this will also reduce the chances of contamination.

6: Visitors to the home are limited. If on official duties, they are to come to the office only. No one from outside is allowed to come into contact with the children.

7: In the event of a possible lock down, we have identified staff members who are to be in the home permanently while the rest are given compulsory leave.

Six mothers have been identified that is: *JM*, *JW*, *RM*, *EA*, *EM* and *EB*. *EB* has replaced *DS* for *DS* is proceeding for her annual leave.

In housekeeping, we are having the following: *JO*, *JA* and *AW*.

The kitchen department will see the following: *EW* and *DM*.

RM will remain in case of any emergency that will necessitate the use of the van.

The clinician and Eirleen will be on call and special arrangements will be made with the children's department and the police OCS Bamburi police and Kiambeni police stations to have passes authorizing us to attend to the children if need be.

CONCLUSION

We are trying our level best to keep the children and ourselves safe in these tough times.

Report by Eirleen