

**ADDRESS BY THE MEC FOR SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT, MRS. H.J MASHAMBA, AT THE
EVENT OF THE ECD EXCELLENCE AWARDS.**

16th February 2016

MPL's here present;

Councillors present here today;

**The HOD for Social Development, Ms. Daisy
Mafubelu;**

**The Chairperson of the NDA, Prof. Zach
Chuenyane;**

Members of the business fraternity;

**Representatives of the various media houses
gathered here today;**

Ladies and Gentlemen;

All protocol observed.

“The doors of Learning and culture shall be opened...”

With these words from the Freedom Charter, adopted 61 years ago on 26th June in Kliptown, we celebrate government’s efforts to deliver innovative and quality early education for our children. It is indeed an honour to join in today’s ECD Awards, during which we acknowledge the hard work and dedication of individuals and groups, who have a passion for shaping and moulding the future citizens of South Africa.

Programme Director

We have, on many occasions, hailed the multitude of benefits Early Childhood Development has to offer.

Today's living and working conditions sees parents having to leave their young children with caregivers when going to work. The Early Childhood Development Programme offers them peace of mind that their children will be kept busy with healthy and uplifting activities and that their children will receive nutritious meals in a safe environment. ECD's care for the most vulnerable members of our communities during the day, when they would normally be at home in a comfortable, familiar environment. It is therefore imperative that their learning centres be places conducive to their growth, development and emotional wellbeing.

At the same time, it offers children the opportunity to receive the relevant stimulation and building blocks they need, when advancing to primary and higher education.

It is a proven fact that children who have been exposed to the ECD programme, perform better at school than those who have not. We are confident that children are likely to excel even more, if the quality of the early childhood development programme and the environment it is presented in, is of a high standard.

This brings us to the very reason for our awards today. Encouraging service excellence within the ECD sector, will ultimately lead to quality education for children in this programme. It is always encouraging to receive accolades for a job well done and for finding innovative new ways in which to present this programme.

While Early Childhood Development centres are seemingly mushrooming all over the Province, it is important to ensure that quality and standards are adhered to and further encouraged.

Indeed the Early Childhood Development Programme is an example of cooperative governance and beneficial partnerships with civil society. While we are thankful for the support the business fraternity has shown in the NDA's "Adopt an ECD" campaign, we wish to make a clarion call to our friends in the business sector to support this effort of awarding the best of the best, in the ECD sector. We are confident that, with their help we can encourage even more improvement.

Programme Director

Without further ado I now wish to congratulate the recipients of today's awards. Thank you for benchmarking and improving on the quality of early childhood development. Your efforts will lead to the grooming of the future leaders and responsible adults of South Africa that will continue to make a difference. In other words, your actions today, will be a lasting legacy. We are confident that these awards will inspire you to reach even greater heights. We also wish you good luck, as you advance towards the national awards.

In closure I take this opportunity to thank the NDA for their continued support of this initiative and others that prove their interest in investing in the future of South Africa. Please keep up the good work and thank you for helping us build a caring society, together!

I thank you!

Nzi khensile!

Ke a leboga!

Ndo livhuwa!

Baie dankie!