



2022 ANNUAL REPORT

**LIFE IS AN UNEVEN PLAYING FIELD.
WE HELP LEVEL IT OUT.**

S O H K
SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS

2017/084112/08 NPC



MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW CEO

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MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW CEO

It is well documented that we - in South Africa, and globally - find ourselves in an **increasingly grave mental health crisis**, at all levels of society.

At the School of Hard Knocks, we have seen this first hand - with the learners that we work with in our schools, with their teachers and their caregivers, with the men that we work with in our NextGenMen programme, and in our discussions with women as we plan a new programme for 2023.

This crisis means many things for the School of Hard Knocks: firstly, that by delivering programmes that seek to help people address the mental health challenges that they face, it is clear that **we are addressing a deep, and all-too-often unmet, need in our society**. SoHK is committed to ensuring that our programmes are **maximally effective and efficient**, while at the same time **recognising and caring for our participants as individuals**. Secondly, we recognise that this crisis places particular demands on our team. The work that our coaches do with young people, in or outside of schools, is hard and emotionally draining. **I want to thank each member of 2022's School of Hard Knocks team for their commitment to, and care for, our participants.**

2022 has been a year of continuity and change. SoHK has continued to deliver and extend its programmes, has continued to bring about substantive change in its participants, and has continued to work with a dedicated team. And SoHK has changed, growing and seeking to find new ways to help those battling with different elements of mental health.

And - you might have noticed - the fact that I am writing this, and not **Scott Sloan**, SoHK SA's founder, is indicative of another change. Scott, after having founded SoHK in SA, after having led the team since its founding, has moved on to pastures new. In October, Scott took up a role at the International Olympic Committee, in their Safe Sport unit. Nothing is a greater testament to Scott than the fact that, in 2023, the School of Hard Knocks will be in a position to grow its reach dramatically, with an experienced and caring core team.

Scott, we wish you all the best for the future.

In 2023, the SoHK team will be working with more learners, aiming to deliver more impact on the well-being of these learners, and seeking to **empower other organisations to deliver mental health interventions.**

I'm excited to be part of this, to be working with the SoHK team and with our partners and supporters, without whom SoHK wouldn't be able to do the work we do - thank you, to you all.



Dr Jon Hunter-Parsonage





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The School of Hard Knocks is dedicated to providing mental health interventions through sport, with the intention of bringing about meaningful social change.

Our vision:

A South Africa where people are better able to fulfil their potential, by addressing the trauma that they have experienced and providing mental health support and introducing behavioural skills that may reduce the likelihood that they will engage in risky or harmful behaviour

We recognise that trauma, on a macro and a micro level, is endemic in South Africa, for a range of reasons



This impacts different communities and individuals in different ways



Failure to address trauma creates the circumstances for the intergenerational transmission of trauma, poverty and other struggles

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

SoHK's work has been widely recognised, winning major awards



The MTN Awards for Social Change 2021



WINNER

Hollard. SPORT INDUSTRY AWARDS

FINALIST

SOHK

SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS

PROGRAMMES



SOHK FOR SCHOOLS



NEXTGENMEN



EMPOWHER

OVERVIEW

The School of Hard Knocks (SoHK) is an award-winning South African non-profit, with a proven track record of using sport, counselling and behavioural interventions to help young people cope with trauma, to change outdated perceptions of gender, and to improve their physical and emotional well-being.

SoHK has two projects currently in progress, with a third in a pilot phase.

SoHK for Schools

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

Three pillars lie at the heart of SoHK for Schools

1. Creating a 'safe space'
SoHK's coaches use trauma-informed skills to create a psychological safe space for participants

2. Pitchside Therapy
SoHK's trained coaches hold pitchside one-on-one sessions with participants, and are able to refer cases to SoHK's on-staff social worker

3. Participants' broader ecosystem
SoHK works with the participants' caregivers and educators, to enhance the support they receive

SoHK for schools has delivered significant results in 2022

243

Learners attended 50% of the sessions

675

1:1 sessions (Pitch-side therapy)



73% ↓

Reductions in school drop-outs (vs mean)

83.7% ↑

say they have learnt how to make better decisions

**In 2023, SoHK for Schools will increase to:
6 schools - 400+ learners - 8 coaches**

NextGenMen

Piloted in September 2022, NextGenMen is an 8-week intervention aimed at reducing violence perpetrated by men - and, in particular, to reduce violence against women. The programme works with men and boys to address and dislodge embedded notions of masculinity and gender.

NextGenMen has proven to have meaningful impact

190

Men aged 18-30 participated in the pilot programmes

11

Different sites across Cape Town



67% ↓

Reduction in agreement with: "A man can hit his wife if she won't have sex with him."

87% ↓

Reduction in agreement with: "A man using violence against his wife is a private matter that shouldn't be discussed outside the couple"

In 2023, SoHK will expand NextGenMen through 3 avenues

1. Continue to deliver to men

Deliver regular interventions, led by SoHK staff

2. Work with schools

Work with adolescents in schools across the WC

3. Utilise a 'train-the-trainer' model

Partner with Community Based Organisations (CBOs), training their staff to deliver

EmpowHER

EmpowHER is an intervention that will provide mental health support to women and girls.

It is currently In the RESEARCH and PLANNING phase:

- Focus groups have been held with 5 women's sports clubs in the Western Cape
- Conversations have been held with leading South African sportswomen

A pilot programme is scheduled for January 2023, with Badgers Football Academy - for 40 girls, aged 14-18.



BADGERS



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SoHK for schools is the SoHK's flagship project. Through a 23-week programme, spanning the entire year, SoHK's specially trained coaches build relationships with the learners at no fee or low fee schools located in and around the Cape Town CBD, providing a range of psycho-social support and coping strategies to improve the mental health and long-term outcomes of SoHK's learners, in hopes filling the mental health treatment access gaps



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 self-esteem

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 PLACE THREE PILLARS AT THE HEART OF OUR PROGRAMME

THE SAFE SPACE

SoHK seeks to create an emotional safe space that is supportive, fun and gender sensitive, where people feel comfortable sharing their thoughts, is heard, and is treated with respect

THE HARD KNOCKS

Physical challenges create the platform for behavioural change - we find that 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 four coaches, who, over the course of the year, build deep relationships with the learners.

AIMS FOR PARTICIPANTS

ABLE TO MAKE BETTER DECISIONS

IMPROVED SELF-CONFIDENCE

IMPROVED RELATIONSHIPS WITH SELF, FAMILY AND PEERS

ENHANCED ABILITY TO SELF REGULATE AND EXHIBIT POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS

INCREASED UNDERSTANDING OF GENDER STEREOTYPING AND NORMS

IMPROVED SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

SOHK FOR SCHOOLS: RESULTS

5

LOW FEE/NO FEE
CAPE TOWN SCHOOLS

298

YOUTH SIGNED UP

243

ATTENDED AVG OF 50%

40%



199

SESSIONS

675

1:1 SESSIONS
(PITCHSIDE THERAPY)

56

PARENTS SIGNED UP FOR
PARENT PROGRAM

17

YOUTH REFERRED BY
COACHES FOR SOCIAL
WORKER INTERVENTION

1000+

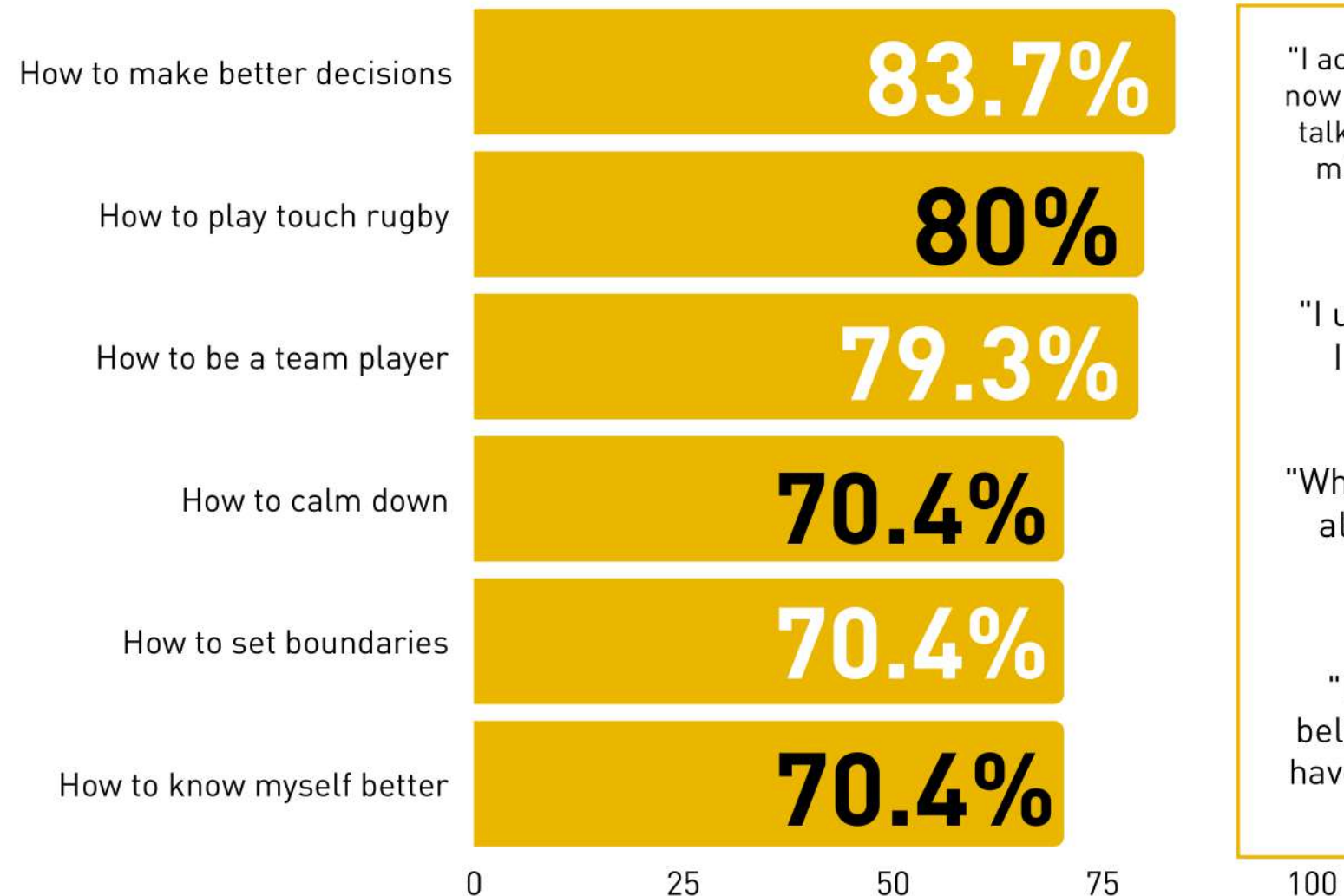
SOCIAL WORK MINUTES

6

FAMILIES RECEIVED
SOCIAL WORK
INTERVENTIONS

SOHK FOR SCHOOLS: IMPACT

"What have you learnt at SoHK this year?"



"I actually respect my mom more now and like, I am starting now to talk to her more openly with my mind and I started building a better relationship"

"I used to be aggressive, but I am calmed down now"

"When I'm agitated or angry, I always use like breathing techniques as well"

"Long ago I used to not believe in myself, but now I have confidence, I believe in myself"

Interviewer: You thought girls would be fragile on the field?
Boy: Yes they would be sensitive.
Interviewer: And now?
Boy: Now I know girls are stronger.

SOHK Focus Groups 2021

57%

indicating that their views on the gender norms and stereotypes have changed

"You guys make school exciting! I wasn't gonna go to school tmr but now I am coz we have a SoHK session.**"**

-SoHK participant via Whatsapp, Sep '22

73%

reduction in school dropout rate against average

"Normally if I see girls like play like netball, I wouldnt have watched them. I would rather go inside or watch TV. But now, they're getting more athletic. They're making a game more fun. So its now a joy to watch them."

"I changed a lot actually, I go to class often, I have more respect with teachers."

99.2%

RATE THEIR COACHES AS GOOD OR AMAZING

SOHK FOR SCHOOLS: CASE STUDY



Abdul Malik is a very energetic boy, sometimes a bit too energetic. His schools referred him to the programme for a variety of "difficult behaviours".

At the beginning of the program, it seemed as if he just attended sessions to be out of class and play some touch-rugby, treating sessions as a "free period", but as the year progressed, he seemed more interested in chatting to the coaches and discussing issues he felt passionate about.

At the graduation session, he shocked the entire team by **openly showing his emotions** and made a point of going to each coach and telling them how much the program meant to him.


He went to his teachers and proudly showed them his certificate, even asking another student to take a picture of him holding his certificate.

The safe space allowed Abdul to be able to grasp things the way he wanted to and his **attitude and behaviour at school improved** during this year.

We are very proud of him and it meant a lot to the team to see the positive impact the program had on a student that the school considered a bit of a headache.

SoHK has invited Abdul back as a **mentor in 2023** and look forward to him being a role model to the new youth joining the programme.

CAREGIVER PERSPECTIVES



"Thank to you and your team for the support you provided to [my child] this year. May Allah grant you and the team many more the strength to be able to be there for many more students over the years."

"Thank you so much for going through all this for my child. We can see the difference in him. We really appreciate it so much."

"Thank you, SoHK. It really means a lot to us that you are so consistent when it comes to [my child]."

"I think me and [my child] have the best relationship I could ever ask for. Me and her father was divorced for about 3 years in that time things was a bit crazy but we in a good space now because of SoHK."

SCHOOLS LEARNINGS

POST-COVID LANDSCAPE

The long-lasting impacts on adolescent mental health of the Covid-19 pandemic of the last few years are becoming increasingly evident. After two years of disrupted schooling, we have seen that young people face higher levels of social and academic anxiety than before. This means that participants need even more robust support that addresses the difficulties participants face.

EXISTING SCHOOLS STRENGTHEN BUY-IN

The strong relationships that we have built with the schools that we have been working with over the past year have led to SoHK being invited to attend the CBD School Principals' Cluster, where we are able to attend quarterly meetings and learn firsthand about the needs of our target schools. This has enabled us to develop relationships with other schools and key role players in the area, and we hope to work with these additional schools in the near future.

ON-FIELD TEAM SCALING

The increased demands placed on SoHK's on-field staff in 2022 and with extra schools that will be partnering with us in 2023, we have expanded our delivery teams, creating 2 teams, elevating two of our existing coaches to Team Leaders and hiring additional intern coaches for 2023. By having 2 implementation teams, we will be able to double the number of participants we reach.



ATTENDANCE CHALLENGES

Although initial enrolment into the programme is high, we faced attendance issues over the course of the year. In part, this challenge is due to the SoHK programme running during the academic school day, with no specifically allocated slots for SoHK sessions. In 2023, this will change - most of our partner schools have asked us to work with their entire grade 9 cohort, and have given us an academic periods in which to work with their learners. We anticipate that this will lead to more consistent participant attendance.

CONNECTING WITH CAREGIVERS

An important part of SoHK's programme is the support we provide to the participants' caregivers. This is often tough - challenges include the lack of consistent phone numbers, caregivers' working hours and their long commutes. Caregiver contact remains an important part of our programme, and we continue to work on creative and accessible ways both to deliver support to caregivers and to receive feedback on ways to improve the programme.



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NEXTGENMEN

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NEXTGENMEN



NextGenMen seeks to help the men who attend the programme to have more self-awareness, question unhealthy gender norms and to have an improved skill set for relationship management and conflict resolution.

IMPROVED COPING STRATEGIES



IMPROVED RELATIONSHIPS WITH SELF AND OTHERS



REDUCTION IN PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY VIOLENCE AS A RESPONSE TO CONFLICT



The programme seeks to empower men to become gamechangers in their communities, leading the drive against violence against women through their attitudes and their actions.

NEXTGENMEN: THEORY OF CHANGE

THE ISSUE

There is an urgent need to address a pandemic of violence against women in South Africa.

Most current interventions typically treat every man as a perpetrator which prevents in-depth discussion on the causes of violence.

Men's mental and emotional needs and lack of self-management skills get overlooked and the unsafe coping behaviours perpetuate the cycle of violence.

ASSUMPTIONS

By creating a safe space where men can engage with sensitive and difficult topics, SoHK allows men to challenge themselves and each other.

Playing sport together creates 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 express feelings that they would normally not talk about.

They feel heard and can exchange resources on how to cope better with life challenges.

NEXT GEN MEN

ACTIVITIES

Adapt and deliver internationally recognised gender transformative content aimed at promoting more positive masculinities and coping strategies.

6-8 one-hour long workshops, on our evidenced-based curriculum, led by trained facilitators.



OUTCOMES

Increased number of men engaging with each other and difficult topics in a constructive way

Improved relationships with selves and others

Improved coping strategies

Reduction in personal and community violence in response to conflict

IMPACT

Improved physical, mental and emotional wellbeing

Greater support for gender equality and non-violent attitudes

Positive change in the adoption of equitable gender roles

NextGenMen act as allies and take an active stand for gender equality and against VAW/GBV

193

MEN aged 18-30

11

TEAMS/SITES

66

SESSIONS

3960

MINS OF MEN
TALKING TO MEN
ABOUT DIFFICULT
TOPICS

STEP UP STAND UP SPEAK UP

59%



MEN WHO OFTEN TALK TO
OTHER MEN ABOUT HOW TO
TREAT WOMEN

61%



WHEN I HEAR SOMEONE
TALKING ABOUT BEING
VIOLENT TO A WOMAN...
"I SPEAK UP OR I FIND HELP"

68%



"IF SOMEONE INSULTS A
MAN, HE SHOULD DEFEND
HIS REPUTATION WITH
FORCE IF HE HAS TO"

87%



"A MAN USING VIOLENCE
AGAINST HIS WIFE IS A PRIVATE
MATTER THAT SHOULDN'T BE
DISCUSSED OUTSIDE THE
COUPLE"

NEXTGENMEN RESULTS & IMPACT

67%



"A man can hit his wife
if she won't have sex
with him."

71%



"It is right for a man to
beat his wife if she is
cheating."

NEXTGENMEN FEEDBACK



"One thing I personally have learned from this programme is that every child is your child, every woman is your sister, every women is your mother. That has played a huge difference in my mind."

"It's only communication that can help because if you are fighting, it cannot help anything. "

"Nothing is done in our community. #NextGenMen changed everything for us. It changed the way we behave on our community. When they fight in our community, we now distance from the fight and learn to communicate with adults and young men. You need to listen."

"Our coach taught us that women have chores as hard as men. It's not only men who have hard chores. I must not wait for my mother to do something there at home. If I can do it, let me do it now."

"#NextGenMen changed me and my relationship with my family, friend, teachers. It changed me."



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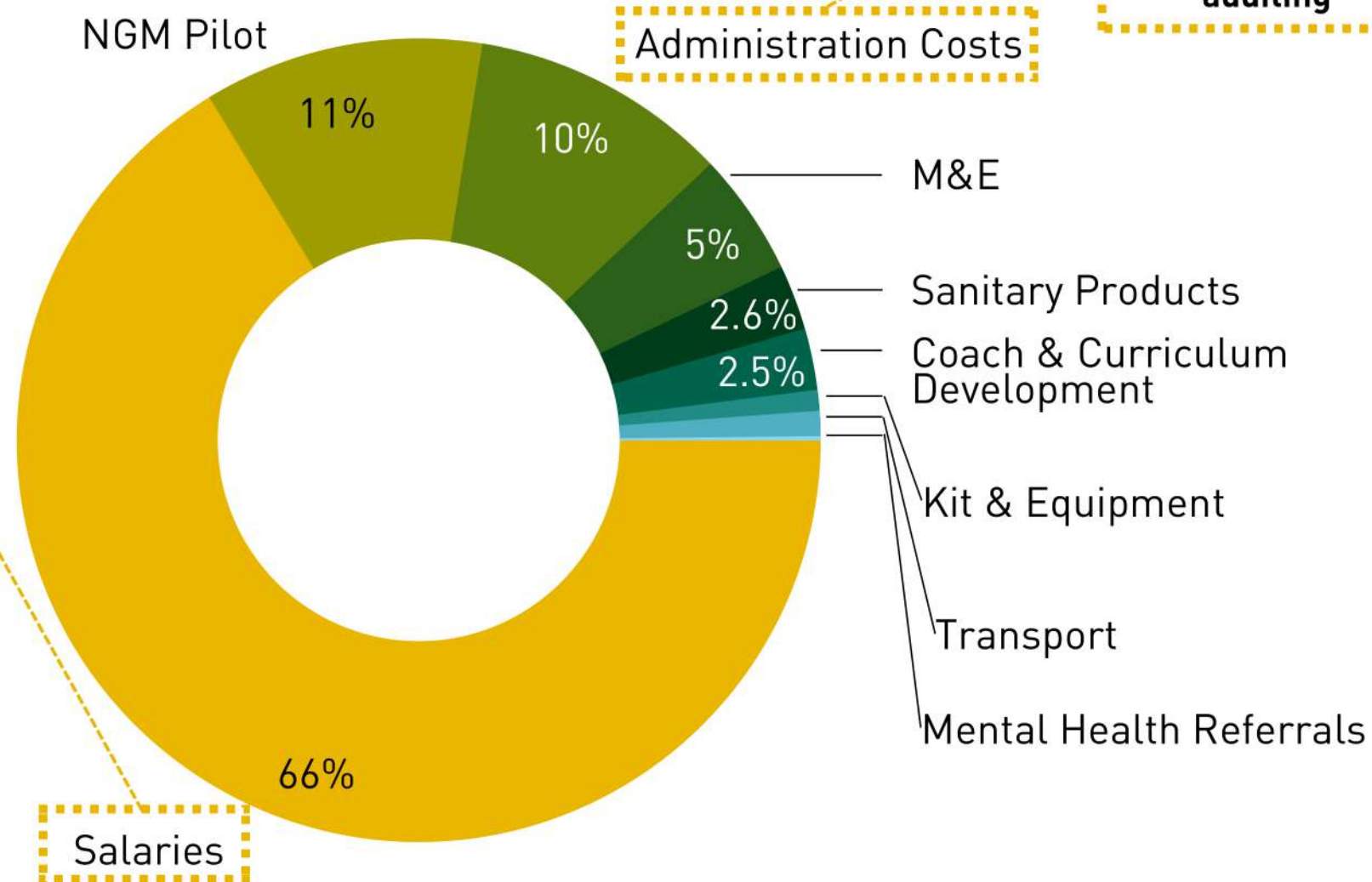
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SOHK: 2022 FINANCES

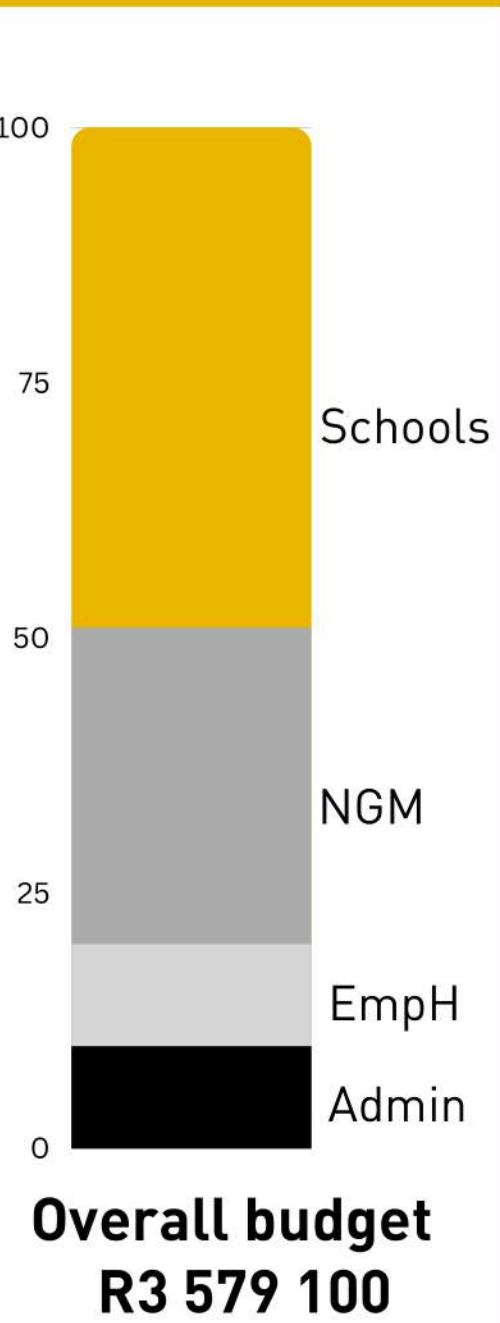
Overall budget
R2 490 920



SoHK's expenditure is focused on putting trained coaches and designated mental health professionals into the field, where they can provide support for our participants

Administration costs are kept as low as possible, and include office space, insurance, bookkeeping and auditing

SOHK: 2023 FINANCES



Overall budget
R3 579 100

In 2023, SoHK will significantly extend the number of people it reaches. We will:

- Double the number of learners on the SoHK for Schools programme
- Enable us to run regular NGM workshops in communities around Cape Town, as well as to train other organisations
- To pilot and launch the EmpowHER programme

This will increase SoHK's annual budget by 43%.

SoHK continues to seek financial partners who want to contribute towards improving mental well-being in vulnerable populations



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GRADUATIONS



SAFE SPORT AWARD WINNER

SPORT FOR:
SOCIAL CHANGE
NETWORK



SAFE SPORT
AWARD WINNER

2022

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NGM CUP TOURNAMENT





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SOHK FOR SCHOOLS: 2023 PLANS

In 2023, SoHK intends to radically increase its footprint - working in an additional school, but also working with many more learners in each school.

This expansion has significant implications for the organisation; requiring new coaches, and significant investment in training as well as in delivery.

2023 Goals

6

LOW/NO FEE HIGH
SCHOOLS AROUND CAPE
TOWN CBD

400

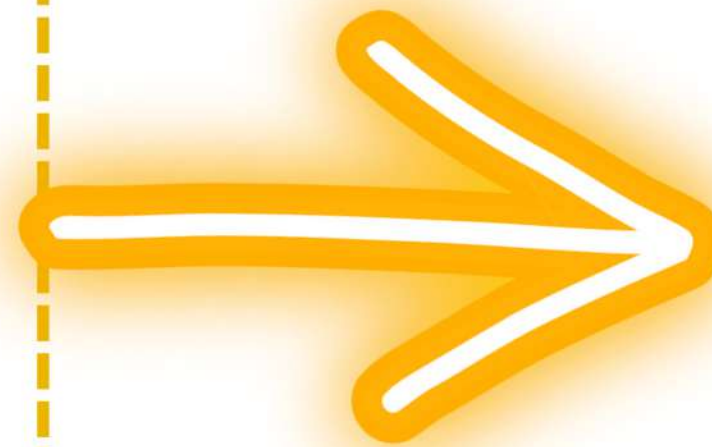
GRADE 9
LEARNERS
(from 243 in 2022)

2000

1:1 SESSIONS
aka PITCHSIDE THERAPY

R3500

COST PER LEARNER
OF ANNUAL
INTERVENTION



The 2023
goals need:

2

IMPLEMENTATION
TEAMS
(1 more than 2022)

8

DEDICATED
COACHES
(4 more than 2022)

SoHK's primary costs lie in its people, with little overheads.

The CEO, COO (both of whom have Honours degrees in Psychology) and dedicated social worker divide their time across SoHK's projects to ensure interventions remain effective and efficient

NEXTGENMEN: 2023 PLANS

NEXT GEN MEN 2023

In 2023, the NextGenMen programme will be implemented through two different approaches

1

SoHK-led delivery

SoHK will deliver the 6-week programme to multiple groups over the course of the year

Target:
5 programme cycles in 2023
100 men per cycle

2

Implementation through other organisations

SoHK will train community-based organisations, teachers, and community leaders to deliver the NextGenMen curriculum, which SoHK will make freely available

Target:
Monthly training seminars
10-15 organisations per seminar
Providing a reach of approximately of approximately 5 000 men

In 2023, SoHK will initiate a new project: EmpowHER

EmpowerHER is designed to provide young women and girls with the mental health resources to deal with the challenges that they face today

PILOT PHASE

November 2022 - June 2023

IN-DEPTH RESEARCH AND CURRICULUM DESIGN INFORMED BY EXPERTS AND EXPERIENCE



WORK WITH IDENTIFIED WOMEN'S SPORTS TEAMS AND ORGANISATIONS TO TRIAL CURRICULUM

The pilot curriculum is a 6-week programme, integrating sport and trauma-informed tools

Aim: To ensure that the EmpowHER curriculum has a substantive impact on the mental health of participants, by trialling the curriculum with 100+ women and girls

FULL IMPLEMENTATION

July 2023 - December 2023

EmpowHER will be implemented through SoHK coaches and by organisations trained by SoHK

IMPLEMENT THROUGH SOHK-LED PROGRAMMES



TRAIN ORGANISATIONS, COACHES AND SCHOOLS TO DELIVER THE CURRICULUM

SoHK will try to reach 200 women and girls directly over the second half of 2023, through five 6-week programme cycles

Working with community-based organisations and making the EmpowHER curriculum freely available, we hope to have a potential reach of 2000 women + girls





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THANK YOU

We are able to continue making a valuable difference in the lives of many because of a range of local and international funding partners.

Thank you to everyone who support us and believe in what we do!



Ambasáid na hÉireann
Embassy of Ireland



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF DENMARK



NEW ZEALAND
HIGH COMMISSION
Te Aka Aorere



SPORT &
DÉVELOPPEMENT



THE
LEARNING
TRUST



EMpower



HOW YOU CAN HELP

There are so many elements that make our projects 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.



R175

**SPONSORS ONE
SESSION OF SPORT &
MENTAL HEALTH
SUPPORT**

R3500

**SPONSORS A CHILD'S
SPORT COACHING &
MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT
FOR A YEAR**

R32000

**SPONSORS SANITARY
PRODUCTS TO 300 GIRLS AT
HAROLD CRESSY HIGH
SCHOOL FOR A YEAR**

CSR

**TALK TO YOUR COMPANY ABOUT
SUPPORTING US AS A CORPORATE
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
INITIATIVE. WE PROVIDE 18 A TAX
CERTIFICATES**



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