

Parents Worry About Declining Treatment at Daycare

By Noluthando Xaba

The Children Daycare Centre has been nothing but a helping hand ensuring that each child is well cared for and is loved. The saying, "It takes a community to raise a child," finds expression since by a certain age, a child normally goes to a daycare centre not just because the parents are away at work, but because it is an advantage for the baby to be in an environment where they will learn and play with peers. This is the first stage of the child learning to be at school, away from home.

It takes a big heart to be around children and know how to handle them in a way that will help them grow. Many people who have worked at the Day Care know the importance of caring for a child. It is a reason to hire those who have the right qualifications and what it takes to be around children.

Money is used but in a way that even a parent would be pleased and even showing love towards children which encouraged many parents to take their children to that day care.

These days, it seems money is the priority ahead of teaching the children, the treatment the children are receiving makes most of them want to stop going to the daycare, there is no love anymore. Care and being dedicated towards the children should be number one. There have been several complaints in different communities about the treatment their children get at the day care centre, even the parents when they try to lay a complaint they are treated terrible parents who fail to take care of their children.

Money has shockingly taken over the good old daycare centres. Parents are forced to pay for school materials even if they are not happy with them because they are being told it is the only way. Some of these choices leave children with a knocked confidence.

Daycare enrolment is now expensive, one of the new mothers observes, noting that they are experiencing challenges with the daycare centre. The school fees are high, trips are expensive, parents must pay for every activity the children do. The uniform too is costly, parents pay but are not given the right size fit. When they complain, they are then tagged as problematic moms. Fighting for children's rights is treated as a criminal act.

Busisiwe a 35-year-old mother of three children said that she had to take her child out of the daycare and take her to school to attend grade R for peace of mind because of the challenges she faced while her child was still at the daycare. Busisiwe's child missed class because she was sick a lot, at the end of the month the daycare would demand fees to be paid. She settled on taking the child out of the daycare.

Thokozani Zondi also faced many challenges when her child was still in daycare, in an interview with Karibu she said, "This year I paid for my child's uniform, I think it was early first term as all parents want their children's to start a new year looking

beautiful. Zondi says she gave the daycare money for the uniform and asked them to take the child's size measurements.

She agreed because she thought she was doing what was best for her baby, but she was surprised they took a long time before they delivered the child's uniform, which frustrated her. She said, "they gave me when I was going to collect my child after school," then added "but, it was too big for my child, then I took it back still nothing was fixed, then I laid a complaint where I was told that I would be given my money back because I complained, about not being happy about something I paid for."

To this day, she says she has not received a refund despite being promised would. "There are so many challenges that I faced, some of them I do not even want to talk about them with that Day Care, they don't do follow ups, all they care about is money and on top of that they expect the parents to deliver yet they are failing to do right by the children," said the visibly frustrated Zondi.

Zondi said it was painful to see her child crying for the uniform on a daily basis, something which she had paid a long time ago. The daycare took a decision to give her the money back, "Every time when I think of taking my child to the daycare [centre] I always think about the pain I am causing her" to send her there without a uniform while other children have theirs on. "This means am paying for her pain because she doesn't want to attend anymore," observed the parent. She says her child is now anxious about being left with other children.

Another parent, simply known as MaMhlongo, also faced the same situation about the size of the uniform. She said she had paid the school fees, for the planned trips, the uniform, all in full, but when the uniform was delivered it was too small. Although she took it back to the daycare in February this year, it still has not been fixed or returned to her.

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