



Star for Life  
— empowering young people

Esiqiwini High School

## Schools programme

A partner report compiled for SfL Norway  
on Star for Life activities.

Name of Principal: **Mr ST Xulu**

Name of Area Manager: **Mrs S Ngubane**

Name of the Coach: **Thabile Buthelezi**

Total Enrolment: **781**

Reporting period: **January – December 2025**

## Introduction

This report provides an update on the implementation of the Star for Life programme and progress at Esiqiwini High School for the period between January – December 2025. The school is in Gunjaneni area in Mtubatuba region under uMkhanyakude Education District of KwaZulu Natal. The coach takes pride to report that the school has performed exceptionally in the 2025 matric examination with a pass rate of 88.6%. This performance has contributed to the overall pass rate for Department of Education which was 88% and to the KwaZulu Natal becoming number one province in the country with 90.6% Pass rate.

## Learner-centred activities

### Learner workshops and Classroom sessions

A total of 764 learners from grades 8–12 participated in workshops conducted as an introduction to the school programme. These were followed by 53 classroom sessions, providing an opportunity for themes introduced during the workshops to be explored in greater depth. The sessions focused on key themes for grades 8–10, including human rights, decision-making, consent, and Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights. For Grades 11 and 12, the focus shifted to study skills to better prepare learners for the matric examinations.

### The table below describes the learner workshop topics

Grade	Theme of the workshop	Month	Learners reached	Total per grade
Grade 8	LW 1: Dreams can be fulfilled	February	130	137
Grade 9	LW 2: The power is within me	February	155	160
Grade 10	LW 3: Knowledge is power	February	193	196
Grade 11	LW 4: Stress management	February	158	160
Grade 12	LW 5: Keys to success	February	128	128

### The table below display classroom session topics

Grade	Theme of the workshop
Grade 8	My dreams, human rights, gender equality, puberty & my dreams, sexual rights & responsibility, intimate partner violence, my personal shield
Grade 9	Self-management, motivation & focus, career & career choices, sexual consent, preventing & treating HIV, STIs, understanding consequences
Grade 10	Responsible decision-making, assertive communication, sexual orientation, risky sexual behaviors, decision-making & transactional relationships, assertive communication & SRHR
Grade 11	Study skills, reading comprehension & mind map
Grade 12	Study skills, reading comprehension, review & celebration



### Individual Consultations

Individual Consultations provide learners with a safe and confidential space to receive psychosocial support. Where appropriate, and with the learner's consent, parents were involved, and cases were referred to external specialized services for further assistance. The coach conducted 61 consultations addressing a range of concerns, including domestic related challenges, grief, misconduct, learning barriers, career guidance, substance abuse,

bullying, and pregnancy. Cases that required additional intervention were referred to Childline South Africa, Lifeline South Africa, South African Police Service, South African National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, and the Department of Health. Through consultations the coach ensured that vulnerable learners received the necessary support to help them navigate challenges and thrive in their personal and academic lives.



### **An example of a case scenario that the coach attended**

A 14-year-old Grade 9 girl reported to the Coach that she was raped by a stranger while she was still in Primary School. She reported this matter to her mother who told her father but, to the learner's disappointment, neither parent acted on the situation and did not support her either. On assessment the learner indicated that she did not want to open a case as she didn't know who raped her. The Coach referred the learner to the Department of health for medical assessment and clinical counselling. In the process, the coach supported the learner to cope with a traumatic experience and engaged her parents as too. The girl is now showing improvement, engaging with peers and participating in class.

### **Additional Activities**

#### **Career Guidance Workshop and Motivational Talk**

To assist grade 9 learners on choosing subject streams for Grade 10, the Coach organised a career guidance workshop which was supported by the Department of Education, Department of Health and Africa Health Research Institute. The Coach also invited guests who spoke about their careers and what inspired them to follow their career path. While grade 9 learners received career guidance, grade 12 attended a motivational talk that was aimed at supporting learners to aspire to good performance.

## Awareness campaign

Awareness campaigns are useful in helping learners address social challenges. During 2025 The Coach coordinated such a campaign with a focus on sexual and reproductive health, consent, substance abuse, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV prevention, and unintended pregnancy. Separate sessions for girls and boys provided a safe and confidential environment where learners could discuss these sensitive issues. This enabled them to identify challenges, reflect on their choices, and make informed decisions about their health and well-being. Various stakeholders such as the South African Police Service and the Departments of Health, Education, and Social Development participated in the campaign and addressed the learners.

## Challenges

Despite the challenges that the school experiences daily due to the low economic environment and lack of resources, the Star for Life programme has contributed meaningfully to building a commitment to teaching and learning. The excellent performance of Grade 12 learners is an indication of educators and learners' resilience that the programme works towards achieving.

**We at Star for Life would like to sincerely thank SfL Norway for your continued support to Star for Life. Without you the work at the school would not be possible. You make it possible.**



## Signed by Coach: Thabile Buthelezi

I have worked at Star for Life since 2019 and hold a Bachelor in Social Work. The best thing about my work is witnessing the journey of learners who have big dreams about their future. It is incredibly rewarding to see them growing and developing the essential skills they need to navigate the challenges of life. Being part of their journey and providing guidance and support is a privilege.