



LETCEE works in impoverished, deep rural communities of the Umzinyathi district, Kwa-Zulu Natal.

Our mission is to work with adults who interact with young children so that they are confident to create nurturing environments for the children in their community.

We support trained Home visitors who provide weekly visits to selected families to provide a range of Early Childhood Development services including:

- Learning through play
- Parenting support
- Nutrition and Health education

A community Toy Library enriches the ECD services.

LETCEE is committed to strengthening the community's response for young children by working in partnership with the traditional leadership and existing structures.

We are accredited to offer training (qualifications & skills courses) to ECD workers.



PROGRAMME INTEGRATION

Our entry point is Early Childhood Development

Going into family homes to “play with the children”
is non-threatening and non-stigmatising.

Home Visitors visit vulnerable families weekly. These visits include:

Early Education	<p>Early cognitive stimulation</p> <p>Social skills</p>	<p>Pre-school activities with a variety of toys and equipment</p> <p>Play sessions at Toy Library with bigger group of children</p>
Parenting support	<p>Strengthening empathic relationships</p> <p>Non- violent discipline</p>	<p>Weekly group workshops</p> <p>Modelling and discussions</p>
Nutrition	<p>Improve family food security</p> <p>Screen for malnourishment</p>	<p>Assist to establish food garden</p> <p>Monthly food parcels</p> <p>Regular weighing and measuring of children</p>
Health	<p>Disabilities and illness</p> <p>IMCI</p> <p>Maternal</p>	<p>Inclusion of all abilities in programme</p> <p>Encourage and assist with referrals to hospitals and clinics</p> <p>Encourage treatment adherence</p> <p>Share information with caregivers</p> <p>Encourage early clinic visits</p> <p>Screen for depression</p>
Protection	<p>Awareness</p> <p>Safety</p>	<p>Community meetings and conversations to raise awareness of children’s rights</p> <p>Links with government services</p>



SOME LESSONS WE HAVE LEARNED ...

Our Mistake	Which lead to	What we have learned
Making decisions about the implementation of the programme with no reference to the community	Tensions and a breakdown of the programme	We have to involve parents and community in decisions which will impact on their children. Our arrogance in suspending a service by community members to community members was a very hard lesson but was a pivotal moment in our work
Selecting and employing a field worker with no consultation with the community representatives	The Community leaders effectively suspended the programme and we were force to rescind our decision. A joint interview process resulted in a successful appointment.	Only the beneficiaries and community representatives have the right to decide who is welcome to visit their homes and influence their children.
As early education specialists, we previously prioritised the early learning aspect of our programme and neglected parenting, health & nutrition aspects.	Limited success with regard to wellness.	If we are to minimise vulnerability all programmes must include aspects of nutrition, health and parenting support in addition to a good quality early learning intervention.

And some on-going challenges:

Working with community and traditional leadership	Children are not always high on political and traditional leaders' agenda.
Joint decision making with the beneficiaries.	Priorities are different, so we have to negotiate hard on some points. Decision making with a large group of people is a slow process!

LETCEE is however, totally committed to work **with** the community, rather than **in** a community.