

## **DEFINITION: DROP-IN CENTER**

A Drop-in centre is a centre that provides **non-residential day care** to children. These centres are centrally situated near the children's homes/shacks and schools. It is a facility aimed at meeting the **emotional, physical and social development needs of vulnerable children**.

Children are provided with the following services:

- **Provision of food** (breakfast, lunch and snack)
- **Laundry services** and/or (i.e. wash buckets, washing lines, washing powder etc.)
- **Assistance with personal hygiene** (shower facilities, soap, deodorant, towels etc.)
- **Educational aid** – school attendance support; ABET program; assistance with homework etc.

A Drop-in centre can also be described as an ear, an eye and a helping hand.

This Centre **operates 5 days a week from 8:30 – 4:30** and is run by a team of volunteers (both permanent and temporary) that provide assistance, information, advice and compassion to vulnerable children living on the street and in the community.

A drop-in center may offer any of the following **programs** appropriate to the developmental needs of the children attending the centre and this drop-in centre provides these:

- Guidance, counselling and psychosocial support
- Social skills and life skills
- Educational programs
- Recreation
- School holiday programs
- Primary health care in collaboration with the local health clinic
- Reporting and referral of children to social workers or social service professionals
- Promotion of family preservation and reunification
- Computer literacy
- Prevention and early intervention

It is the desire and focus of this drop-in centre to provide a loving and caring environment that offers all of the above services and support to vulnerable children, to build the capacity of vulnerable children using **M. E. N. D.** (Mentoring, Educating, Nurturing, and Discipling).