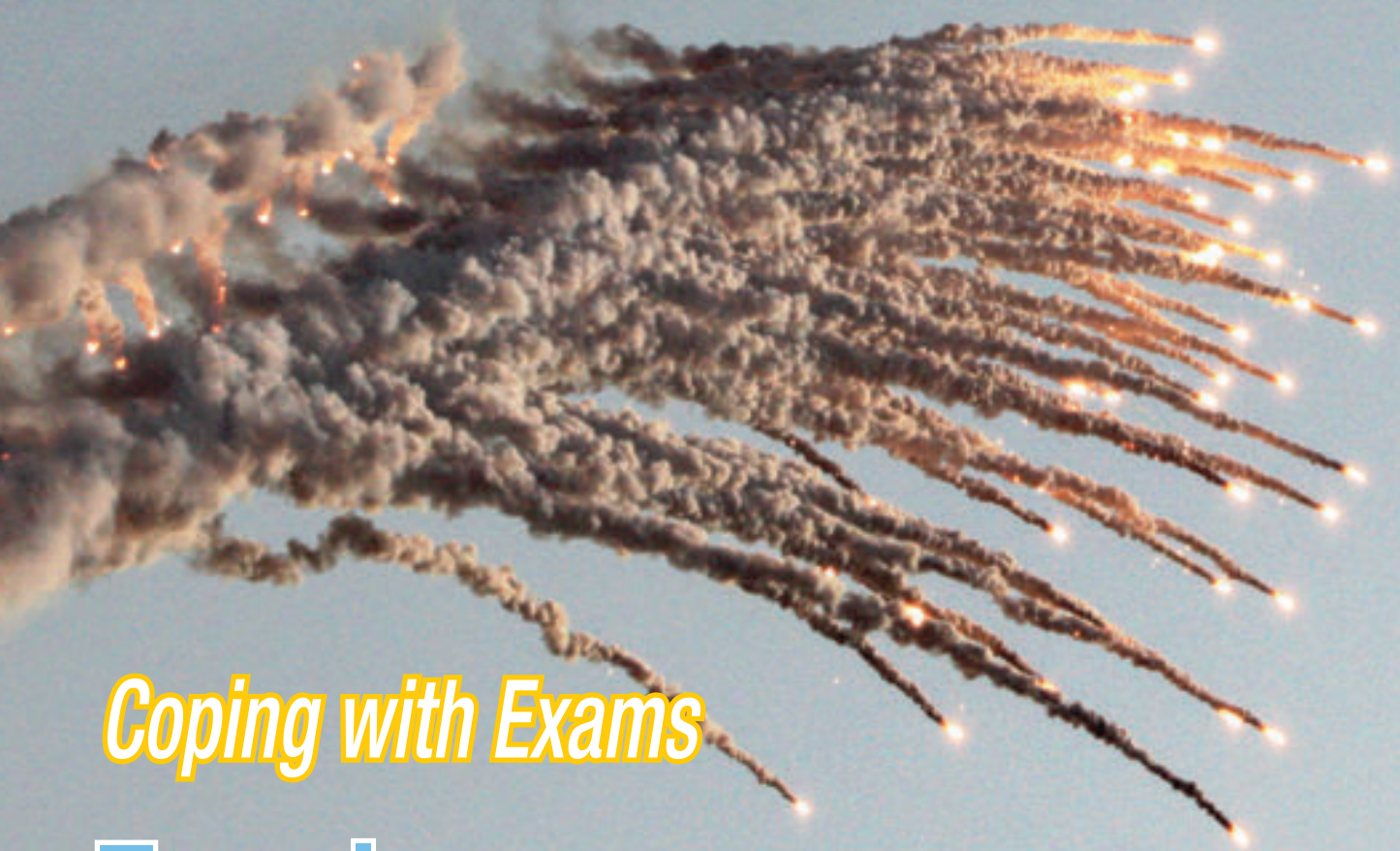




The Villager

Issue 9 • 2016

**Heed
Security's
rules**



Coping with Exams

**Travel:
Okinawa**

Stress Gone!

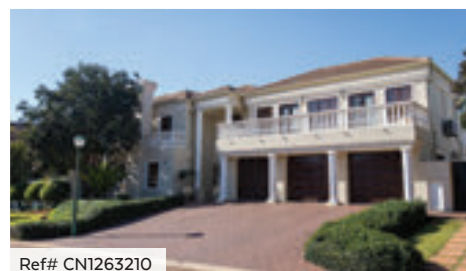
I am Irene Farm Villages & Centurion Golf Estate agent

Peter Varrie 082 457 7416, pamgolding.co.za/peter-varrie

Office: 012 644 8300



I am
Peter Varrie
Irene Farm Villages &
Centurion Golf Estate



Ref# CN1263210

Irene Farm Villages / **R4.8 million**

Bedrooms 4 / Bathrooms 3 / Garages 3 / A gracious and elegant home. Enormous study or entertainment area above the 3 garages, pool and adjoining park.



Ref# CN1283486

Irene Farm Villages / **R4.3 million**

Bedrooms 6 / Bathrooms 3 / Ideal home for the extended family. This house is situated in a very quiet street of the prestigious Irene Farm Villages.



Ref# CN1282041

Irene Farm Villages / **R3.89 million**

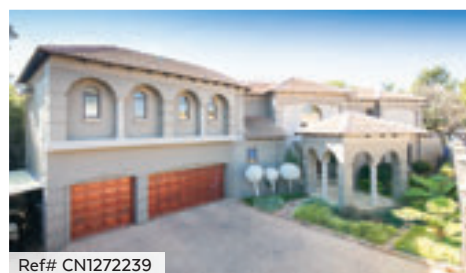
Bedrooms 3 / Bathrooms 3 / Garages 2 / light and bright modern family home. You cannot help but to say wow as you enter this lovely modern home.



Ref# CN1277525

Irene Farm Villages / **R3.795 million**

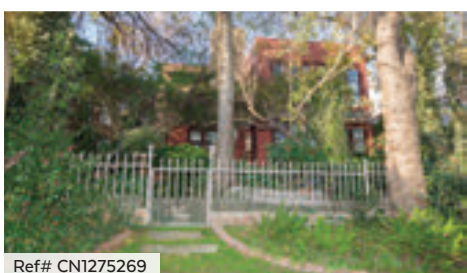
Bedrooms 4 / Bathroom 2 / Garages 3 / Quality family home situated in the secure confines of Irene Farm Villages. Designed for open-plan living.



Ref# CN1272239

Centurion Golf Estate / **R8.9 million**

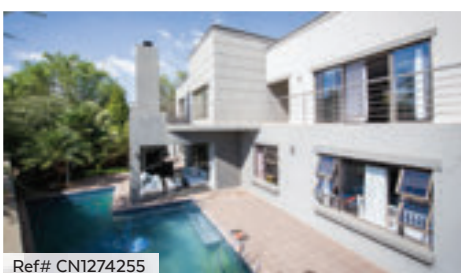
Bedrooms 4 / Bathrooms 4 / Garages 4 / This north-facing house with large aluminium framed windows ensures that the house is warm and sunny.



Ref# CN1275269

Centurion Golf Estate / **R5.3 million**

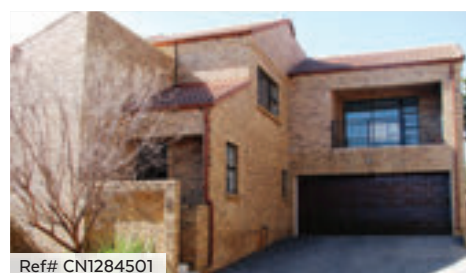
Bedrooms 3 / Bathrooms 3 / Garages 2 / Cleverly designed to make the most of the old indigenous trees. Feel a part of the canopy. 6 Receptions.



Ref# CN1274255

Centurion Golf Estate / **R5.25 million**

Bedrooms 6 / Bathrooms 6 / Garages 3 / Family home in prestigious security estate. Designed for a large family that enjoys entertaining, it is priced to sell.



Ref# CN1284501

Centurion Golf Estate / **R3.3 million**

Bedrooms 4 / Bathrooms 3 / Garages 2 / Full cluster home. Recently renovated, exceptionally well-built and designed for low maintenance.

Contents

The Villager focuses on Irene Farm Villages. The magazine is delivered to the home of each resident on the Estate. The magazine is co-ordinated and published by Estates in Africa (Pty) Ltd on behalf of the Home Owners' Association of Irene Farm Villages. The opinions of workers and personnel of Estates in Africa (Pty) Ltd do not necessarily reflect those of the HOA of Irene Farm Villages.

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Cover Photograph by Madeleine Du Plessis

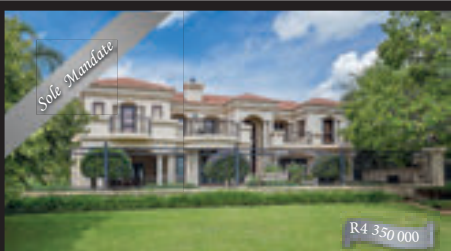


SUPERIOR REALTY

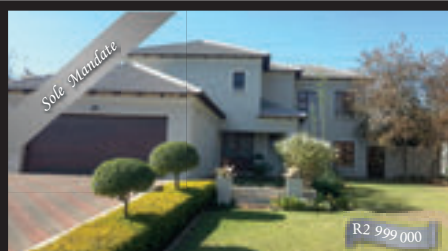
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Jonathan Koen

073 206 3877 ♥ 012 662 5663



Divine design meets exceptional finishes and unmatched build quality in this dream property. Open the front door and this stately home reveals finishes that will take your breath away, from the solid wood kitchen, imported porcelain tiles, modern bathrooms, underfloor heating and gas fireplace. The designs of the living areas are the perfect setting for entertainment, open plan that incorporates the kitchen, 2 lounges, and dining room. Sliding door opens up to a patio with built in braai overlooking the garden and adjacent park. All bedrooms are upstairs – the main suite radiates style and provides the occupants with enough cupboard space and a beautiful en suite bathroom. One more bathroom and 3 bedrooms with a landing/study area. In addition to the majestic look and feel of this home, it also offers the owner practical features like: 3 garages with enough space for a work bench, servant quarters with bathroom, automated sprinkler system and a generous stand for the kids to play. Situated in the award winning Irene Farm Villages.



Situated in a quiet part of this award winning estate, this property offers everything and more. The location is perfection, adjacent to a green belt with natural veld grass overlooking the roaming wildlife guarantees tranquility and privacy, as there is no neighboring properties overlooking the entertainment area and pool. The home offers an open plan design that consists of 2 lounges, a dining room and stunning kitchen all with porcelain tiles. Study with built in cupboards is the perfect setting for working from home. On the first floor there are three bedrooms – the main bedroom offers an en suite bathroom with bath and shower. Enjoy your morning coffee from the balconies overlooking the green belt. The two rooms share a guest bathroom with bath and shower. The light and airy property also features a guest toilet, servant's quarters, double garage and air conditioning in the main bedroom.



Completed renovated beauty. Come and experience top notch finishes perfectly combined with an open plan layout that will please even the most discerning buyer. Step into the front door and be greeted by a spacious lounge area with air-conditioning. The open plan kitchen features granite tops and a separate scullery. Adjacent the dining room is a sunny, spacious entertainment area. Another lounge area with stack doors invites in the landscaped garden or provides the family with an informal living space to kick back and relax. The patio area features a built in braai overlooking the garden. Upstairs, the layout for family living is perfection. 4 bedrooms, 2 en suite bathrooms and a family bathroom. The main suite offers a Juliet balcony with the look and feel of an expensive hotel room, the en suite bathroom features both bath and shower with double vanities. The family bathroom and the other en suite bathroom both have beautiful finishes and gorgeous layout. Other features include double garage, servant's quarters, sprinkler system, air-conditioning units and a street appeal second to none.



If sold is what you want, it's Jonathan you call!



At van Niekerk

Dear Residents

On the 1st September 2016 spring started with the eclipse of the sun. The office personnel took a few minutes to embrace the moment. We all shared the hope of being around with the next eclipse in 2030.



One of the most important matters on the agenda is the scarcity of usable water. The Estate Management is currently planning ways to use water more sparingly. This means less watering of the young trees planted during the past three years. The water-saving plan also means that the parks will not be watered, all vehicles will be washed with the use of a bucket only and the water fountains at the two entrance gates will remain switched off. The Garden Service



Team was requested to replace where possible, the existing small plants with succulents. We appeal to all our Residents to take all possible steps to use water sparingly. The HOA Board is in support of adhering to the water restrictions.

The maintenance and painting of the boundary walls are progressing well and the expenditure on this project is well within the approved operational budget for the current financial year.

The landscaping of the traffic circle and surrounding areas at the main gate is in progress. The final landscaping will be done once the excavations at the Mall

and the transport of the soil past our main entrance have been completed.

The second stage of the walking trail was brush cut and cleared, and Residents have started walking the full trail, which covers four kilometres. The start to the walking trail is at the Estate post office with distance markers every 500 metres. Additional poles and tags are on order, and will be installed in the coming weeks. Residents are reminded of the weekly Saturday morning group walk at 07h30, starting at the post office.

We managed to arrange with M & T Developers to donate soil to the Estate, which will be used for the rehabilitation of the old dumping site between Phase 1 and Phase 2. To date approximately 360m³ of soil has been deposited on this site and more soil is expected from time to time while excavations are ongoing at the new Mall site. The





rehabilitation of the dumping site is scheduled to be carried out during the latter part of this year.



The repainting of the stand numbers on the kerbside of all the properties is still planned for this year.



During the past 18 months 28 trees planted in the Estate died and will be replaced with indigenous trees like the Wild Olive, White Ironwood, Outeniqua Yellowwood, Karee, Van Wykshout and the Weeping Boerboon. An additional 10 trees will be planted in Crown Park and at the North gate. Only two of the trees planted as part of the Family Freedom Fun Day on the 27th April this year did not survive the winter.



New irrigation systems were installed at the North gate and at the traffic circle at the main entrance. Instead of pumping water directly from the water tanker, the tanker's water pump will now be connected to the irrigation systems. This will allow better control of the amount of water applied to each of the planted beds, thereby allowing the HOA to use the water more sparingly.

Residents are reminded when contractors are required to work at their

premises, to register the contractor and the full team at the Estate office. If it is anticipated that the work will take longer than three (3) days to complete, the full team will be registered on the bio-metric access system at a cost of R50 per worker. Access will not be granted if the worker cannot produce an SA identification document, driver's licence or a valid passport. Residents are also reminded to inform the Estate office immediately once the construction work has been completed and the work force is off site, in order for the Estate office to cancel the bio-metric access of the workers. Should the bio-metric access not be cancelled, security is at risk, because such workers may gain unwanted access to the Estate without being noticed.

Residents will recall that on a number of occasions the HOA has warned Residents to abide by the traffic rules of the HOA, especially to stop at stop signs. The Estate Management is using a video surveillance camera to track Residents and visitors who fail to stop at stop signs. A number of penalties were issued during the past three



months. The penalties are debited to the Member's levy account and such penalty becomes due and payable with immediate effect. We once again appeal to Residents not to drive faster than 40kph in the Estate.

The Annual General Meeting ("AGM") is scheduled for Wednesday, the 26th October 2016 at 18h00 in the Cornwall Hill College auditorium. The audited financial statements and a summary thereof were



sent to all Members. The notice of the AGM will be communicated via e-mail therefore Members are requested to confirm their e-mail addresses with the Estate office. Members are once again reminded of the importance of this AGM, because the Board will be presenting the resolutions to upgrade the two entrances, the contractor's yard, the entertainment lapa and the CCTV-network, for which a special levy has to be approved.

Our annual Fun Day will take place on Saturday, the 3rd December 2016 from 09h00 until 13h00. There will be a lot of fun activities for the whole family. Residents, who have home craft businesses are invited to put up their stalls at the Fun Day. Pre-bookings at the Estate office is required. Santa Clause will once again visit us therefore Mom and Dad must arrange with Santa Clause to bring along presents for the kids.

Beverly Sills once said:

"There are no short cuts to any place worth going."

Regards

Estate Management



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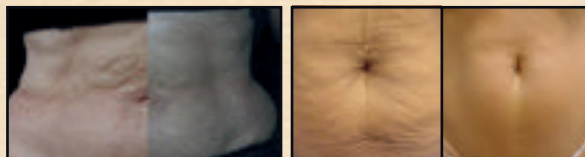
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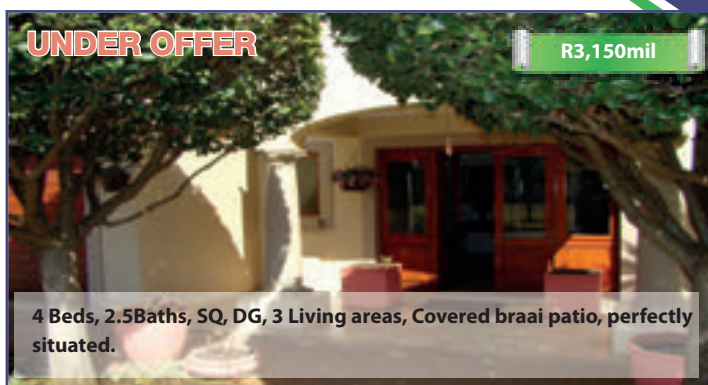
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Security



Marchell Galant

Dear Residents

I would like to share a few situations with you that we have recently dealt with but which seem to be an ongoing problem.

There are Residents that register domestic workers for specific days only but then allow the workers to sleep in without notifying the Estate Management office. This creates a problem when such workers want to exit the Estate on a day when they should not be in the Estate. As a result, domestic workers arrive at the Estate Management office with a complaint that the biometric system is not working for their finger prints, only to find out they are not registered to be in the Estate on that day. Residents should also refrain from driving domestic

workers in and out of the Estate. This is a transgression of the HOA rules 4.3.5 and in terms of rule 6.25 such transgression carries a penalty of R500.

There are still Residents in the Estate who do not want to register their household workers and expect the Security personnel to allow the household workers into the Estate with a day pass. In terms of rule 4.3.2, every household worker working at a property in the Estate should be registered on the biometric finger print system.

Domestic workers still arrive at the exit gates with goods given to them by Residents but without an accompanying letter stating that goods were donated to them. In such cases Security has to contact the Residents to confirm the donation. However, this may frustrate workers who may miss their transport due to the delay. In terms of rule 4.3.6 please make sure that you issue your household workers with donation-letters when donating any item to a household worker.

Kind Regards

Marchell Galant

Contract Manager
EPS Irene Farm Villages
Tel: +27 12 665 5602
Mobile: +27 82 300 1835
E-mail: galantm@proteacoin.co.za

remember

Make Sure

- That all vehicles that are parked in driveways must be locked and all valuables (e.g. laptops, wallets, handbags and GPS navigators) must be removed from the vehicle.
- That alarm systems must be activated and in a working condition. Please test your alarm system regularly to ensure that it is in a good working condition and that it does send out a signal when activated.
- To be vigilant at all times in the Estate and report any suspicious activities directly to the Bidvest Protea Coin Security.
- To be law abiding citizens and prevent crime, register all domestic workers and gardeners and make sure that they have IDs or valid passport documents.

Residents can contact me directly should they be interested in having an alarm system linked to our Protea Coin 24hrs Call Centre in Highveld Techno Park.

Marchell Galant • galantm@proteacoin.co.za • 082 300 1835

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

24HR SECURITY GUARD ROOM:

012-662-1688

24HR CONTROLLER:

082-947-7610

24HR SHIFT MANAGER

082-838-7779

SECURITY MANAGER

082-300-1835



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OUTREACH TO THE KHOMANI SAN OCTOBER 2016

All packed for delivery...

During recent months many of our residents put clothing and other items into the green bins at the gate to be donated to the Khomani San in the Kalahari. These generous

donations will address many urgent needs of the San community, and this is what happens between the green bins and the Kalahari.

Clothing collected at the gates is first taken to a central store room where the various items are carefully sorted according to the gender and size of the 800



Items are packed into individual parcels.

Khomani members. This allows each member of the community to receive a parcel specifically packed for them according to information that is updated annually in a comprehensive database.

By the time you read this, the outreach team would have delivered 250 boxes of clothing, toys, household items, books, etc. to the homes of the Khomani people.

Clothing is collected in the green bins located at the IFV entrance gates



Ria and Gail packing the boxes for the families in the central store room. EIA Publishing (Pty) Ltd, the publishers of The Villager, kindly sponsored 250 boxes for the outreach.



Some of the 250 Family boxes packed, labelled and ready to be delivered.



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PRINCIPAL



Eunice - 071 676 5940
RENTALS

IRENE FARM VILLAGE

R3.1 MILL



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NINA 082 963 1994

WEB REF 960



IRENE FARM VILLAGES HOME OWNERS' ASSOCIATION

Summary Income Statement August 2016

	August 2016		Year to Date		YTD Variance	
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Value	%
Operational Income						
<i>Levy Income</i>						
Normal Levies	914 279	910 648	5 470 898	5 463 888	7 010	0.1%
<i>Other Income</i>						
Interest Received	94 461	10 000	257 196	60 000	197 196	328.7%
Contractors Permits	0	10 000	77 845	60 000	17 845	29.7%
Estate Agent Registration	0	0	129 960	129 960	0	0.0%
Post Box Annual Fee	1 630	2 500	10 970	15 000	(4 030)	-26.9%
	1 010 371	933 148	5 946 869	5 728 848	218 021	3.8%
Operational Expenditure						
<i>Professional /Administration</i>						
Accounting Fees	97 928	54 155	348 365	387 420	39 055	10.1%
Audit Fees	33 000	33 000	198 000	198 000	0	0.0%
Bank Charges	57 829	0	58 703	62 500	3 797	6.1%
Insurance	(301)	2 500	16 277	15 000	(1 277)	-8.5%
Legal & Professional Fees	9 978	8 655	57 151	51 920	(5 231)	-10.1%
	(2 577)	10 000	18 235	60 000	41 765	69.6%
<i>General Office</i>						
Office Equipment	10 270	10 700	61 920	75 500	13 580	18.0%
General Expenses	110	1 200	3 946	7 000	3 054	43.6%
Office Refreshment	(100)	1 500	8 113	19 000	10 887	57.3%
Printing & Stationary	632	1 000	2 210	6 000	3 790	63.2%
Telecommunication	3 079	3 000	18 078	19 500	1 422	7.3%
	6 548	4 000	29 573	24 000	(5 573)	-23.2%
<i>Operational Expenses</i>						
Municipal Charges	139 436	173 413	839 175	991 475	152 300	15.4%
Recycling	29 860	50 000	192 869	300 000	107 131	35.7%
Donations	8 247	8 663	49 484	51 975	2 491	4.8%
Meetings	0	5 000	0	30 000	30 000	100.0%
Salaries & Wages	350	750	2 041	5 500	3 459	62.9%
	100 979	109 000	594 782	604 000	9 218	1.5%
<i>Security</i>						
Access Control (ClickOn)	530 451	506 683	3 067 909	3 040 093	(27 816)	-0.9%
- ClickOn Recovery	20 218	22 000	118 994	132 000	13 006	9.9%
Equipment Maintenance SLA	(8 676)	(12 000)	(53 850)	(72 000)	(18 150)	25.2%
Security Maintenance	43 281	19 500	129 844	117 000	(12 844)	-11.0%
Guarding Services	5 445	7 000	45 605	42 000	(3 605)	-8.6%
	470 182	470 183	2 827 317	2 821 093	(6 224)	-0.2%
<i>Repairs & Maintenance</i>						
Equipment Maintenance	127 925	142 562	839 009	853 672	14 663	1.7%
Fuel	0	0	0	0	0	100.0%
	2 890	3 000	19 490	18 000	(1 490)	-8.3%



IRENE FARM VILLAGES HOME OWNERS' ASSOCIATION Summary Income Statement August 2016

	August 2016		Year to Date		YTD Variance	
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Value	%
General Maintenance	6 063	10 050	28 811	57 900	29 089	50.2%
Infrastructure Maintenance	0	3 000	17 189	18 000	811	4.5%
Park Facing Boundary Walls	4 480	12 500	80 869	75 000	(5 869)	-7.8%
Park Maintenance	0	4 500	16 197	27 000	10 803	40.0%
Park Maintenance Contract	114 492	108 012	667 512	648 072	(19 440)	-3.0%
Vehicles	0	1 500	8 942	9 700	758	7.8%
	906 009	887 513	5 156 378	5 348 160	191 782	3.6%
Operating Profit / (Loss)	104 361	45 635	790 491	380 688	409 803	
Non-Recurring Revenue						
Special Levies	0	0	0	0	0	100.0%
Stand Sales	0	0	3 079 240	0	3 079 240	100.0%
Estate Penalties	2 000	0	21 150	0	21 150	100.0%
Late Building Penalties	0	0	53 250	0	53 250	100.0%
Late Payment Penalties	3 450	0	22 850	0	22 850	100.0%
Expense Recovery	0	0	350	0	350	100.0%
Other Income	0	0	0	0	0	100.0%
Plan Fees	19 348	0	43 890	0	43 890	100.0%
Sale to Members	0	0	4 160	0	4 160	100.0%
Non-Recurring Expenses						
Debt Write-off	0	0	0	0	0	100.0%
Water Risk Management	0	0	23 180	100 000	76 820	76.8%
Traffic Management	0	0	73 918	75 809	1 891	2.5%
Social Development Projects	0	0	43 455	45 000	1 545	3.4%
Water Tanker Roadworthy	0	0	0	50 000	50 000	100.0%
Park Development	10 452	0	44 652	60 000	15 348	25.6%
Historic Tshwane Accounts	0	0	1 375	408 000	406 625	99.7%
Environmental Development	6 186	0	66 757	153 500	86 743	56.5%
Cash Provision	0	15 000	0	90 000	90 000	100.0%
Stand Sales	0	0	35 786	0	(35 786)	100.0%
Net Positive/ (Negative)	8 159	(15 000)	2 935 767	(982 309)	3 918 076	

Account Ability

Office Address:
Sovereign Drive,
Route 21
Corporate Park

Accounting Office

Hours
8:00 to 13:00
Monday to Friday

Office Tel:
082 780 0059

Accounts Email:
accounts@aams.co.za

IFV Accounts:
Winnie Boshoff

Summary Income
Statement by
Account Ability

“If your plan is for 1 year, plant rice.
If your plan is for 10 years, plant trees. If your
plan is for 100 years, educate children.”
— Confucius



Saturday walks through the eyes of a junior walker



I enjoy the Saturday walks as they are fun. It helps me to keep fit and lose calories. Sometimes when we walk we get to see steenbok, guinea fowls, mongoose and various species of birds. We walk in the veld, jump over rocks and even get to see and learn about amazing plant life. If you would like you can run instead of walk. On the walk you can talk to your friends and make new friends.

I have great fun and enjoy the walks every week and encourage everyone to join me.

Akeesha Moodley

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Samuel Seeff - Chairman

Seeff

Irene Farm Village

R4 800 000



Absolute style and perfection!

Beds 4 Baths 3 Garages 3

WEB 400716

Splendid spacious layout. Well designed entertainment area. SQ. Pool. Air-con. Undercover braai. Alarm.

TRACY KEYTER 082 928 8219 (O) 012 667 2167

Irene Farm Village

R28 600 p/month



Great views!

Beds 3 Baths 2 Garages 2

WEB 387791

Available 1 Aug 2016. Beautiful kitchen. Patio with braai. Irrigation system. Study. Great security.

SYLVIA MENEELY 084 010 8504 (O) 012 667 2167

The chain of Japanese islands, southeast of Japan – its surface area is less than one tenth that of Gauteng – has a greater ratio of centenarians than anywhere on earth.

Okinawa comprises five main islands and a couple of dozen very small to tiny ones, all fringed by talcum-powder beaches and lapped by the turquoise East China Sea. One is aware of the vivid greenery and exotic tropical plants for the islands straddle the Tropic of Cancer.

One is also aware of Okinawa's pleasant people who acknowledge one's presence with a polite little nod of the head and a smile. They nod to their neighbours, who never fail to politely nod in return.

But, above all, one is aware of the food: food stalls and food shops, enticing restaurants that offer a wondrous variety; dishes you've probably never seen the like of; dishes that are prepared imaginatively and meticulously.

The food! That surely must be the secret to the extreme age of the islanders. Dieticians frequently visit Okinawa hoping to find its secret.

What's the secret

Maybe it's the tranquillity and its paradisiacal semi-tropical nature – or, perhaps, it's the food. Whatever it is, the small population of the coral islands that make up the archipelago of Okinawa have at least 400 centenarians, one or two having been born in the 19th century.

Much of the islanders' food comes from the sea. Not just fish and shellfish but seaweed. Seaweed such as delicious *umibudo*, or sea grapes, which are served in a tangled bunch as a side plate. "Grape" is a fair enough description although, to some, they might look more like a bunch of tiny, transparent peas. Somebody equated the sensation of eating them like popping bubble wrap.

Okinawa is not yet on South Africa's bucket list but that might be just a matter of time. It has an area of 1 200 square kilometres and a population of 1.3 million which gives it an average density of roughly one person per square kilometre. In fact one gets the impression that it is even less densely populated than that because more than half the people are concentrated in and



Sea Grapes



Set Meal

ingredient in Okinawa's food?



View from Marriott Hotel

around the 15th century Naha, the lowrise capital and port.

Many who know Japan find Okinawa, culturally, quite different from the rest of the country. Its paintings and textiles; its dancing and festival costumes and unusual theatrical entertainment, some of it having been influenced by China which, centuries ago, ruled

the islands. At one point in its early history its populace was disarmed and that's how unarmed combat evolved. Okinawa is now world famous among martial arts exponents for having refined karate.

Culturally Okinawa is fascinating enough to draw a constant stream of visitors from mainland Japan, despite the three-hour flight from Tokyo.

One could almost trip over its highest point, Mount Yonaha, a deeply forested mound 503m high and the focal point of the Okinawa-Kaigan Quasi-National Park. The park has some interesting birds including a unique rail but for wildlife the surrounding coral reefs hold more promise – at least for those who are interested in snorkelling and the fish of the tropical Indo-Pacific region.



Pickled salmon



Okinawa has its own unique cuisine with roots in the old Ryukyu Kingdom which evolved a wonderful gastronomic repertoire by adapting food items from its ancient trading partners such as China (and its pork), Japan (and its *dashi* – a stock made from seaweed and bonito fish flakes that forms the base of most Okinawan soups and dishes) and other elements from various islands in South East Asia.

One looks in vain for a sushi bar. The island speciality is *goya champuru* (champuru is stir-fry), made with green gourds, tofu, pork and eggs.

The Okinawan diet mainly comprises non-fatty foods, low in salt and mainly fish, pork, tofu, seaweed and vegetables. Can that really be the secret to the islanders' extraordinary longevity? They drink beer and a unique but not terribly exciting saki-like spirit called *awamori* made from imported long grain rice and stored in bulky earthenware vats.

Some of the cuisine has been handed down from the food served to the royal family in ancient times, and some, using island herbs and ingredients,



Shisa Dogs



Okinawa Seascape

was favoured by the peasants. The latter included some unusual (to western palates) seafood such as *mozuku* and *umibudo*, seafood dishes, pork and stir-fry dishes and Okinawa *soba* (noodles), which is considered Okinawan "soul food". And there's taco rice just about everywhere. It comprises various concoctions and is, to the American forces still on Okinawa, what pizzas are at home – though much healthier.

The American army occupied the islands from 1945 until 1972. They invaded Okinawa in mid-1945 when, after one of the bloodiest battles of World War 2, they defeated the Japanese garrison. The Japanese triggered the war in the Pacific in December 1941 by attacking, without provocation, the US Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbour, practically destroying the navy's battleships.

In the summer of 1945 the Americans were rolling back the Japanese

empire and anticipated fighting all the way from Okinawa to Tokyo at a cost of one million lives – friend and foe. The atom bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki persuaded the Japanese to surrender unconditionally.

The Americans by agreement continue to maintain military bases on Okinawa as a mutual safeguard against further trouble in the Far East. Their presence, agreed to by the Japanese government, is resented by islanders – in a low key sort of way – because they fear their peaceful islands might one day be a prime target in a future war.

It's hard to imagine anything ugly happening again on Okinawa where the only affront to its heady tranquillity are the *shisas* – colourful ceramic dog-like dragons (gargoyles if you like) – that stand aggressively on rooftops and at gateways usually in highly coloured pairs warding off evil spirits and, it seems, the Great Reaper.



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COPING WITH EXAMS

Article written by Nicoleen Davies,
Director Life Talk Forum with extracts taken from
"Life Talk for a Daughter" by Izabella Little-Gates



Stress is defined as a state of mental or emotional strain, as a result of demanding or adverse circumstances. Physiologically, when we feel stressed, our bodies release chemicals into the blood stream which give us energy and strength – which is a positive outcome. But, too much stress can be debilitating, causing a variety of symptoms including tiredness, illness, and possibly even shutting you down completely so that you can't think clearly and can't get anything done.

Exams, class and cycle tests, oral presentations and so on, are all a part of our children's school life from a young age and can be the source of enormous anxiety and stress for both the children and their parents! In today's competitive environment, this is amplified by subject workloads and performance pressure as well as the extra-curricular commitments our children are encouraged to participate in.

According to the support group Childline, many of the children who contact them feel that the greatest pressure at exam time comes from their family. Therefore, it's important to listen, talk things through if a test went badly perhaps and even discuss those that went really well, support and above all, avoid criticism. As such, the most effective we as parents can be, at these times, is by supporting them and not adding to their pressure.

Not only does their external environment place them under stress (school, peers, parents) but





they also undergo internal stress (personal performance pressure, not wanting to disappoint, maybe feeling what they should be achieving doesn't match what they actually can achieve.)

We must remember that a measure of stress is also motivating and forces us to get going, to be highly effective over short periods of time, so, as with most things, we need to teach children to balance their stress by managing it so that they can harness the benefits. Elevated stress levels, for extended periods of time, can have many negative consequences, including depression and underperformance.

Know when your child is stressed During stressful periods, keep a close eye on your child. If they display signs of irritability or mood swings, withdrawal or acting out, overreacting to situations perhaps, maybe not sleeping or eating as they usually do or are complaining of feeling ill – these could all be signs of stress and anxiety. It is important to address this as soon as possible.

Help them manage exam stress Knowing that exams are a stressful time, it is possible to manage the process to minimise stress and maximise performance. Engage them in conversation, and together you can help them not only cope better but also learn some vital life skills in the process. Consider the following:

- Plan ahead and anticipate the busy stressful period. Through guidance and assistance if necessary, help them prepare sufficiently and in so doing avoid undue stress. Help them plan their studying programme and to set up a preparation timetable. Often, even in the higher grades, the children feel they are too busy to set time aside to do this but, it is vital to helping ensure that they can get through everything and if not, to then prioritise.
- Talk to your child and help them decide what their weaker areas are, which may need more focus

and time when studying. On their timetable, allow more revision time for these subjects. Consider colour coding the subjects based on the amount of effort required for the subject to help create a visual reminder.

- Encourage a good work ethic. It is a great habit to develop and will benefit them throughout their lives. A good work ethic entails self-motivation and discipline, knowing what you need to do and not procrastinating. Using available time wisely is the essence of a good work ethic.
- Relieve stress through relaxation! Continue with sport or other activities which are a change of scenery and gives them a break.
- Exercise and a healthy diet are very important. Teach and encourage them to avoid stimulants to help them study, like caffeine, alcohol and even sleeping tablets, all of which can make them feel groggy the next day and, affecting their ability to concentrate and focus. Exercise will help them clear their minds and relieve body tension.
- They could benefit from natural supplements like Vitamin B complex, Vitamin C and Vitamin D. Vitamin B's are essential for cognitive activity, brain function, energy production, nerve health, mood regulation and concentration. Studies show that Vitamin C reduces the stress hormones in your blood. It also elevates mood whilst reducing anxiety. Vitamin D, in turn, is believed to help with concentration, memory and fatigue.
- Enough sleep is vital as this is when the brain processes what they have learnt. During sleep, the memory of recently encoded information is consolidated. Furthermore, a lack of sleep will inhibit their ability to concentrate and focus as well as being detrimental to their ability to learn and retain information. Sleep improves judgement and mental clarity. There is some evidence that taking a short nap after an intensive study session will help to consolidate the information learnt to a greater degree.
- All-nighters should be avoided.

They are not sustainable and are exhausting, with very little real learning being possible in that state.

- Recognise when they are succumbing to stress – make them take a break or have a chat to see if you can help them cope better.

Attitude makes you a winner Encourage positivity and a good attitude. "Your attitude makes the difference between success and mediocrity. Your attitude is often more important than your intellectual ability. Some of us are naturally more positive than others, but the good news is that we can choose the attitude we want," writes Izabella Little-Gates. "You'll find that if you adopt a positive attitude then everything around you suddenly starts to look brighter". This can be applied to exams. It may have had a tough year or they are battling with some subjects but it is never too late to improve marks and increase their understanding of their subject by planning well in advance and working hard.

Encourage them to strive to do their best under the circumstances - the results will be theirs to reap.

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TEENAGE STRESS IN TODAY'S FAST PACED WORLD

Studies have shown that not only is teenage stress extremely common, but their stress levels continue to increase. Today's adolescent stress is higher than the average millennial's stress of a decade ago. But more alarming is that USA statistics reveal teenage stress now exceeds that of adult stress levels. Much adolescent stress is being attributed towards increased demands of technological dependency with decreased human connectivity and interaction, creating social anxiety, isolation, depression, and higher suicide rates. This should raise warning bells for both parents and teenagers alike. Creating balance is essential.

Understandably the transition from childhood to adulthood is a difficult phase for adolescences to navigate often resulting in uncomfortable, self-conscious anxiety and turmoil. Teenagers are no longer children, but not yet adults either, and must progress through a series of transitional stages. Each of these fundamental and developmental stages can be tricky because of the changes triggered in all aspects of the teen's core being viz., physical, emotional, behavioural, cognitive and social. Each stage can affect the individual as to how they relate to and make sense of themselves within their inner world, as well as the outer world in relationship to parents, siblings, peers and society too. Although these

stages vary according to the individual, adolescence is always awkward because of a teen's internal struggle to seek independence, define their identity, body image issues while learning about intimacy and sexuality too. There is no doubt that these transitory adolescent years can be challenging and confusing resulting in varying levels of stress.

Cause of teenage stress

Today there are far greater demands and expectations on a young teenager's shoulders than ever before. Pressures to make early career decisions because of far greater competition for both university and job market availability. Ever expanding growth of information and technology adds further burdens of having to constantly stay connected, informed and keep up, with the FOMO (fear of missing out) adding further pressures. Also tech provides an overwhelming number of available options, making career choices difficult. Additionally, parents and teens often find themselves at odds because the generational gap of understanding tech is vast.

In addition, the following situations can trigger stress in teenagers – family conflicts, friendships, peer pressures, fitting in and keeping up, high expectations of parents, teachers or friends, study worries and exams problems, classroom and sports competition, discrimination, bullying, crammed schedules, after school chores to earn pocket money, tech over-stimulation and not switching off enough, excessive social media, lack of sleep, poor nutrition, exposure to alcohol, cigarettes and drug use, and sexual abuse.

An observant parent can usually spot what stresses their teenager. Where possible, respond immediately to early warning signals and then try reducing unnecessary stress. Early intervention

can prevent stress from becoming anxiety, depression, and even suicide. Signs of stress in teenagers can show up in their behaviour, emotions, body and thinking.

Changes in your teen's behaviour might include:

- Withdrawing from friendship groups or activities they usually enjoy
- Seeming nervous or anxious
- Crying
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Eating more 'comfort food' or eating less
- Wanting to be by themselves more than usual
- Having emotional 'ups and downs' for no obvious reason
- Having less energy than usual
- Refusing to go to school
- Drinking more caffeine products or taking over-the-counter painkillers
- Aggressive tendencies
- Decrease in schoolwork or results
- Not caring about their appearance
- Behaving differently in their relationship with you, i.e. suddenly not talking to you

Changes in your teen's emotions, might include:

- Being cranky or moody
- Feeling sad, depressed or hopeless
- Feeling worthless
- Finding it hard to relax or switch off
- Getting more angry more than usual
- Feeling that 'nothing is going right'
- Feeling like they're on an emotional rollercoaster ride

Sometimes you might notice physical signs of stress, such as:

- Feeling sick, i.e. headaches, shoulder pain, stomach aches, jaw pain



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- Having panic attacks, dizzy spells, fast breathing or pins and needles
- Frequent colds, infections or illness
- More tired than usual, even if they are getting enough sleep
- Not being hungry
- Losing or gaining weight
- Changes in daughter's menstrual cycles

Finally, stress can affect your teen's thinking, for example:

- Finding it hard to concentrate and stay focused
- Losing the thread of thoughts or conversations
- Having trouble remembering things
- Making snap decisions or errors in judgment
- Having trouble organising, planning or making decisions
- Getting confused or irrational
- Perfectionism
- Continual procrastination

How to reduce stress in teenagers

In general, you can help your teen deal with their stress by consistent and effective communication – especially listening, spending quality time together and doing things that make your teenager feel uplifted. You can also help reduce stress by working together on two key areas – helpful thinking and healthy lifestyles.

Helpful thinking to reduce stress in teenagers

Dealing with stress is a learnt skill. How you think about things affects how stressed you can become as a result. Like adults, teenagers can develop unhelpful thinking that makes it harder to deal with stressful situations. Unhelpful thinking can get out of control, particularly if this becomes the normal way you think about things.

Some common unhelpful thought patterns are:

- Mind-reading, or expecting other people to have a bad opinion of you,

- i.e. 'They think I'm stupid' or 'The teacher (or sports coach) thinks I'm no good at anything'.
- Thinking things will always go wrong, i.e. 'Things never work out for me', 'Everyone is always against me' or 'I'll never be able to ...'
- Negative labelling of self, i.e. 'I'm no good', 'I'm stupid' or 'I'm hopeless'.
- Absolute thinking, i.e. 'I have to do it this way' or 'This will never work'.
- Expecting the worst, i.e. 'I'm sure to mess this up', 'It's not going to work out anyway' or 'I'm going to feel awful when it doesn't happen'.
- All-or-nothing thinking, i.e. 'He does everything right, and I always get it wrong', 'It has to be perfect' or 'If only I had done it that way, it would be okay'.

Changing unhelpful thinking

Speaking to a professional can help your teenager to see that there are other ways of thinking about situations. You and your teen could try these techniques to change unhelpful thinking patterns:

1. Together work out what's causing the stress, i.e. your teen receives a last-minute text from a friend to cancel going out.
2. Encourage your teenager to list the thoughts connected to this situation or event, i.e. 'He doesn't really like me', 'She should have told me sooner' or 'My day's ruined'.
3. Help your teen decide if these thoughts are helpful, i.e. how does your child know her friend doesn't like her? Is it possible the friend couldn't have told her sooner? Are there other good things your child could now do with the day?
4. Encourage your teen to suggest some other thoughts, i.e. 'I don't really know why he cancelled – there could be an emergency', 'Life has its ups and downs', 'I can go out anyway', 'This gives me time to do other things', 'I'm disappointed but I can cope', or 'We can go out together another day'.
5. Help your teen notice that when he/she changes their thinking, their feelings also change – usually for the better. Teaching teenagers these simple but positive reframing

statements is a great way to reduce and cope with stress far more effectively.

Healthy lifestyle changes to reduce stress in teenagers

When your teenager feels stressed, it's easy to forget to do everyday healthy things. Here are some healthy family lifestyle changes to reduce stress:

- Physical activity: the stress chemicals of adrenaline and cortisol can leave one feeling tense. Exercise burns off these chemicals, helping the body to relax.
- Stay connected to family and friends: plan some special time with your teen when you know they're feeling stressed. Positive, supportive relationships are the building blocks of emotional and mental well being.
- Get enough sleep: one of the biggest causes of stress in teenagers is not getting enough sleep. Your child still needs about 8-9 hours of sleep a night, every night.
- Eat good food: aim for a family diet with plenty of nutritious fresh fruit, vegetables and whole grains.
- Relax and unwind: this might be going for a walk, reading a book, having a relaxing bath, listening to soothing music, appreciating nature, sunsets etc.
- Stimulate conversation and healthy discussions: switch off social media, TV and all forms of tech daily for at least an hour to enjoy each other's company.
- Eat meals together as a family.

If you're concerned your teenager isn't coping sufficiently, seek professional help. Early intervention provides great coping skills, and most importantly avoids unnecessary long term anxiety, stress, worry, and even depression.

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Health Benefits of Chia Seeds



Chia seeds have become popular for their health benefits. They have a great nutrient composition and are easy to incorporate into your eating plan. I definitely recommend them at my clinic. Here are a few nutrition facts about chia seeds.

Chia seeds are tiny, black seeds from the plant *Salvia Hispanica*, which is related to the mint. This plant grows natively in South America. Chia seeds were an important food for the Aztecs and Mayans back in the day. They prized them for their ability to provide sustainable energy. "Chia" is the ancient Mayan word for "strength".

Despite their ancient history as a dietary staple, only recently did chia seeds become recognized as a modern day superfood.

In the past few years, they have exploded in popularity and are now consumed by health-conscious people all over the world.

The nutrient composition of chia seeds is really great! 28g of Chia seeds provides 11g fibre, 4g protein and 9g fat (mainly omega 3). It also contains good amounts of calcium, magnesium and phosphate. This makes them one of the world's best sources of several important nutrients, calorie for calorie.

Chia seeds are high in antioxidants that help to protect the delicate fats in the seeds.

Fibre plays an important role in your diet, especially for good gut health and maintaining healthy bacteria in your gut. Fibre helps keep glucose stable and as is not digested thus they

Ajita Ratanjee



EATING OUT... CHOOSING THE BETTER OPTIONS

We all love eating out from time to time. Depending on your work and schedule some of you need to eat out more than others. Making the right choices remains crucial to ensure that you can eat what is the best for you especially if you have a disease like diabetes, high cholesterol and so on, or if you are on a plan to support weight loss.

Fortunately most restaurants nowadays have great menu choices and sides are up to you, so you do

have options to choose what works for you!

If you would like to stick to a healthy plan and maintain your weight, always ensure that you have your protein and veggies or salad. Protein choices include meat, fish, chicken, egg, cheese, ostrich, game and pork. Red meat like beef and lamb should not be eaten more than three times a week as they are higher cholesterol containing foods. Remember to also choose fatty fish as it is high in omega 3, which has many beneficial anti-inflammatory

do not need to be counted as carbs. Chia seeds thus work well on carb-controlled eating plans.

Bottom line: Almost all of the carbohydrates in chia seeds are fibre. This gives them the ability to absorb 10-12 times their weight in water.

Chia seeds also contain a decent amount of protein. Considering that it is a plant source, chia seeds have a good protein content. They also contain a good balance of essential amino acids, so our bodies should be able to make use of the protein in them.

Protein has many benefits for health. It has a great effect on promoting satiety and thus fewer cravings. This is great for weight loss and keeping glucose controlled.

Chia seeds really are an excellent protein source, especially for people who eat little or no animal products.

Bottom line: Chia seeds are high in quality protein, much higher than most other plant foods. Protein is the most weight-loss friendly macronutrient and can drastically reduce appetite and cravings.

Easy ways to add chia seeds to your diet:

- Add a sprinkle to your yoghurt or breakfast cereal
- Add some to your protein or fruit smoothie/shake
- Sprinkle some into a salad
- Add some to your soup – it will help thicken it a little
- Add some to your milk (chia absorbs liquid so you will have something like a tapioca pudding if you leave it overnight)
- Add them into your muffin mix

For all the nutritional value they offer, I think chia seeds are great to include in your diet. They are simple and easy to use, have a neutral taste and are packed with nutrients! At Easy Health Wellness I am always looking for simple and practical ways to promote healthy living – chia seeds are definitely on my list!



effects. Examples of fatty fish are tuna, sardine, salmon and mackerel. Choose grilled or steamed or Cajun options as these cooking methods have less fat, thus reducing kilojoule intake. Options like salads and stir-fries are great!

Your starch option will depend on your activity level. Remember that additional energy provided from starches that are not burned up will be stored as fat. My rule is to eliminate starch from either lunch or dinner.

Drinks can add many additional kilojoules so choose drinks wisely. Sugar-containing cool-drinks are a definite no as sugar is known for its inflammatory effects on the body. 100% juices also are high in concentrated natural sugar, so avoid them if you are watching your weight. Sugar-free cold drinks are an option as they have much fewer kilojoules. Most people do not drink enough water so water is also a good option, as boring as it may sound. Alcohol packs in lots of extra kilojoules – a light version of wine or beer will help cut kilojoules. Spritzers also help to lower kilojoules from an alcoholic drink.

Sauces may have a higher fat content than what you may usually take in. Opt for sauces to be served separately so that you can add a

limited amount to your dish.

Dessert...what can I say? They are so loaded with sugar and fat that they will throw any healthy plan off track. So, once in a while when you do indulge make your workout a bit more intense to burn up the extra kilojoules.

It is impossible for anyone to eat a perfect diet all the time thus being active makes a difference to balance out kilojoules, especially on the times you take in a bit more. Remember you are trying to make a lifestyle change... not binge and quick fixes!

It is important to keep things practical. When you create good habits it is easy to maintain weight, diabetes, cholesterol etc. It's when you have bad habits and choose more bad habit options when eating out that you will find yourself in a negative cycle with your health. We can all make good choices and enjoy a treat from time to time.

Your health is your most valuable asset... take the time to create good habits!

At Easy Health Wellness we make healthy living easy and practical!

Easy Health Wellness is a weight loss clinic founded by Dietitian Ajita Rantanjee in Moreleta Park, Pretoria.
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DREADFUL LITTLE BRATS AND TINY PSYCHOPATHS

The *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* in America concluded that 98 percent of small children are dreadful little brats and “tiny psychopaths”.

In fact when you analyse them and their skills when it comes to manipulating parents they can give one the creeps. What I find fascinating about primary school children is their quite spooky self-perpetuating lores which are astonishingly similar to the ones I adhered to when at primary school in the late Pleistocene.

Many years ago when I had two small children of my own, I picked up a study, *The Lore and Language of Schoolchildren*, written by Iona and Peter Opie which made me realise that the lore of the playground has changed little in 400 years.

What is particularly fascinating is that playground lore is passed down not by grown-ups but by small children themselves.

For instance, primary school children from here to Baltimore or Berlin know it is a “known fact” that if you nick the skin between thumb and forefinger you get lockjaw. Lockjaw, as I recall, is fatal. I lived in fear of nicking myself and then lying on my back, speechless, my jaw locked into a hideous grin as my life ebbed away and my school mates staring down at me as they ate their morning break sandwiches.

The lockjaw myth and beliefs (passed on by solemn, finger wagging, 8-year-olds) as well as chants and nonsensical rhymes can date back beyond Shakespeare.

“Known facts” said the Opies are not passed down from parent to child, they are passed down from small child to smaller child.

They said, “The scraps of lore which children learn from each other are at once more real, more immediately serviceable, and more vastly entertaining, to them, than anything that they learn from grown-ups.”

When a child gives another child something, tradition has it that it can never be taken back. From four centuries ago if any attempt was made to take something back or even a hint that the donor would like it back, would invite the chant:

**Give a thing
Take a thing
Dirty man's plaything.**



It is a Known Fact that if you recite The Lord's Prayer backwards you will call up the devil.

And then there are the funny poems – the ones a child learns from older playmates.

The playground poem I learned in grade one was 19th century:

**Red white and blue
A dirty kangaroo
Hid behind a dustbin
And did its number two.**

School rhymes are not meant for adult ears. Anywhat adult would see the humour?

Children are amused even by the fact that lines can rhyme hence, I suppose, the continuation of ancient nursery rhymes. Boys crack jokes that Jonathan Swift laughed at in the 17th century. Remember this one?

**Adam and Eve and Pinch-me
Went down the river to bathe
Adam and Eve were drowned
Who'd you think was saved?**

Being such a bright little lad I would be first to shout out, “Pinch-me!”

Among the many ancient unwritten rules among children is the almost automatic response when a playmate finds, let's say, some money. Children the world over cry “halves!” or “halvies!” meaning it must be shared – just as they cried in the Dark Ages.

When I was at school and the school bully was about to punch my lights out I would shout “Barley!” and cross my fingers. This in playground lore is as good as rushing into a cathedral and hiding behind the archbishop.

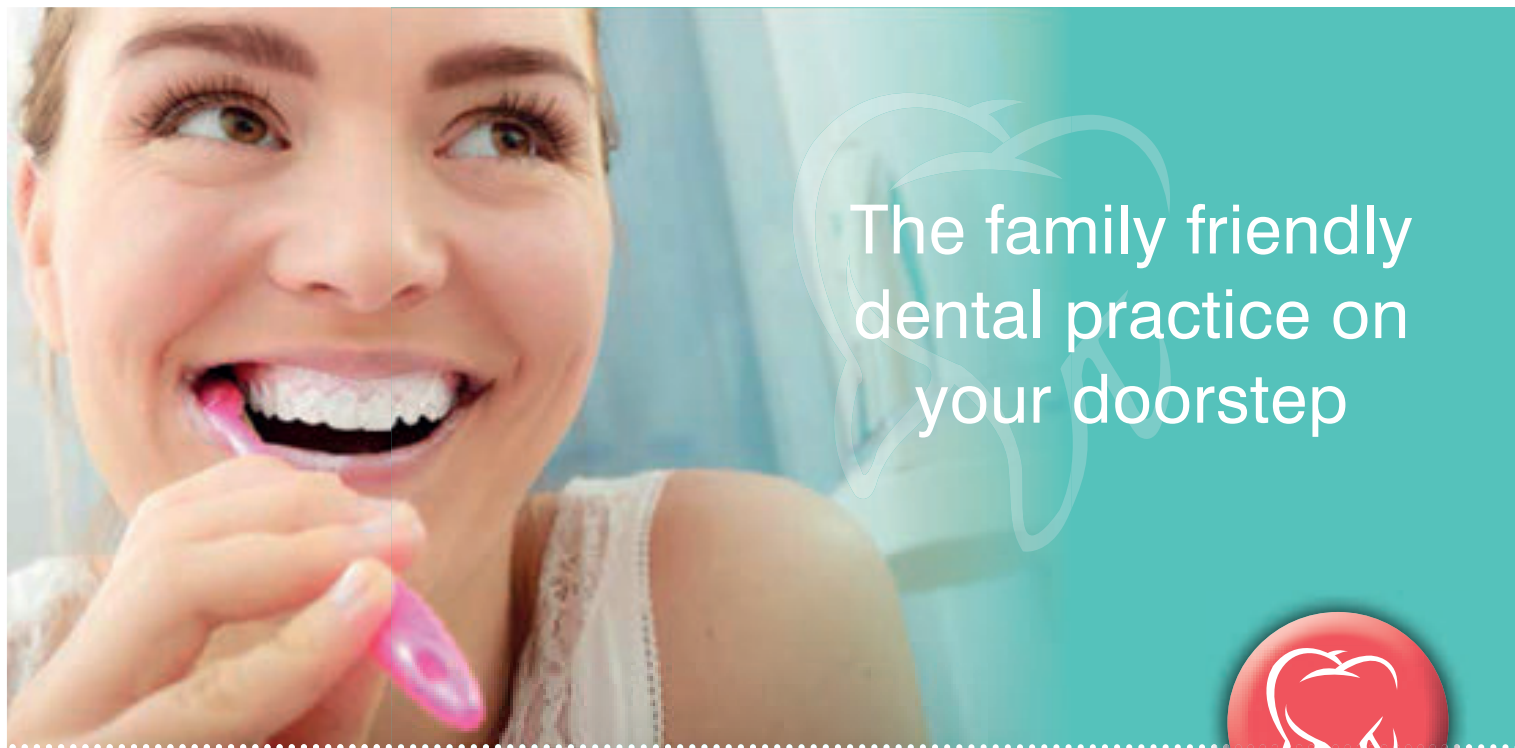
Some children might, instead, shout “Pax!” My own children shouted “Den!” or “Parley!” or “Dubs!”

And do you recognise this?

**Sam, Sam, the dirty old man
Washed his-face in the frying pan,
He combed his hair with a donkey's tail
And scratched his belly with a big toe nail.**

It goes back two centuries.

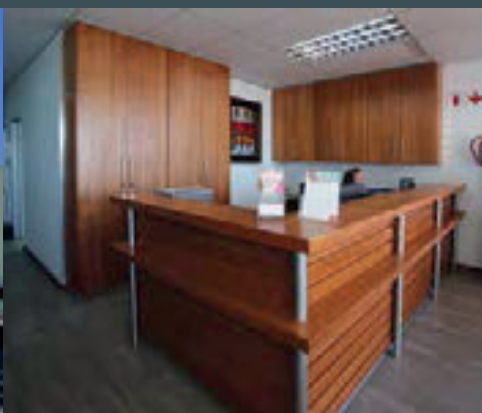
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