

# Coronation brings adventure to reading

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Coronation Fund Managers recently established two new Reading Adventure Rooms as part of its initiative to bolster literacy among learners in Grade R to Grade 3. The project involves the training of teachers and implementing a successful language educational programme in the foundational phase. This year, some 7,500 learners are expected to benefit from the programme, which was launched seven years ago. Coronation also sponsors the transformation of classrooms, with murals and equipment, to create stimulating learning environments. These classrooms have become the dwelling of imagination and escapism for the children, who are from unsafe communities. More than two dozen schools are currently part of the programme, which is managed by one of our NGO's, Living Through learning. Most recently, Reading Adventure Rooms have been established at VRT Pitt and Bontebok Primary Schools in Swellendam.



Acquiring good reading skills in the foundational phase is critical to academic success later on in school. Without it, learners struggle to progress. “We believe that helping children to read and write well will assist in unlocking South Africa’s educational potential,” says Wendy Bergsteedt, group head of marketing at Coronation.

However, the country’s massive education challenges cannot be seen in isolation.

“At Coronation, we believe in active involvement. While financial support is a start, we are committed to achieve real progress by spending time inside communities to assess the types of problems that prevail and how we can help. Our aim is to address the problem holistically to eradicate the issues that are inhibiting the development of our children.” Members of the leadership team have recently visited a number of schools in areas such as Delft and Lavender Hill, which are synonymous with gang related violence and drug abuse. Bergsteedt believes that hands-on support of these communities is the solution to eradicate social ills and to enrich the lives of learners. “We are not afraid of facing these issues head on by physically showing up, it’s one of the ways that we show our commitment to changing the trajectory of these communities to achieve long term success,” she says.

Before launching the projects at the new schools, the Coronation team visited Swellendam to talk to community leaders and

school headmasters and engaged with teachers to understand the challenges and to develop plans to uplift the community as a collective.

As the saying goes, “It takes a village to raise a child, and as Coronation, we’ve implemented a rounded approach to helping children by supporting and mentoring them, but also inspiring parents, teachers, principals and community leaders to work together in uplifting the lives of learners.”

Coronation is involved in various educational and entrepreneurship initiatives that are changing lives. “It’s a long-term investment that we take very seriously,” says Bergsteedt.

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