

Business network to empower PTA

Thato Mahlangu

Local NGO Bontlebane will launch the Gauteng chapter of the Christian Women in Business Network next Saturday in Pretoria.

Founder Kea Modise-Moloto told *Rekord* the event would bring together like-minded business and professional women who would share business and professional wisdom for growth and empowerment.

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“It will be a platform for women in different industries to build a local network with national reach to share and impart business knowledge, support, encouragement, inspiration towards growing businesses or accelerating professional and career growth,” she said.

“I started the network after experiencing unconditional support from women, some of whom I did not know at the time, who prayed for and supported me during a traumatic and painful experience.

“This taught me that women thrive, and can achieve anything when they support each other.”

Moloto-Modise hosted the launch of Christian Women in Business Network (GCWBN) earlier this year in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) where businesses, professional women leaders and aspirant professionals gathered.

She said the Gauteng launch followed the successful KZN launch, which created a buzz and demand in



Kea Modise-Moloto (left) with panelists at the KZN seminar.

other provinces with Gauteng being at the forefront.

Modise-Moloto said the network, founded on Christian values, was a space for women who sought growth, support, mentoring, coaching and motivation, to gather.

International singer and songwriter Lira, led conversations at the KZN launch

“I became involved in this network because of its Christian background.

“For me balancing spirituality with real life and work always results in a fulfilling life and this is what the network promises to bring to business and professional women,” said Lira.

In 2013 Modise-Moloto started Girls of Hope, an initiative to empower girls in underprivileged circumstances through mentorship programmes.

She often speaks at business and community imbizos where she motivates

young people and women alike to take control of their lives in spite of their circumstances.

“Our efforts especially help teen girls with positive self-esteem and breaks the mould of self-doubt, poverty and lack of progressive successful lives through developing business skills.”

Lira said Girls of Hope empowered young girls by ushering them into responsible young women.

Modise-Moloto said eNCA’s Bongive Khumalo, life coach and author Amanda Ndiki, and businesswoman Johanna Mukoki, Lerato Motsamai broadcaster and journalist Khanyi Magubane would be among the women leading the dialogue at the Gauteng launch. The event will be held on 15 July at the National Zoological Gardens in the CBD.



Music sensation Lira speaks at the event.

Education department admits learner pregnancy crisis

Tshegofatso Ngobeni

The Gauteng department of basic education has conceded it is not winning the fight against teenage pregnancy.

Last month MEC Panyaza Lesufi tweeted Pretoria learner pregnancy statistics for last year, which showed 1 041 learners in grades 5 to 12 had fallen pregnant – Tshwane South 380, Tshwane West 360 and Tshwane North 301.

Department spokesperson Oupa Bodibe said teenage pregnancy was becoming difficult to manage.

“We urge parents and other stakeholders to work with us in tackling [this problem],” said Bodibe.

“We have a number of programmes to discourage early sexual activity, which includes life orientation programmes that focus on overall personal wellbeing.”

He said the programmes included voluntary counselling, mother-daughter dialogues, the doll project and peer education.

Bodibe said although the department wanted learners to delay in engaging in sexual activity as pregnancy could affect their education, the policy was that pregnant learners could continue their education until they gave birth and could return to school after delivery.

“Learners can attend school while pregnant and anyone ill-treated because of pregnancy is encouraged to alert the school management for necessary action,” said Bodibe.

He said during voluntary counselling and



The Gauteng department of basic education says it is not winning the fight against teenage pregnancy. Photo: africacheck.org / Stephane De Sakutin

HIV testing, learners were taught about using condoms and were encouraged to get tested to know their HIV status.

“Though some teenagers had early sexual debuts, they knew the dangers of engaging in sexual activities at a tender age.”

He said learners who participated in the peer education programme had changed in their behaviour and attitude towards early sexual relations.

Arcadia-based NPO Amato Pregnancy

Crisis Centre director Heila Chopman said the problem was broader and needed to be addressed by parents first.

He said some parents did not discuss sex with their children and if they did, the children did not listen.

“Teenage pregnancy in Pretoria is devastating,” said Chopman.

“Our young people get exposed to sex at a very young age and this can get out of hand as we have seen here.”

She said her NPO was doing what it could, including:

- Prevention through education – visiting schools and universities to discuss the consequences of sexual relations.

- Dealing with crisis – where young mothers were helped to cope with an unplanned pregnancy, providing pregnancy tests, counselling and connecting learners with other NGOs that dealt with adoption.

- Post abortion and pregnancy loss counselling, which helped young women cope with the aftermath of an abortion or miscarriage or stillbirth.

“I believe the department is doing its best. Sometimes part of the problem is the men these women engage in intercourse with.”

“Some do not know how to use a condom or they say they cannot use a condom as it removes the skin on skin sensation or sometimes they lie and say they used a condom whereas they did not.”

Chopman said alcohol and the sexualisation of children by the media was a contributing factor to teenage pregnancy.

“Another problem is that some of these young women come from one-room households where parents sometimes have sex in full view of children then the children want to go and experiment sex for themselves.”

She said there was no single solution to the problem but effective communication between parents, schools, NPOs and learners could go a long way to addressing it.

Amato Pregnancy Crisis Centre can be contacted via its Facebook page, on www.amato.co.za or on 012-342-3452.