

JULY 2025 RECAP



“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.”

1 Peter 4: 10 NIV

A JOURNEY OF GROWTH, GRATITUDE & JOY

This month, we celebrate a very special milestone as Sphiwo turned 16! On behalf of the Vessenes family, we're honoured to share an update that reflects the joy, transformation, and deep gratitude they feel for the village that once wrapped little Sphiwo in love.

From the heart of Empangeni to the shores of California, Sphiwo's journey has been nothing short of extraordinary. He recently completed his first year at a boys' military boarding school, where discipline is part of daily life - uniforms, routines, and strong character-building. He's embraced his environment with maturity and joy, forming close friendships, thriving in History class, and diving headfirst (literally!) into weekend surf sessions in the Pacific Ocean.

Soccer remains his true passion. He's part of a competitive team and continues to hone his skills with determination. This coming school year, he'll deepen his academic pursuits in Science, Maths and English, and try his hand at cooking! Perhaps one day he'll whip up a taste of South Africa in a California kitchen.

Though the academic journey presents challenges, Sphiwo's perseverance shines through as he passed all his classes and continues to grow into a young man respected by his peers and teachers alike.

The Vessenes family expressed their deep thanks to each person who loved and supported Sphiwo during his early years at iKhaya. This early care laid the foundation for the person he is becoming. They hope to bring him back to South Africa for a visit before graduation, as an opportunity to reconnect with the people and places that first shaped his story.



surf



SCHOOLS OUT

Our recent Holiday Programme was an inspiring mix of learning and laughter! Over ten days, children explored themes like kindness, good manners, safety, teamwork, sharing and saving electricity, all through creative, age-appropriate activities. From crafting kindness trees to rehearsing fire escape routes and making massive posters, each session helped build skills that matter in everyday life. Our amazing team created such a fun and purposeful space where children feel seen, supported, and empowered!



LIFE SKILLS

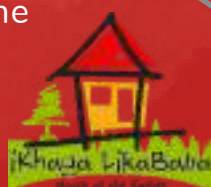


Our boys got hands-on in the kitchen, whipping up banana bread and even warmer smiles as they learnt teamwork, patience, and the joy of creating something together!

CFCI YOUTH VISIT



Joy, laughter, and high-energy action filled the day as our children teamed up with the vibrant CFCI Youth for an unforgettable time of sports and games! The interactive and social day was a huge success.



MANDELA DAY



We celebrated Mandela Day in true Madiba spirit, with generosity, kindness, and joy. The children were treated to a delicious pizza lunch and a day of fun activities and spoils. As Madiba said, "What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others." Thanks to the incredible support from Dunlop Zone, Super Tyres, Halfway Zululand, and Sanlam, our day was extra special and our cupboards are full.

One Con

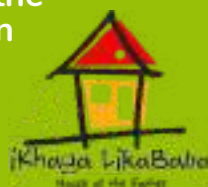


Five of our teens attended One Conference in Pietermaritzburg, hosted by One Life Church. Over four days, they experienced powerful preaching, worship, devotions, and connection. Topics like relationships, leadership, and identity sparked meaningful reflection, and a miraculous healing made the event even more unforgettable. Moments like these build faith, friendship, and lasting character.

New Skills



Over a fun three-day workshop at Zikhulise, Lulu got her first taste of braiding and loved it! She's already picking up knotless styles and is keen to try freehand next. With practice, she could soon be earning pocket money too. Big thanks to the team for creating such a hands-on and confidence-building experience.



IGNITING CURIOSITY

Our older children had the great opportunity to witness a controlled cane fire, a breathtaking and educational experience! Guided by farm officials, they learnt about the purpose of these fires in local agriculture, the precautions taken to manage them responsibly and how sugar is made from sugar cane. It was a great time of learning, excitement, and awe as they stood watching the flames dance across the fields. Experiences like this spark curiosity and deepen the understanding of the world around us.



Family Togetherness

Honest and Ellen, house parents to our teenage girls, recently took them on a fun and memorable family outing to Mtunzini. The day included a lively game of Putt Putt and a visit to Honest's building site, offering both joy, learning, and inspiration. Their care and creativity continue to shape special moments that remind our girls what's possible, where hard work, vision, and ambition walk hand in hand.

UNDER CONSTRUCTION





A Personal Note

Dear friends of iKhaya

July has been a month of joy, learning, deep connection and growth. From Mandela Day's spirit of generosity to the faith-stirring time at One Conference, we have seen hearts opened and lives touched in unforgettable ways.

Lulu's first braid, the fiery wonder of cane fields, and the laughter of teens at Putt Putt inspired a sense of discovery and personal development, reminding us that it's often in these day-to-day moments that the seeds of growth quietly take root.

The third school term is underway with our children stepping into new challenges with courage and enthusiasm. One of our teens completed her Consumer Studies PAT, dressed with confidence and professionalism for the waitressing assessment. In another classroom, a young learner took initiative to tidy up, broom in hand, surrounded by the many colourful learning charts. These snapshots of school life reflect the great learning platforms and joy that fill their days.

To our volunteers, many sponsors and friends, your support is the quiet force behind every smile, every breakthrough, every celebration. Thank you for walking this journey with us.

With love and gratitude, Loressa & the iKhaya Team



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