

## Lavinia Davis

When I retired in 2016 it wasn't to sit at home and allow the school hours to pass by. It was to give me the time I so longed for to work in the community and continue to serve. At school it was 99,9% school and 0.1% for the community and family.

I wanted to work for UNICEF but the posts were in North Africa and I wasn't prepared for that...and when I got the opportunity to work for Wordworks, it was an easy decision. I had trained as a facilitator when the programme was introduced to our circuit. I motivated 3 Educators to join me to initiate the program at the school I served.

I am delighted that the school still engages with the programme after 8 years. Why...because the educators are reaping the benefit in the classroom, children exposed to the Wordworks Home-School Partnerships (HSP) Programme come into the class with better language and numeracy skills and the parents, who are trained, are more involved with teaching their child/ren through the Wordworks activities.

When I came into this organization, my enthusiasm to serve was elevated to new heights...I experience fantastic team work and passion, which has a ripple effect on the way we serve our communities. Parents are enthusiastic to learn, the "know hows" they have within them become reality, and I am inspired when they see they have it within themselves... "...to be a parent with skills" as quoted by a parent. The gratitude of Educators, makes one realise the need for mentorship and support for educators, which is lacking from the bureaucrats in charge of education in South Africa.

I have learnt that being a parent at home is more difficult than being a parent at school. As Educators we take it for granted that parents "know or should know". I have seen parents grow from 'I never knew' to 'now I know and understand'. It's heartening to see how Educators team up and make the Wordworks (HSP) Programme work despite the odds. They are not paid extra to run the Programme at their schools, but they make a difference in the lives of their child/parent, by going the extra mile.

Officials in the Education Department need to engage vigorously with the Wordworks HSP Program to make a difference in the education of our children/parents of South Africa.

Love what you do...do with it love. I salute the Leaders at Wordworks!

