

**Thobisa Damfane**

My journey with Philani Nutrition Centre was a life changing experience. I grew up as a very shy person, and as a result my behaviour affected my first born son who is now 16 years old. My son struggled with reading and writing in Grade 1, so much so that he had to repeat Grade 1.

The opportunity to attend the Every Word Counts Programme gave me mixed feelings. I was excited to be part of the programme and yet worried that I would not have the capacity to help other mothers in my community who are facing the same problems I had with my son. I wanted to help them to be able to love, trust and build good relationships with their children. Now I can confidently say I am able to stand in front of other mentor mothers at work and share the information that I have gained from the Every Word Counts Programme.

The kind of support that I receive from work motivates me to stay involved in the programme. I have seen mothers following my footsteps in the community by being part of their children's lives. The mentor mothers trained by Philani assist the parents to collect resource to enable children to learn.