

Can't Touch This

a Child Abuse Prevention Programme

09 June 2015

Courtney Smith (left) and Almar Müller (right) performing their first show at Camps Bay Preparatory School



The **arepp:Theatre for Life** Trust is an Applied Theatre organisation which has been operating nationally in South Africa since 1987.

arepp:Theatre for Life creates high quality applied theatre productions which travel to schools nationwide, providing complimentary, social life-skills education to school-going learners

Using a rights-based approach each show is age-appropriately crafted to highlight and foster thought and debate.

Performed in the real-life context and home language of the audience, the productions are specifically designed to be performed as a Life Orientation lesson in the schools' daily schedule and to complement and support the outcomes of the national Life Orientation curriculum statements.

arepp:Theatre for Life proudly presents *No Monkey Business: Can't Touch This*, an Applied Theatre puppet show aimed at developing Life-skills and Self-efficacy in relation to Physical Abuse and Physical Boundaries amongst Foundation Phase learners.

Philip Rademeyer directed two talented young performers, Almar Müller and Courtney Smith, into an incredible piece of theatre which thrilled both the learners and educators. With their four-week tour concluding in **Child Protection Week**, the team had performed 31 shows to over 4,500 Grade R to 3 learners.

In *No Monkey Business: Can't Touch This*, Mac Monkey is incredibly excited because his uncle, Bobby Baboon, is coming to visit and he knows these really great games and fun things to do. But Bobby's games get a little too 'rough', and Mac begins to feel uncomfortable, so he talks with best friend Vanda Vulture and they begin to feel that something isn't quite right.

The show has been in **arepp:Theatre for Life's** repertoire since 1998 and has been performed a number of times over the years. *Can't Touch This* is aimed at foundation phase learners and addresses issues around 'good and bad touching' and 'good and bad feelings'. It reinforces the idea of trusting your own feelings and offers practical solutions for how to act and what to do when things feel 'wrong'.

" It brought pertinent concepts and information to the learners at their level... A difficult concept to teach was done in an easy way to understand. "

- Educator
Tour 4, 2015



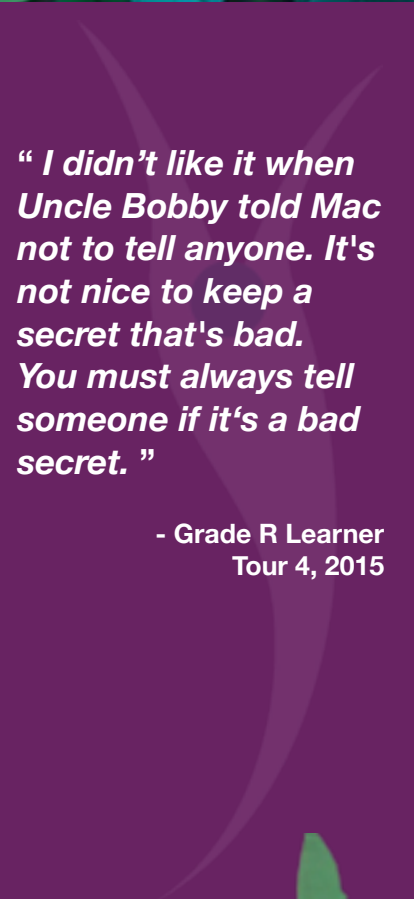
The Team reported that the Learners were enthused with the puppets and loved every minute of the show! They were fully engaged in the presentations and were eager to participate and interact with Mac Monkey and Vanda Vulture. They sang along to all the songs. Some even got up stated dancing! The interactive nature of the play and the songs allowed them to understand and better remember concepts discussed during the show.

While being swept away by these bright, colourful characters, they were able to engage and the story and deal with the issues in a safe and education space. During the facilitated discussion after show, the learners were able to recall what to do if they ever found themselves in a situation that made them feel uncomfortable or unsafe. They also demonstrated an excellent understanding of the difference between 'good' secrets and 'bad' secrets.

Educators were asked to complete an evaluation at the conclusion of every performance in which they assess the quality of the show, as well as the impact of the presentation on the learners in relation to the various Life-Skills indicators.

The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive! The educators often commented that the presentations were age-appropriate and dealt with the subject matter in a sensitive and non-threatening way. They also reported a significant increase in the Learners' ability to communicate and problem-solve, as well as demonstrated an excellent understanding of their rights.

arepp:Theatre for Life is immensely proud of impact of the tour and would like to thank our incredible team and production staff for making this tour a success!



“ I didn't like it when Uncle Bobby told Mac not to tell anyone. It's not nice to keep a secret that's bad. You must always tell someone if it's a bad secret. ”

- Grade R Learner
Tour 4, 2015



“ Our learners definitely understood the lesson. I'm sure they will feel comfortable telling someone if that 'bad' feeling occurs. An excellent presentation! ”

- Educator
Tour 4, 2015