

Soul Surfing by Underprivileged Children

www.MyPE.co.za: It is definitely not the average activity their friends would do on a Saturday morning that awaits six learners from Walmer Township on a weekly basis. When eleven to 15 year olds Siwe, Thobela, Luthando, Yonela, Noma and Lofefe get up they rush down to the beach to continue with their surfing lessons. Living in a neighbourhood where an estimated 95 percent of people cannot even swim, this is obviously quite exceptional.

The surf project is part of the extra curricular "Learn4Life!" programme run by the educational organization [Masifunde Learner Development](#). The programme aims on shaping personality, establishing role models within the township community and broadening the children's lives horizon. In a joint venture with the Summerstrand surf school [Soul Surfing](#), the children can now learn how to surf as the school provides the lessons and the NPO gives transport and administration. Says Jonas Schumacher, Director of Masifunde: "We are very glad to have Soul Surfing as a partner to teach our kids how to surf. South Africa offers so many beautiful possibilities that these children otherwise couldn't even dream of and it is amazing to see how the learners grab the chances they get."

Surf coach and owner of Soul Surfing, Matthew Calitz, is very satisfied with the high commitment and talent of his young learners, how they conquer their fears and paddle out far. "Most of them stand and ride already", the passionate surfer says, but also highlights that professionalism on the waves is by far not all his lessons are about. Says Calitz: "It's a whole package of sports skills, respect for others, social skills and environmental awareness. Surfing is more than just riding waves, I intend the children to become one with their environment. And being out there in the ocean gives them the freedom and the time to think about themselves which they probably wouldn't find at home in that extent." He wants the children to be able to surf on a contest level one day, but surfing tournaments is not his main goal as he says surfing isn't about being the best. Instead of aggressively combating against each other the children should rather maintain the essence of surfing – respect for nature and others.

To finance the surf project on the long run, Matthew Calitz together with Masifunde Learner Development is looking for surf sponsorships for the children taking part in the course. Contact [Soul Surfing](#). Their donation account is "Masifunde Patenschaften e.V.", Account No. 080 266 517, Branch 050 417, Standard Bank, Rink Street, Port Elizabeth.

Posted by [MyPE](#) on Sunday, July 26 @ 09:25:00 SAST

[\(Click Here to Comment](#) | Score: 0)