



## BACKGROUND

Research has shown that children with HIV are more likely than others to have developmental delays and therefore struggle at school “CT results suggest that children with HIV who have documented structural anomalies in the brain may be at risk for deficits in visual-motor and visual-spatial processing” (*Dev. Neuropsychol. 2002; 21 (3): 223-41: Cognitive development in school-age children with vertically transmitted HIV infection. Blanchette, Smith, King, Fernandes-Penney & Read*). These factors make teaching, and the opportunity for additional learning support from teachers, understandably difficult. Especially in a classroom consisting of sometimes more than 40 children, with one teacher.

In order to make this project work, we needed the following:

### 1. BOXES



**2. Specially selected age appropriate stock**, supplied by Hi Ho Cherry O



**3. A dedicated team**, ours consists of Dr. Paul Roux, our Occupational Therapists: Prof. Elewani Ramugondo, Pam Gretschel, Naiema Razzack, Robyn Meissner, Jessica Ferguson & Caraleigh Otto, with consultancy from Dr. Louis Benjamin.

## OUR MAIN CONCERN

HIV+ children are not always able to receive the additional learning support they require from their schools and teachers, due to a lack of human and financial resources. Along with this, their parents are not always empowered or sufficiently educated to understand the developmental needs that their children have.

## OUR ACTIONS

Our plan started with us providing age appropriate stimulation boxes (GO Boxes) to the children attending the crossroads clinic for treatment. The children's age groups were broken up into 6 months-2 years, 3-5 years, and 6-8 years. One of our OT's runs groups with the moms and their children on a monthly basis, explaining what each item is used for and how it aids their child's development. The moms then take the boxes home and have the opportunity to use the skills they have learnt at home with their children. On returning to their next group session, our OT is able to see how they managed and how the child benefitted.

So far we have seen great potential and such enthusiasm from our moms / carers and their little ones.

#### 4. The final product, the GO BOX



#### OUR PLAN AHEAD

We plan to take the next two year (2013-2014) to research the benefits of these GO Boxes, under the outcomes of Development, Play and Learning, as well as how our caregivers have found this process. We hope to provide sufficient evidence to allow for the roll out of these boxes throughout the Western Cape in the near future. **Thank you** to all those that have journeyed with us, and to those we will still meet along the way.

For more information, see [www.kidzpositive.co.za](http://www.kidzpositive.co.za)