

Testimonies from St. Stithians' Students

Refilwe is a magical place and it is amazing how many people actually give up their time to help. The children I played with were ages 3-4, they are very exciting, bownsy, lovely children but have so much heart and love for each other. When I entered the room to help out, all the children came running to give me a hug and that was so special. Spending time with them, playing games and doing different dances made me realize even more how much they appreciate all they get and have. It was also wonderful to see all their bright shining faces smiling at you all the time. Going to Refilwe makes me want to help out and make the world a better place. I also realized how very lucky and gifted I am and how privileged I am to go to a great school who is so involved with helping others. So many people are extremely privileged but don't help out and give to others, when they should. But the most amazing thing I thought was how the team at Refilwe have being fixing up this place, and the visions they have of how this magical place can be so great. To the team at Refilwe you are amazing!!! **From Nicole Baylis**

From our community service outing to Refilwe, I learnt...

1. That I absolutely love little kids.
2. That I need to appreciate the things that I get more.
3. That they appreciate everything that they get.
4. That community service can be really fun.
5. That little kids love hugs and they love giving them.
6. That little kids are really cute and energetic.
7. That they love food.
8. That they love jumping on you

From Rachel McJannet

Walking into the 3-4 classroom and seeing the joy excitement and the light up faces of those little children made me feel very special. They then all came to me and gave me a big hug. I sat down and immediately and played lego with them. As I did that I knew that they were so grateful and happy with what they have and made me feel very grateful too. It made me realize that this kind of place makes a real difference in the world and I'm glad to support it. I hope to come soon and also make a difference. Thank you, **from Emma Galanakis.**

Today I learnt a lot of things that made me change and I think the trip to Refilwe was amazing. I loved the kids, the way they interacted with us was amazing. As soon as you get in that room you get so much love and they seem as if they are never sad, like they have the most amazing life and they are just always happy. Refilwe is probably the best children's home and I like it because they don't just take care and love the kids because they have to. They do it because they love them and they think they are gorgeous. I think what Refilwe has done is build a future for these kids, and I think that they are doing such a wonderful job. I would like to thank the director and Refilwe for allowing us to visit and plant trees - I had a wonderful time. **Love, Nompilo.**

From Refilwe, I learnt that we should be grateful for what we have in life and be happy that we have all the things that some people don't have. We should cherish everything we have and store it within us because if we let go of it we won't have much and won't be grateful for anything. The best thing today was the little kids. They are so cute and even going to a place like Refilwe brings a smile to their faces because they have people and staff that want to look after them and make them feel special. The compost was really fun too. My friends and I had so much fun putting them in bags and spilling them on ourselves. It was so much fun and I really couldn't ask for a better day. I just want to thank you for everything you do for the children - without your education and love, they wouldn't be as happy as they are now. They are really lucky to have you and when they grow up they will thank you for everything you have done for them and how you changed their lives and made it better for them. They will be grateful for all you do and how you have helped them with anything they ask of you. Thank you, **Samantha Nye**.

From my experience at Refilwe, I learnt that I should really be grateful for what I have. I am very guilty of taking most things for granted, while these small children think that one single book is SO amazing. They enjoy the simple things like just having a friend; they loved just playing with my hair. They loved having someone to congratulate them when they succeeded in building a puzzle or just playing a game. When I helped in the gardens it was very important to them even though it was something very simple and it helped to make their future better. From, **Daniella Traill**.

On the community service outing to Refilwe I learnt that I must appreciate what I have and to be more grateful and thankful for what I have. I must thank God in my prayers and give back to the community. I learnt that a little goes a long way and to always treat others as you would like them to treat you. I've learnt to stop asking for the things I don't have but be grateful for everything I do have. Refilwe helped me to learn how to be grateful and how to give back to the less fortunate. This community service outing is one that I will treasure as I learnt so much about giving back and appreciating life. Regards, **Sarah van der Spuy**.

Today at Refilwe I realized that little children are extremely grateful for what they receive! We are all guilty for taking for granted what we have and we always want more! I think from my experience today I realized how lucky we are in receiving what we get. Interacting with the little children made me aware that even if you don't have a lot you can still share and give to others! When my friends and I were putting compost into a bag I was made aware that some things aren't as bad as they seem once you have done it! I also learnt to think about and appreciate what you have and not think about what you don't! By **Claudia Alhadeff**.

At Refilwe I saw that even though those kids don't have toys, they still let the other kids play with them. They love it when you come and spend the day with them, and they love lots of attention from you. They are really cute and lovable, and it was fun to play with them. I spent the whole day with the babies, they are sweet and some of them are really small! I was so attached to this one girl,

I taught her to high five, it was so sweet to watch her do it!! Refilwe is such a beautiful place, and very special to some of those kids who don't have homes and parents who are not alive anymore. From **Kelly Graham**.

My time at Refilwe today was amazing. Today I realized how privileged I am to have a good education, family and friends and to live in a wonderful house. The children that I looked after today were so cute and whenever I saw them they made me smile and laugh. I realized how lucky I am and that I am so grateful for what I have got. Those little children were so happy even if they didn't have all that we have got they were so happy. I also realized that if we can go there just for half a day we can make such a difference to them in such little time and try to work as hard as we can we can do so much for them. Just working a bit for them made a difference and me knowing that I made a difference to somebody else makes me feel really happy. From **Angelique Smith**.

It was really, really fun going to Refilwe and I learnt A LOT!

1. Talking is not the only way to communicate
2. I CANNOT ride a bicycle
3. Little children are so cute
4. Little children are so energetic
5. I can play and teach people how to play snap (the card game) without saying a word
6. I need to appreciate my possessions more
7. What I take for granted could mean the world to other people
8. Donate the things that I take for granted and do not use
9. Community service can be fun!
10. Community service MAKES EVERYONE SMILE (you and the people that you are helping)

From **Michelle Dobson**.

Playing, cleaning, moving around, gardening, you name it. My experience at Refilwe was AWESOME! I am so happy to know a community that really wants to make a difference in children's lives and, future. When I go to Refilwe I feel the happiness in every child's face and every smile a meaning. The children at Refilwe Primary are really grateful for the things they have. I also find that with the little things that they have they seem to make such a difference . I have really enjoyed my experience at Refilwe and hope to visit soon! From **Christina Botes**.

At Refilwe I learnt that we must not take the things we have for granted and that we must cherish everyday that we can sleep in the most comfortable bed and can buy things we enjoy. I learnt that these little kids and babies have such small things compared to us and that even if they have less stuff than us, they can even be as happy as us because you don't need money to be happy, that's just a bonus. The thing you need most in life is love, care, help and honor. With those things you could be happier than the people who have money and fame and fortune, because they will still have an empty space inside them and they won't know what it is. This is why with love, care, help and honor you can get extremely far in life. As my dad says you will win nothing if you don't try and fight for it. From **Matseliso Tlelai**.

Today was a special day for our Grade 8 class as we went on an outing to Refilwe for the first time. It was special not only to us but to the kids that we looked after as well. We helped garden, looked after different ages of children, served food, read books and colored with the kids. It was amazing! I felt really proud that I was doing something good not only for myself but for the children I was with. I helped look after one of the youngest children in Refilwe. She alone opened my eyes to new beginnings and things that have been in my life that I never took notice of before. I've learnt to be grateful for the things I have and learnt to appreciate what I have. A lot of different children opened my eyes to much more things. Most of these kids are gifted and I know they can make a world of a difference! It's been a pleasure Paying it Forward to Refilwe and I hope to go back soon! >From **Tinuka Poonee**.

I noticed that the kids at Refilwe don't have much but they are very grateful for what they do have. They love attention and that is so sweet. Most things fascinate them, like when I was playing with the babies one of them was playing with my glasses. Two of my friends and I were helping the kids to ride their bikes. Some of them did not know how so we helped them with it, showing them which way to move their feet. I met a lot of them because they swapped every fifteen minutes. I found out some of their names (which were all very cute). Afterwards we went to one of the classes and we were playing with them and we read to them. They loved to show me how far they could count. We went and sang with them and that was very special. I had a lot of fun and hope to go back soon. From **Jessica Wohlfarth**.

Today from our trip to Refilwe I learnt that even though the kids that we play with don't have as much as we do, they still always look to the positive and always try to have smiles on their faces. Playing with the babies was my favorite part - they are all so adorable and they smile and laugh at almost anything, which was so fulfilling because not all babies these days do that. I grew attached to one little baby girl who was so gorgeous. She had beautiful skin and was one of the most beautiful babies that I had ever seen. It's always really wonderful to be able to help out at places like Refilwe and even though sometimes I think that I have barely done anything, I've actually made a huge difference, because I feel I made the little babies that I played with feel very loved. Even just a single smile goes a long way. The quote "some people pursue happiness, others create it", really shows here because in our trip we choose not to pursue happiness but to create it in everyone of those little children's hearts. I also enjoyed watching the little toddlers sing and they sounded so amazing! I loved the outing and would love to do it again any day. From **Viwe Mtoba**.

Going to Refilwe taught me that although the children there are less fortunate than me, they are still easy to relate to and they are still normal little kids that one day could be very good people. When we were helping with the compost for the trees it made me think that Refilwe is a place that is trying so hard to help these little children and create a sanctuary where they can feel safe and be provided with opportunities that will affect their futures. I was so happy to be a part of that and to contribute towards what Refilwe is doing for these children. The children at Refilwe are so welcoming and they really do appreciate all that is being done for them. Although I have never experienced poverty, I have learnt a lot about it and it has inspired me to do something about what people are going through. Refilwe is one of those things that really do make a world of difference. From **Leah Arnoldi**.

I absolutely loved Refilwe! Those kids were so grateful for what they have and that really taught me a bit about being grateful for things! It was so nice to go there and to meet new people. I think the teachers were really good with the children which are something I know I'm not that good at. The kids were so cute because they always wanted your attention but when you were busy they would do something else or wait. They were well behaved and happy with what they had. Filling packets with fertilizer was hard work but it is worth it. From **Faine Correia**.

I enjoyed myself at Refilwe. It was something so different yet so fun! I think the kids there are the sweetest things ever. They really know how to brighten up someone's day. I also found the cow dung thing quite fun because it's something I have never done but thanks to Refilwe, I did it for my first time there and I am so grateful for that. The most important thing I learnt there is to be grateful for everything that I have and never to complain because there are people out there that would like to have something I was complaining about. Before I complain, I should think of those who are less fortunate. Something else I learnt there is that before I think of wasting food, I should think of all those around me who don't have food. I hope we can do this every term! From **Bonolo Pule**.

Going to Refilwe today was an unforgettable experience. I think that we all learnt more than we expected. Being with the little kids in the morning and seeing how well looked after they are, it just touched my heart. Playing with all the tiny babies was fun, seeing all the laughter and joy in their eyes. I also think that we saw how much we take advantage of what we have and to see these children that don't have as much as we do but are still willing to share. Seeing Refilwe for the first time and just seeing that everything that I had heard about them making a difference was true, was great. I think that it is really inspirational to see how much time, effort and thought has been put into Refilwe and to see all the ideas in action was amazing. I think that being able to go out to Refilwe and to see how everything works down there and to help out was an awesome feeling knowing that I was giving back to the community. It just goes to show how much we take advantage of everything we have and that if we were all as giving as the people at Refilwe, the world would be a much nicer place to live in. I feel that we all took something from this outing to Refilwe. I also think that every single girl left with some good idea and a happy feeling. From **Holly Freeman**.

I think Refilwe was an amazing experience and I learnt a lot from it. I was playing with the 2-3 year olds and found that they are very energetic, but I could see that when one of my friends and I walked in to the room, they all had smiles on their faces and they really appreciate everything. When we were building the puzzles and playing around in the playroom, a smile just came to my face as it reminded me of when I used to play just like that with my little family friends. I really enjoy being around children so it was fun for me and them. It shows us how much we take for granted and teaches us how much we must appreciate what we have and be thankful for it. Over all, I enjoyed this trip a lot and I hope to go back soon for another visit, to help out or entertain the babies. From **Damini Patel**.

Today to me was actually absolutely amazing. I love small kids and I thrive on helping them so I really enjoyed spending my time with them. I met a kid there who today changed a lot for me, I always fall in love with little babies but Peter was amazing, as soon as we had arrived he had the biggest smile on his face and he was so energetic, we really bonded and he really made me feel that a positive attitude is the best thing to have in anybody's life. I'm really grateful to him and most of the other kids because I have had a lot of stress and immediately I felt refreshed and re-energized I know that those kids will grow up to all be amazing people. I think what Refilwe has is outstanding and I hope everything goes well for the team down at Refilwe - it takes some good hearts to do miracles and those children do see Refilwe as a miracle! Thanks to everyone for today I will definitely head back there soon! From **Sarah Knight**.

Going to Refilwe was quite an amazing experience for me. It taught me a lot about how little some people have in comparison to us and that it's not right that we take some of our privileges for granted. We need to be so thankful for the beautiful lives we live. Just seeing those little smiling faces made my heart melt. The children welcome you with open arms and immediately treat you like family. They aren't judgemental at all. They also don't resent you for being a lot better off than they are. It meant so much to them that we were there and I'm really glad that I was able to make an impact on each of their lives'. It may not seem like it to us, but just being there has actually made a big difference to the little, cute children. From **Lauren King**.

My experience at Refilwe was awesome, I learnt so many things but the most important was that we are really lucky and should be really grateful for what we have! Even when you are not in the best place in life you might as well enjoy every moment of life that you get, because you only get one life and that is not going to change! I think that we can learn from those children even though they might not have the same education as us and that they are way smaller, but we can learn that no matter what we have or how our life turns out we must always be thankful for just being here today, and never give up on anything! You must take every chance you have in your life, because it could be your last chance in life to get that experience. You have to forget about the bad, and learn from your mistakes. You have to let go what has happened in the past, have no regrets and know that whatever happens life goes on! From **Samantha Brimacombe**.

I learnt that although I am not normally a small children's type of person, I actually enjoyed being with the children a lot today. There was a moment when a little girl, Mawi, was reading to me and I saw how much she enjoyed it and appreciated that there was someone there to read with her. It really touched me. I also learnt that although they have less than us, they have more gratitude for it than we have for some of our most prized possessions and they are more than happy with what they have whereas we are almost never satisfied with the amount of money or possessions. From **Ellie Cookson**.

I absolutely LOVED Refilwe! It was such an awesome feeling to know that although I was there for such a short amount of time, I'd made a huge difference in these children's lives, especially the kids I taught to ride bikes (the class at the end of the hall). I loved bible story time and singing and dancing with all the kids was loads of fun! I read stories to them as well and I could see how much they enjoyed it! I love you all and hope your lives are filled with joy and happiness. I hope to see you again some time! Love **Khumo Masege**.

Today we went to Refilwe. I haven't been there before so I didn't know what to expect. These kids don't have as much as we do yet they are the happiest people that I've ever seen. This trip to Refilwe made me appreciate a lot more in life. Playing with the babies made me realize how much work it takes. I would like to say that the women that work there with the kids are truly amazing! So thank you for this wonderful opportunity. From **Mercedes Delport**