



FAMSA IS TAKING ON THE HANDS PLEDGE PROJECT.

The Family and Marriage Society of South Africa (FAMSA) in Northwest are incorporating the hands pledge project: **“I will not use my hands or my words for hurting myself or others”** into their Violence Awareness Program (VAP) held at Primary Schools.

The hand pledge project was initiated in 1997 in Salem, Oregon, USA by the Founder/Executive Director of Hands & Words Are Not For Hurting Project, Ann S. Kelly. The Pledge is designed to help people of all ages to pay attention to the things they say and do to themselves and others that cause pain. It is also about paying attention to what others are saying and doing to us and asking for help if we are being hurt.

The Violence Awareness Program is already implemented in Primary Schools in the Northwest area that FAMSA service namely, Potchefstroom, Klerksdorp, Stilfontein, Orkney, Vryburg and Rustenburg. Violence and abuse are at epidemic proportions in our society. The Violence Awareness Program held in schools for grade 7's aim to show children alternative ways of dealing with their problems and not to use violent behavior learnt in the home. By incorporating the goal of the hand pledge project to end abuse and violence the cycle of violence can be broken and a step towards a violence free generation becomes a possibility.

The hands pledge symbols are an open (means STOP) purple hand that indicated all people in every community around the world. A red heart in the middle serves to represent when you hurt yourself or another person. Children will get the opportunity to take a pledge to not use their hands or their words for hurting themselves or others by writing their name on the red heart. We want to teach our children and community that anger is a feeling, violence is a choice. For more information on this project contact Ansonette van der Merwe, VAP Coordinator, Potchefstroom at 018 293 2272.

The grade 7's of the following schools in the Klerksdorp-Stilfontein area have already taken the pledge:

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