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| ****The Community of Practice is a multi-sectoral and inter-disciplinary collaboration between academic researchers, practitioners, governmental and non-governmental agencies and is supported by the National Research Foundation.********JOIN US FOR A SYMPOSIUM TO SHARE RESEARCH AND LESSONS LEARNT FROM A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE MODEL********TO********FAST-TRACK CHILD WELL-BEING OUTCOMES FOR EARLY GRADE LEARNERS IN OUR SCHOOLS********REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN AND ATTENDANCE IS FREE**** **Dear Colleagues and Partners**The South African government recently adopted proposals to reconfigure responsibilities for Early Childhood Development and care. The Department of Education will in future be the lead department in collaboration with the Departments of Social Development and Health. This move places child well-being for early grade learners at the top of the government’s agenda. A joined-up service delivery model geared to the child, the family, school and community is envisaged to ensure that children receive the care, support and services they need to learn and thrive. Innovative evidence-based solutions that integrate services across these key sectors at a school and community level are needed.The symposium will share lessons learnt from a Community of Practice (CoP) to overcome the fragmentation in service provision for early grade learners in schools in disadvantaged communities in Gauteng. The CoP tested and implemented an innovative digital tool to assess children in grades R and Grades one and two in several domains. This resulted in individually tailored interventions and in the tracking of their progress.This multi-disciplinary team approach involved teachers, social workers, nurses and school psychologists in the assessments and interventions. It aimed to address among other issues hunger, material deprivation, parental engagement in learning, psychosocial well-being, caregiver mental health and child health while also improving learning outcomes in maths and language in order to disrupt the cycles of disadvantage in South Africa. The CoP solutions align closely with national goals and the Sustainable Development Goals: poverty, hunger, health and education.This symposium is the culmination of a two-year CoP research and intervention study and a partnership between three research chairs at the University of Johannesburg and the Centre of Excellence in Human Development at the University of the Witwatersrand. The symposium will bring together researchers, practitioners, civil society organisations, government representatives and policymakers to interrogate what constitutes the most appropriate cross-sectoral interventions to step up child well-being outcomes in the early grades. We will share the findings from the research and lessons learnt of teachers, social workers and nurses working together and how community-level resources and parents may be mobilised to become more actively involved in their children’s learning.  The conference programme will include the following topics:* Findings of child well-being assessments of early grade learners in schools in disadvantaged communities during COVID-19
* The design and testing of a digital tool to assess children’s performance in maths and language development, child health and nutrition, child and caregiver mental health, poverty and hunger, access and use of community resources and learning difficulties
* Share lessons learnt from the delivery of joined-up school-family-community level interventions
* School level intervention of cash plus care programmes
* Mobilising parents/caregivers to be more actively involved in their children’s learning
* Lessons learnt from working across disciplines and social sectors
* Consider the potential for scaling up school level support and care services so that children may better learn and thrive.

To participate in this symposium, please register via this link '[REGISTRATION'](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fmail.eventsairmail.com%2Fls%2Fclick%3Fupn%3DMI-2FbpmzfT2hhXoqmqwj9O4P0nOoOionnaYVjPMno9RPDoIjgmBcHoj-2F42p7kQCSbvJP6O5-2FDerL-2BPL4Bz-2B1CVNynRH-2B5e5mrkUtsPLYADF8-3Db-Jj_Bb9CJ40G9gLfVljfrshGk4aDeaVo65gL-2BCFYqOTHPLF-2B65o8wRV2t6-2FAsv3stu8eTYqLzKwtVVstPTL24oJ3oF2RhZlvOu0GXXlQe0QAGwuwWDhUz3PWvXApW2C5J9u-2BDwGxZ-2BWzwy5FQdn5Q5m1wlbF-2BteXTLKeSa6njOZ5hzyRdlS4aCEEBvaAynO1gfKQoE2ULlKn5aqelCneO2tX-2FkVcEZnVlDiIYFYR8koamCPyqsXFx-2BTXRz-2Ffh94qDC-2FqKgPzySEio5IY3LU4HSnf-2FEeAoZBeXTucTu-2B29B773lEJT9yTXDPOlwsTcqDih-2FzqqF5qY1aqbFyk3e22kZZTQ5FxL7BvJ-2BHRdOhgXzIhprs-3D&data=05%7C01%7Cjadep%40uj.ac.za%7Cd7ce83871ac54dc4464508da447a5e6e%7Cfa785acd36ef41bc8a9489841327e045%7C1%7C0%7C637897589836608877%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C2000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=0i833HGD2d%2Bd%2FrJx%2ByRXfvsmYB2yREn2e9pn4Zk6ltA%3D&reserved=0). For registration enquiries, please contact the symposium secretariat at register@confsa.co.za. For enquires about the symposium, you may contact +27 (0) 12 349 2301.     We look forward to welcoming you at the symposium.Kind regardsA picture containing scissors, weapon, clipart  Description automatically generated **Prof Leila Patel**, DSI/NRF South African Research Chair: Welfare and Social Development, Centre for Social Development in Africa, University of Johannesburg.Lead investigator of the NRF supported study: Communities of Practice for Social Systems Strengthening to improved child well-being outcomes           **The symposium is co-hosted with: Prof Elizabeth Henning**, DSI/NRF South African Research Chair: Integrated Studies of Learning Language, Science and Mathematics in the primary school, Faculty of Education, University of Johannesburg. Co-investigator. **Prof Jace Pillay**, DSI/NRF South African Research Chair: Education and Care in Childhood, Faculty of Education, University of Johannesburg. Co-investigator. **Prof Shane Norris**, Director, DSI-NRF Centre of Excellence in Human Development, University of the Witwatersrand. Collaborating partner. **Prof Arnesh Telukdarie,** Professor of Digital Business and Research Chair, Johannesburg Business School University of Johannesburg. This symposium is sponsored by the NRF. |
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