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MEDIA RELEASE

The Johannesburg Roads Agency and City Power Join Together in Response to Mayibuye Tragedy

The combined municipal entities of the City of Johannesburg (JRA, City Power) jointly express our sympathies and support for the families of the children who were electrocuted whilst playing on a work site on the 23rd January 2012. While this unfortunate incident is something we all hope will never happen to anyone, all of our work sites are clearly barricaded and we do warn both motorists and pedestrian to take every precaution when passing by.

We would like to urge parents partner with us to protect our children, and not to allow young children out of their sight prevent them from playing near dangerous sites such as construction sites, so as to prevent future incidents of this nature. In direct response to the electrocution of children tragedy, which is currently under investigation, the City of Johannesburg through its municipal entities has formed a task team to assist the bereaved family and the family of the injured child as well to provide support and any other assistance the two families may need.

As a part of the City of Johannesburg safety and health policy, the family members are being provided access to resources necessary to deal with this tragedy. We will also assist the community by providing more safety education as well as provide the media with

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answers to inquiries and questions. It is also important that we all learn from such tragedies so as to ensure that the level of safety awareness improves among our children and communities. Together, with the media community leaders and parents we need to reinforce knowledge particularly what to do during emergency situations.

RESPONSE TO THIS TRAGEDY - LIKE FACETS ON A DIAMOND

Reading a News report on one daily newspaper recently, we were amazed at the array of different responses to the tragedy that had been reported on. There were responses of condemnation, sympathy, horror, empathy, bewilderment, and sadness, among many more.

I found it is normal for some people to want to blame others, whilst it is equally normal for others to shelve all thought of blame. These latter ones are incredulous regarding those who would blame an innocent party for any part in such tragedy.

Is any single response to a tragedy wrong? If we may answer, "Yes" to that we may quickly polarise away from the tragedy, itself. For we may be guilty of judging another's response and, suddenly, there is little room for supporting those most affected. Then, in the presence of bickering they are alone. But, responses of conflict are just as equally normal as any other response!

There are as many valid responses to tragedy as there are people who might develop such responses. Still, ours is not to judge, just to support if we can.

HOW DO WE MAKE SENSE OF SENSELESSNESS

When numbness has taken its part in people's lives, emotions prevailing harshly to the point of total immersion in a soul's sense of chaos, how might we position ourselves to make sense (even if that were possible) of the senselessness, in order to help?

1. Are we doing enough as parents to safeguard our children at all times?
2. Do we provide recreation spaces for our children...children are children they just want to play?
3. Have we lost our "Ubuntu" where a stranger will parent every child who happens to act improperly and provide guidance?

4. Whilst tragedies are often preventable, especially from the aspect of hindsight, our human nature dictates that human-caused tragedies have always happened and will always happen - to someone; they can and do, indeed, happen to us.

In closing the JRA would like to extend our heartfelt condolences to family of the child who passed on and speedy recovery to the surviving child.

Ends

Issued on behalf of the Johannesburg Roads Agency

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