

Jennifer Southgate – Curriculum Vitae

Certified HANDLE® Practitioner, BA, HED

Jennifer is the only certified HANDLE® (Holistic Approach to Neuro-Development and Learning Efficiency) Practitioner in South Africa who has completed the advanced HANDLE training and is affiliated with The HANDLE Institute, USA.

With over 16 years in education, Jennifer has dedicated her career to assisting children with learning and behaviour challenges. Her multifaceted experience covers therapy, training and teaching, and early child development, including:

- Over a decade of experience in individualised evaluation and tailored therapeutic plans for children and young adults, with delivery of programmes both nationally and internationally.
- Over 60 workshops, training and teaching events, together with numerous community information lectures, delivered nationally and internationally, including on behalf of the South African Departments of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training, and with HPCSA (Health Professions Council of South Africa) and SACE (South African Council of Educators) accreditation awarded to select courses.
- Founded the Mindstretch Preschool for mild to moderately challenged learners in 2014 with the aim of facilitating inclusive education. Previously founded Funda Fun, a movement-based extramural playgroup, in 2002.

EXPERIENCE

2004–Present • Founder and Director of Mindstretch, Cape Town

Jennifer works therapeutically with children and young adults presenting with learning and behaviour challenges, including ADD, ADHD, autism, Down syndrome, dyslexia and cerebral palsy, among others. She has a special interest in assisting children presenting with autism and autism spectrum disorders.

Selected Mindstretch programme highlights include:

2016: Launch of additional Intermediate Class at Mindstretch Preschool.

2015: Launch of Grade R class at Mindstretch Preschool.

- At year-end, all Grade R learners applying to schools offering mainstream Grade 1 curricula were accepted.

2014: Principal and Director of Mindstretch Preschool for children with mild to moderate learning challenges, including autism.

- Mindstretch Preschool was initiated in January 2014 with the objective of providing a nurturing environment for pre-schoolers with special learning needs, preparing to equip them for 'inclusive education'

2013: SACE-accredited educator's workshop on "Overcoming Barriers to Learning", with numerous additional seminars and workshops delivered for schools and educators, including Autism South Africa and SAGSA (South African Girls' Schools Association).

2013: Introduced Mindstretch to the Mauritian Ministry of Education; included delivering therapy to autistic learners in Mauritius.

2013: Initiated and implemented a support project for hearing impaired students at the King Sabata Dalindyebo FET (Further Education and Training) College, Eastern Cape.

2012: Trained and mentored over 60 nurses and carers at the Woodside Special Needs Centre, Cape Town.

2011: Designed, initiated and facilitated training for the Eden and Central Karoo Education District.

2010-2012: Delivered training for FET Colleges in the Eastern Cape, with a focus on understanding barriers to learning, cognitive screening and curriculum adaptation.

2010: Developed a "Cognitive Screening Tool" for application at FET Colleges; the Tool provides an accessible test to help guide new students in selecting appropriate vocational studies.

2009-2010: Presentation of multiple, tailored HANDLE seminars (HPCSA accredited) in all key South African provinces.

2009-2010: Extensive programme of work conceived and delivered for the Western Cape Education Department. A 2010 special initiative involved assisting Metropole South Education District in introducing HANDLE into all their full service schools.

2009-2010: Initiated and ran two charity initiatives, including assistance for children at the Agape School for cerebral palsy learners and the Alpha School for children with Autism, with dedicated follow-up over a 12-month period.

2008: Presented as the keynote speaker at the conference of Principals Association of South Africa (PASA).

2008: Delivered a HANDLE seminar to speech therapists in Mumbai, India.

2000–2004 • Founder and Director of Funda Fun, Johannesburg

- Funda¹ Fun was an extramural movement-based playgroup designed to stimulate learning through fun, interactive activities targeting gross and fine motor skills.

2001–2004 • Teacher (Grades 1–7) at the Department of Education, Johannesburg

(1999 • Career sabbatical to raise twin daughters)

1996–1998 • Director at Lifestyle Promotions cc, Durban

1992–1995 • Educator at Natal Heart Foundation, Durban

HIGHER EDUCATION

The HANDLE Institute, Oregon, USA

2004: Certified HANDLE® Practitioner – Advanced Level Certification

University of Kwazulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa

1991: Higher Education Diploma

University of Kwazulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa

1990: Bachelor of Art

(Brain Gym® school classroom "hands-on" training in 2012; Tiny Handz sign language training in 2015)

¹ Funda means 'Learn' in Zulu.