

Jennifer Southgate — Curriculum Vitae

Certified HANDLE® Practitioner, BA, HED

Jennifer is an Educator and Entrepreneur. She is founder and Principal of Mindstretch Preschool located in Pinelands, Cape Town.

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 (handle.org).

With over 20 years in education, Jennifer has dedicated her career to assisting children with learning and behaviour challenges. She is expert in early child development.

- Over a decade delivering tailored therapeutic plans for children and young adults, with delivery of programmes both nationally and internationally.
- Over 65 educational workshops, delivered both nationally and internationally. These include events for the South African Departments of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training, HPCSA (Health Professions Council of South Africa) and SACE (South African Council of Educators) accreditation awarded to select courses.
- Founded Mindstretch Preschool for mild to moderately challenged learners with the aim of facilitating inclusive education. Previously founded Funda Fun, a movement-based extramural playgroup.

EXPERIENCE

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

Jennifer has worked with children and young adults presenting with diverse learning and behaviour challenges and developmental disabilities. Her special interest is assisting children with autism spectrum disorders. She launched Mindstretch Preschool to help these children in 2014:

- Mindstretch Preschool provides a nurturing, therapeutic and educational environment for children with mild to moderate learning challenges, with provision for those on the autism spectrum. The tuition programme is individualised to the needs of each child. A range of classes serve different learners and ages in a needs-led manner. Visit www.mindstretch.co.za

A sub-selection of Mindstretch programme highlights:

2020: Launched the Mindstretch Remote Outreach Programme within three days of SA's Covid-19 lockdown: including individual check-in and four tailored activity sheets per week.

2019: Launched a Bridging Class for older learners.

2017: Launched an Assisted Learning Programme.

2016: Launched Mindstretch's second Grade RR Intermediate Class.

2015: Launched Grade R Remedial & Enhancement class.

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

2013: SACE-accredited educator's workshop on *Overcoming Barriers to Learning*, with many other seminars and workshops delivered, including for 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: 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 Woodside Special Needs Centre, Cape Town.

2011: Delivered training for the Eden and Central Karoo Education District.

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

2010: Developed a *Cognitive Screening Tool* for application at FET Colleges: an accessible test to help guide students in select appropriate vocational studies.

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

2009-2010: 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 to 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: Keynote speaker at the conference of Principals Association of South Africa (PASA). Also delivered HANDLE training in Mumbai, India.

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

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), 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

Other Training: Autism Western Cape training, Brain Gym®, Tiny Handz sign language, First Aid