

Biography of Lydia-Anne Plaatjies

My name is Lydia-Anne Plaatjies. I am a mother of 2 whose passion for the futures of young South Africans extends beyond my household. My advocacy and passion for the rights of children were born 35 years ago where I worked in the office of a social worker where people; and most of the time mothers, grandmothers, aunts, and foster care parents sharing their daily challenges with and about their children.

Starting in 1988, I worked as an Adult Educator, Trainer and ECD Curriculum Developer with *Grassroots Adult Education Trust* in Athlone, Cape Town (working in various parts of the Western Cape) and at *Grow Adult Education Trust* in Brixton, Johannesburg before moving to the SABC newsroom in 1999. I then spent 4 years as part of the *SABC News Research Team* wherein my main research focus were on social, educational, health and political issues. Here, I played an instrumental role in designing and training SABC journalists in the Computer Aided Journalism course. Thereafter I spent 6 years as a Show Producer of the SABC News, Morning Live show.

During my time at the SABC, I had undergone various in-house training programs as well as multi-media training at the University of Witwatersrand and with UNISA. I left the SABC to become a full-time Masters student at University of Witwatersrand and graduated in 2012 with a Masters of Arts in Journalism and Media Studies.

When I moved back to Cape town in 2013, I started my own company: *Active Citizenship: Executive Support Outcomes* wherein we primarily focused on networking people and services. During this period, I also tutored Adult Education and Training at the *University of Cape Town*, headed up the Television School at *AFDA* in Cape Town and provided on-the-job training for youth in live television production at *Cape Town TV*.

I have undergone advance training in social network platforms, been involved in Computer-aided journalism (database development) and trained on the development of MXIT applications, Diversity Dialogue and Photography. I have recently submitted my

PhD thesis which centered around issues concerning technological innovation in parenting guides. I hold expertise in the following areas:

- Adult Education
- Research
- Facilitation Teaching, Curriculum Development
- Early Childhood Development and Television Production
- Computer-aided research and research methods
- Education systems design and Project Design and Management
- Database management, spreadsheets, and statistical packages
- Government and Parliamentary systems and processes
- Online journalism and creative writing
- Lobbying and advocacy for rights of children; the girl-child and fight against gender-based violence
- Understanding and unpacking policies; implementation challenges; budgetary constraints
- Monitoring and evaluation of projects
- Project management
- Working with governments, communities, mothers and children;

Most notable career moments in the last 5 years:

- Developed an SMS curriculum for primary caregivers
- Presenting of conference papers locally at the *South African Association for Early Childhood Education (SARAECE) National Conference* and the *South African Education Research Associate (SAERA) Conference*.
- Presenting of conference papers at international conferences, namely: the *Department of Basic Education and UNICEF Conference on Play* as well as the *International Conference for Mobile Learning* held in Greece in 2019.
- Prepared a focussed study on the use of mass communication technologies to communicate messages to parents.
- Monitored and evaluated various children projects as a consultant.

With all of the above knowledge and experience I am prepared to roll-up my sleeves and work with everyone in the Western Cape in order to make sure that children are not only 'put first' but are given the necessary tools to break the barriers that face them. This requires developing projects from scratch, a skill I have consistently put to use. The combination of my expertise in media, communications and technology on the one hand and childhood development on the other, makes me a unique candidate equipped to tackle the issues that concern South African children today with the multi-dimensional insight they not only require but demand.