

HELDERBERG BABY SAVER



Creating the possibility for Miracles to happen

The baby boy was over a month old and had been well looked-after. He was in a clean, beige baby grow and had a dummy and a blanket. E.M.O. was dispatched to the scene and checked that the baby was fine to transport, then they took him to the Helderberg Hospital where all of his vitals were checked and he was found to be healthy.

His mother had obviously taken very good care of him and there is hope that she will come forward to Choices, the hospital, or Social Welfare for counselling and assistance.

"The Helderberg Baby Saver is an initiative that was inspired by Baby Amber – the baby that was found abandoned by a river in Somerset West in February last year", said Sandy Immelman, the project founder. Her friend and fellow Neighbourhood Watch member, Judith Cross, was the first person to respond to a call on the Neighbourhood Watch radio after this little girl was discovered by a vagrant's dog.

She wrapped her in a blanket she had in her car, wiped ants from her mouth and removed the umbilical cord from around the baby's neck while waiting for the ambulance that had been called. They named the baby Amber after their ambulance and took her to Helderberg Hospital.

"When there was a report of another abandoned baby the following week I knew I had to do something," said Immelman. She and Cross approached Choices to request permission to build the Saver into their offices and by August 2014, with the help of the community, the Helderberg Baby Saver was opened.


"The hardest part is getting the word out – if the women who need the Saver do not know that it exists or where to find it, then this whole exercise is pointless," commented Immelman.

The four voluntary responders (all of whom work for NPOs in the area) are immensely relieved that everything went according to plan with this first baby. "There have been a range of emotions – from relief to gratitude to distress when thinking about how hard this must have been for the mother," they said. "Mostly we are just grateful that she made this brave decision and that this little boy has been saved."

The baby boy will be kept in a place of safety until all the legal processes have been completed and he will then be placed into the foster/adoption procedure.

The team from Helderberg Baby Saver would like to appeal to all women who have crisis pregnancies to reach out for assistance. Choices is a very good option in the Helderberg region – and if, for some reason, they have not accessed assistance, to please use the Saver. It is situated on the right side of Choices, Schapenberg Road (opposite the Vergelegen Spar), Somerset West. Simply open the door, place the baby inside and shut the door. It will automatically lock and send the panic signal – so that the baby will be attended to within 10 minutes and taken to hospital for care. Re update for the Saver - on Friday 9th October Wandisa Adoption Agency collected the baby from Helderberg Hospital and placed him with a kanga mom. We have named him (for our purposes only) Ayabonga, which means "They are grateful". Ayabonga will be cared for while the processes are completed and placed into foster/adoption should his mother not come forward to claim him. This is what happened to Baby Amber last year - instead of perishing alone on a river bank, she was cared for and then adopted by a family and is now living in Europe.

For more information please see www.babysaver.co.za.



RAPE CRISIS HELDERBERG

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