



Press Release – Tsogo Sun Gaming – 15/05/2019

### **Silverstar gives kids a nutritional head start**

South Africa's burden of malnutrition and stunting among under-fives needs to be addressed by both the private and public sector, according to the Global Nutrition Report released in November 2018, which reported that while stunting in under-fives had dropped globally from 32.6% in 2000 to 22.2% in 2017, South Africa's rate is 27.4%. The report states, "Suboptimal diets are a major risk factor of malnutrition, disease, disability and death globally. Governments and business need to implement a holistic package of actions to ensure food systems and food environments are delivering healthy diets that are affordable, accessible and desirable for all."

This reality and a commitment to the local community motivated Silverstar Casino (<https://www.tsogosun.com/silverstar-casino>) to launch a three-year nutritional supplement programme that will impact about 860 Munsieville and Kagiso toddlers and pre-schoolers in 14 ECD centres and Grade R kids from three primary schools.

Silverstar is investing more than R1,4 million in the programme, which is being run by HeadStart Kids, an NPO that works with stakeholders to meet the nutritional and health needs of preschool children from low-income families.

The four-part programme entails:

- Monitoring the physical (weight and height) and brain (head circumference) growth of each child every three to six months
- A daily nutritional supplement of Nutrilite 'Little Bits', a micronutrient supplement developed by Amway South Africa, which provides 15 essential vitamins and minerals for proper growth and development, and when eaten daily with food, can help improve a child's health
- Deworming every six months to ensure that a worm infestation is not 'feeding' off a child's nutritional intake
- Annual haemoglobin monitoring to detect low iron levels and ensure the child is getting sufficient oxygen supply to the brain

Adele Wilson, Silverstar's CSI Manager, explains, "As Silverstar is increasingly involved in community projects in schools in Mogale City, we have become more aware of the reality of malnutrition. If children don't receive essential nutrients in the first five years of their lives, the opportunity for



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optimal brain and body development can be lost for their lifetime. Partnering with HeadStart Kids in this health and nutritional programme in our area will, we believe, make a difference in the children's lives, in their families' lives, and more widely in their community as they grow up to be productive and healthy adults." Wilson adds that Silverstar's involvement does not begin and end with funding, and also entails resources as needed and available, and staff volunteering.

A 1-gram packs of Nutrilite 'Little Bits' is mixed into any food that the children are fed every day. The product is designed to have no taste or texture to ensure it is accepted by children from any culture. The 'Little Bits' aligns with the World Health Organization (WHO) recommendations for children from six months to five years old. According to WHO, nutrition is fundamental for good health and development in the early years of life, and without the right amount of micronutrients, children may become ill or have delayed mental and motor development that could have enduring adverse effects beyond childhood.

Mogale City Executive Mayor, Cllr Patrick Naga Lipudi, welcomed the initiative and called on all ECDs in the area to do everything possible to look after the programme. "Government alone will not be able to provide every solution needed to fix the malnutrition problems of our society. We need the private sector to take part, and Silverstar Casino has proved itself as our social activist partner in education and the promotion of development in our City. Every little bit of support must be treasured and taken care of by our people."

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