



# WAVES FOR CHANGE

A N N U A L  
R E P O R T



# What a 2017!

We began the year with two sites in Cape Town, reaching over 250 children per week. We'd completed a feasibility study exploring what surf therapy could change, and identified the parts of a surf therapy programme that created these changes. And using this learning, we developed a strategy with Ashoka and McKinsey to grow W4C and the surf therapy sector.

It's now March 2018. It's surreal to look back and see how far we've come in 12 short months! Today we operate five surf therapy sites along the SA coastline reaching over 1,000 children per week! We also have a W4C site running in Liberia and a partnership programme in Somalia.

We've brought together the world's leading surf therapy practitioners to co-found the International Surf Therapy Organization, collaborating on research, sharing best practice and connecting leaders across the global surf therapy community. So we can all grow, together!

A year that started in Monaco with a Laureus Award ran away with a wonderful life of its own. Our team is full of new faces who have brought fresh ideas and experience where it's most needed. We have brand new sites in a host of locations bursting with energy and ambition. In December 2017, our whole organisation met to set our Vision 2020...it's BIG!

2017 was a wonderful year. But it feels like we're just getting started. Enjoy the read, thank you for being with us!

- Tim Conibear





# Surf Therapy for all

In South Africa there are less than 2 mental health professionals for every 100,000 people...

# 75%

OF PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH ILLNESS  
DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO  
MENTAL HEALTH CARE

In 2017 W4C wanted to improve access to surf therapy...for everyone!



# More Kids More Locations

From an informal group of 15 children attending surf lessons occasionally in 2011, to an average of 537 children receiving weekly evidence-based surf therapy sessions in 2017!

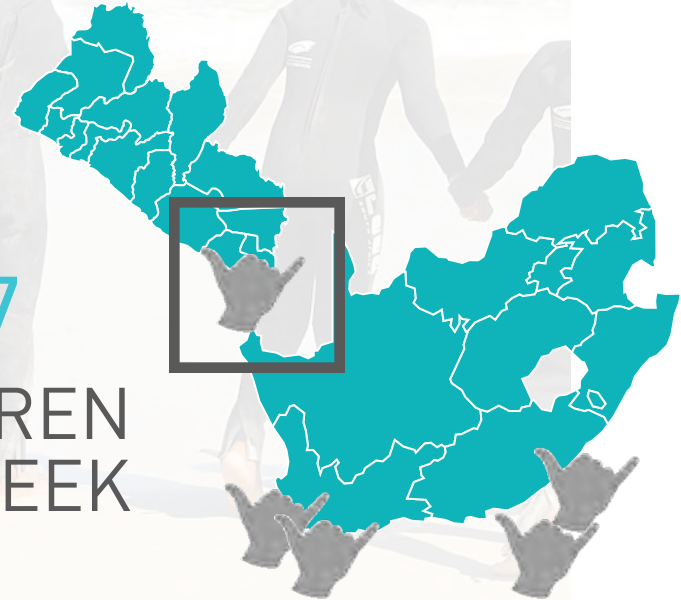
## FIVE SITES

In 2017, W4C boasted five flagship sites: Muizenberg, Khayelitsha, Port Elizabeth and East London with our fifth site operating successfully in Harper, Liberia.

W4C 2011 - 2017 Growth



■ Participant Numbers





# Making Waves With Autism

W4C successfully piloted surf therapy with a group of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) at our Khayelitsha Site. As evidenced in a published internal study, short term outcomes included:

- 👉 Increased confidence
- 👉 Improved peer relationships
- 👉 Improved social interaction
- 👉 Increased trust
- 👉 Increased communication

\*W4C is now scaling its work with autistic learners across all sites in 2018.

# Female Participation

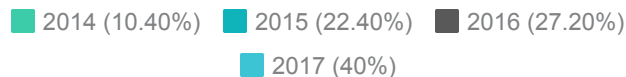
There are many barriers for females to access the ocean.

Increased understanding of female participants has been a key W4C goal during 2017 and going into 2018.

W4C are working with USAID and Making Cents International to train mentors to be gender-responsive and offer surf therapy in a way that supports and develops both female and male children.



## Growth in Female Participation





# More Awards



## LAUREUS SPORT FOR GOOD

Presented by HRH Princess Charlene of Monaco, W4C received the Laureus Sport for Good Award for the effective use of sport to overcome disadvantage.

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## IMPUMELELO SOCIAL INNOVATIONS

W4C received the Impumelelo Social Innovations Award for exceptional innovation in youth development across South Africa.

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## YOUTH MINISTERIAL AWARD

W4C was awarded the WCG DSD's Silver Youth Ministerial Award for excellent practice in creating spaces for identity and belonging.

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# Social Media Highlights



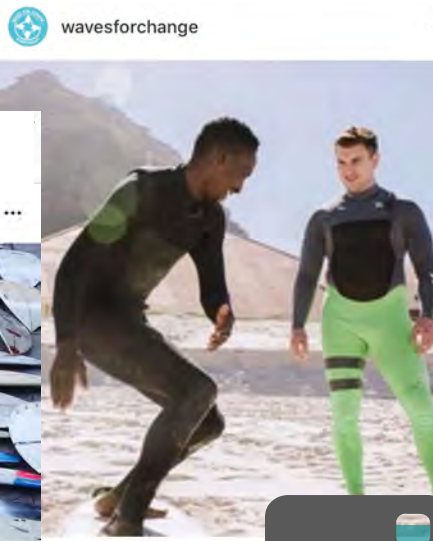
2017 HIGHLIGHTS



View Insights  
Liked by mamma\_afrika, b0ngles wavesforchange These three incr



8,738



View Insights Promote  
Liked by wsl, mamma\_afrika and 148 others wavesforchange Wishing good waves to our friend

6,240



View Insights Promote  
Liked by seabond, allongboard and 388 others wavesforchange What dreams are made of! 700 surf

# 2017 - A Year in Surf Therapy

The W4C surf therapy programme consists of daily, evidence-based surf therapy courses, facilitated by trained community-based mentors, for groups of vulnerable and differently-abled children who attend over a 12 month period.

Following a 12 month surf therapy course, participants graduate to W4C Surf Clubs. Weekend Surf Clubs open doors to new opportunities for inclusion and employment.

What surf therapy looked like in 2017:

300

DAYS

32

SURF  
MENTORS

277

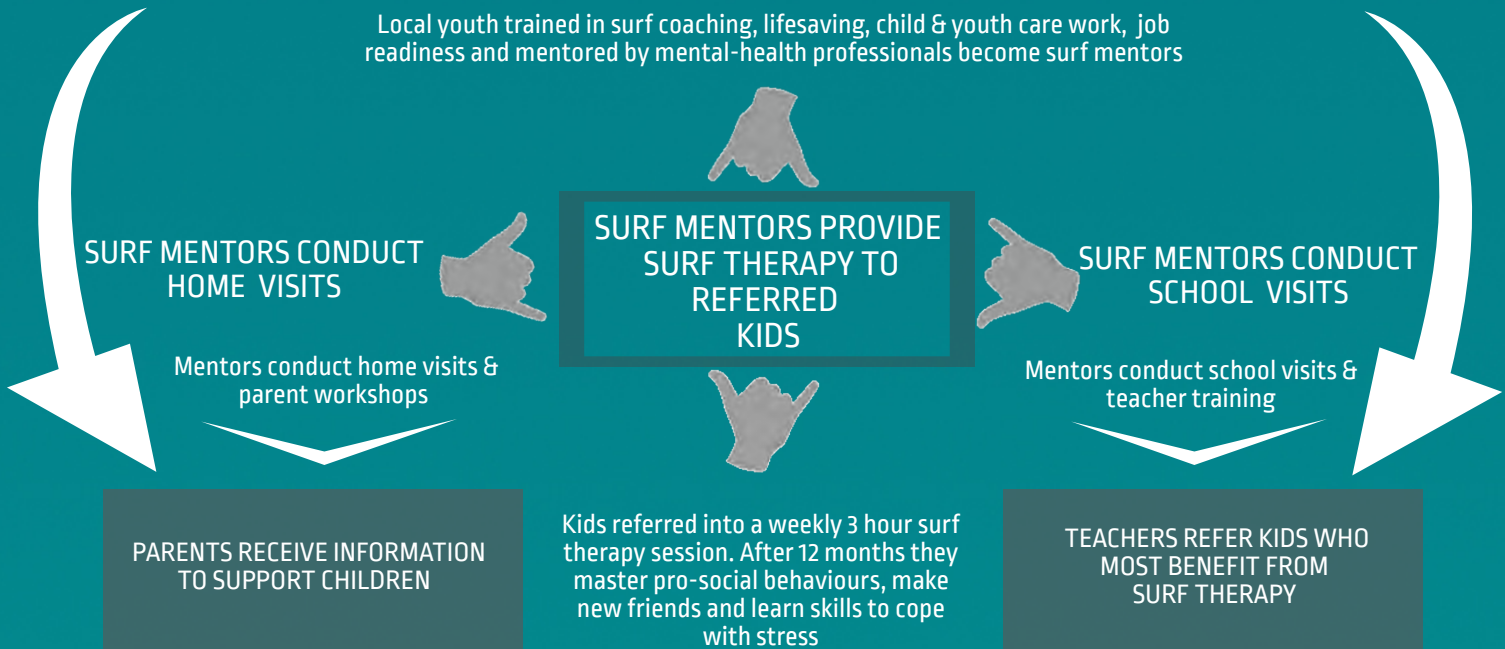
GRADUATES

# Community Owned Surf Therapy



## CARING ADULTS

Local youth trained in surf coaching, lifesaving, child & youth care work, job readiness and mentored by mental-health professionals become surf mentors



# Community Outreach

W4C surf mentors work closely with local communities

W4C surf mentors create networks with schools and other community-based organisations.

Mentors conduct home visits and interact regularly with the key caregivers in the children's lives to ensure a holistic approach.

Improved relationships with the communities allow W4C to operate in sometimes violent and unstable areas.

Outreach allows W4C to build relationships, share ideas, get feedback from teachers and parents/caregivers, and ensure children who are referred to the W4C surf therapy programme are those that would benefit most.



In 2017 mentors conducted:

400

HOME VISITS

100

SCHOOL VISITS

20

SCHOOLS

# Baseline 2017

W4C works with young people who have been exposed to repeat adverse childhood events (ACES), such as abuse, neglect and violence. They often lack supportive adults and can adopt challenging behaviour patterns; which reduce their chances to live positive lives.

W4C 2017 child participant's exposure to adverse childhood events:

- 70% have been hurt by an adult in their house
- 59% have witnessed someone being shot
- 57% have had someone in their household die
- 35% do not have what they need for school
- 30% have had someone in their house go to prison
- 19% live with someone that got drunk
- 16% do not have enough food at home
- 12% live with someone who used drugs

CHILDREN  
EXPOSED TO  
FOUR OR MORE  
ACES ARE FIVE  
TIMES MORE  
LIKELY TO BE  
DEPRESSED  
AND TWELVE  
TIMES MORE  
LIKELY TO BE  
SUICIDAL

# W4C Surf Therapy

## Courses

W4C courses run daily in the mornings and afternoons throughout the year.

Children attend a weekly class where a unique curriculum helps them master behaviours proven to increase resilience to trauma, and cope with stress.

Four years of research and development mean that every time a child comes to the beach with W4C, they leave having learnt a new skill to deal with stress.



# Teachable Moments

The W4C curriculum is made up of a course of teachable moments that reinforce coping skills and positive behaviour. Examples include:

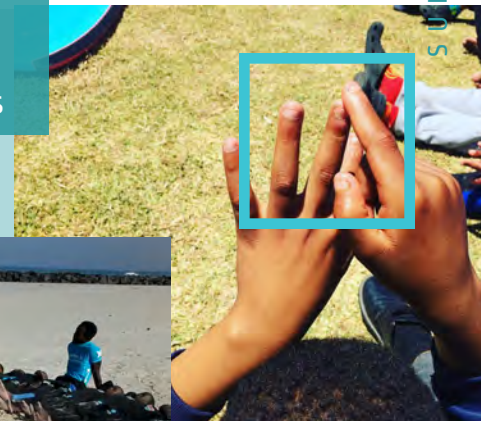


## IMMERSION

encourages children to listen to each other and respect feelings

## POWERHAND

teaches children how to calm down and reflect on strengths



## MEDITATION

helps children identify and deal with emotions, and supports a sense of belonging



## PAIRS SURFING

builds trust and promotes sharing



# What the Children Say...

In 2017, 537 children, from five W4C  
flagship sites said:

97% felt happier

93% felt more confident

92% felt fitter and  
healthier

90% increased school  
performance

87% improved coping skills,  
including calming down

85% more people to trust  
and talk to

84% are proud of  
themselves



# Training Local Surf Mentors



“You come to heal the children, and end up healing yourself.” - W4C mentor

1:30,000

The ratio of social workers to children in South Africa

millions of children are left to cope with adversities on their own

# Surf Mentor Development

W4C mentors are given two year training contracts, during which they ensure consistent programme delivery, whilst also improving local child-care infrastructure. Skills development increases job readiness of mentors, enabling them to find work opportunities post W4C training.



Nationally accredited training to work on beaches and deliver safe surf lessons including: surf instructor qualifications, lifesaving qualifications, and first aid. Training to facilitate group discussions and work with vulnerable youth.



W4C works with local partners to provide apprenticeship opportunities and work experience.



Weekly debriefs with psychologists. Mentors learn to process personal trauma and improve resilience.

# Surf Mentor Outcomes



"My coach makes me laugh. When I am upset I can talk to him. He is also a good surfer, I feel safe when we go in the water"  
- W4C participant

QUALIFICATIONS ACHIEVED BY W4C MENTORS IN 2017:



Child & Youth Care



First Aid



Life Saving



Surf Coach



Computer Skills

# What the Mentors say...

92% increased skills or  
qualifications to work with  
children

88% increased work  
readiness and  
professionalism

72% increased psychological  
well-being

56% improved financial  
stability



In Dec 2017 W4C surf mentors from around SA met to establish our...

# VISION 2020!

VISION 2020

2,565 vulnerable and differently-abled children attending W4C surf therapy per week

50% of total intake to be female

Increase staff capacity & referral networks to run more sessions so more children can attend

Execute one annual internal and one annual external research project to increase the evidence base for surf therapy

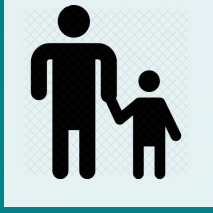
Work with our stakeholders to improve awareness of surf therapy and its associated benefits, increasing investment and access

# How Surf Therapy

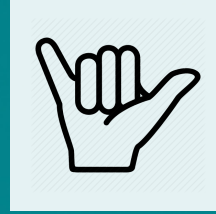
## Works



Young people repeatedly exposed to stress from adverse experiences, are at increased risk of mental & physical health challenges, affecting learning, behaviour & health outcomes.



Waves for Change connects vulnerable/ differently-abled youth to caring adults, a safe space, opportunities to master a challenging activity, and learn skills to cope with stress.



Vulnerable and differently-abled youth experience a sense of belonging, improved mental wellbeing and confidence, enabling them to make positive life choices.

# Thank you to W4C Partners & Supporters...



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# Thank You!

Follow our journey in  
2018...  
it's going to be  
**HUGE!**

@WAVESFORCHANGE  
#Surftherapy

IMAGES: @TAOFARREN @NICBOTHMA