

Founded July 1999



**Door of Hope**  
*Every child matters.*

# Presenter

## Nadene Grabham

Operations Director

Door of Hope Children's Mission

South Africa

# Our Country

## South Africa

**Population:** 56,7 Million

**Races:** Black, White, Colored, Asian/Indian

**Religion:** Christian, Ancestral & Traditional African beliefs, Muslim

**Class:** Highest disparity between rich & poor in the world



# Our Country

## South Africa

**South Africa has one of the highest rates of infant abandonment in the world**



# Our Country

## FACT SHEET on child abandonment

- Approximately **300** children are abandoned **every month** but this figure only includes the **survivors**. The total number of abandonment is much higher
- In Johannesburg, for every abandoned child found alive, **two** are found **dead**
- **65%** of abandoned children are new-born babies,
- **90%** are under 1 year old

# Our Country

## FACT SHEET on child abandonment

- Many abandoned babies are never found
- Many abandoned babies are failed attempted abortions
- Abandonment is not listed as a violent crime in South Africa
- Safe abandonment is illegal - meaning our BabyBox operates illegally

# Our Country

## Main reasons for child abandonment

- Poverty
- Unemployment
- Breakdown of family
- HIV/Aids
- Cultural beliefs
- Rape, incest
- Blessers or Sugar daddies
- Abandonment of the mother by the child's father
- Failed attempted abortions
- Illegal immigrants
- Legal age for abortion is 12, legal age for placing baby for adoption is 18
- Ignorance of sex and conception

# Our History

- Door of Hope started in 1999
- From the Berea Baptist Mission Church.
- Pastor Cheryl Allen discovered many babies were being abandoned each month in unsafe locations.
- She believed many mothers would act differently if they had a safe alternative.



# Our History

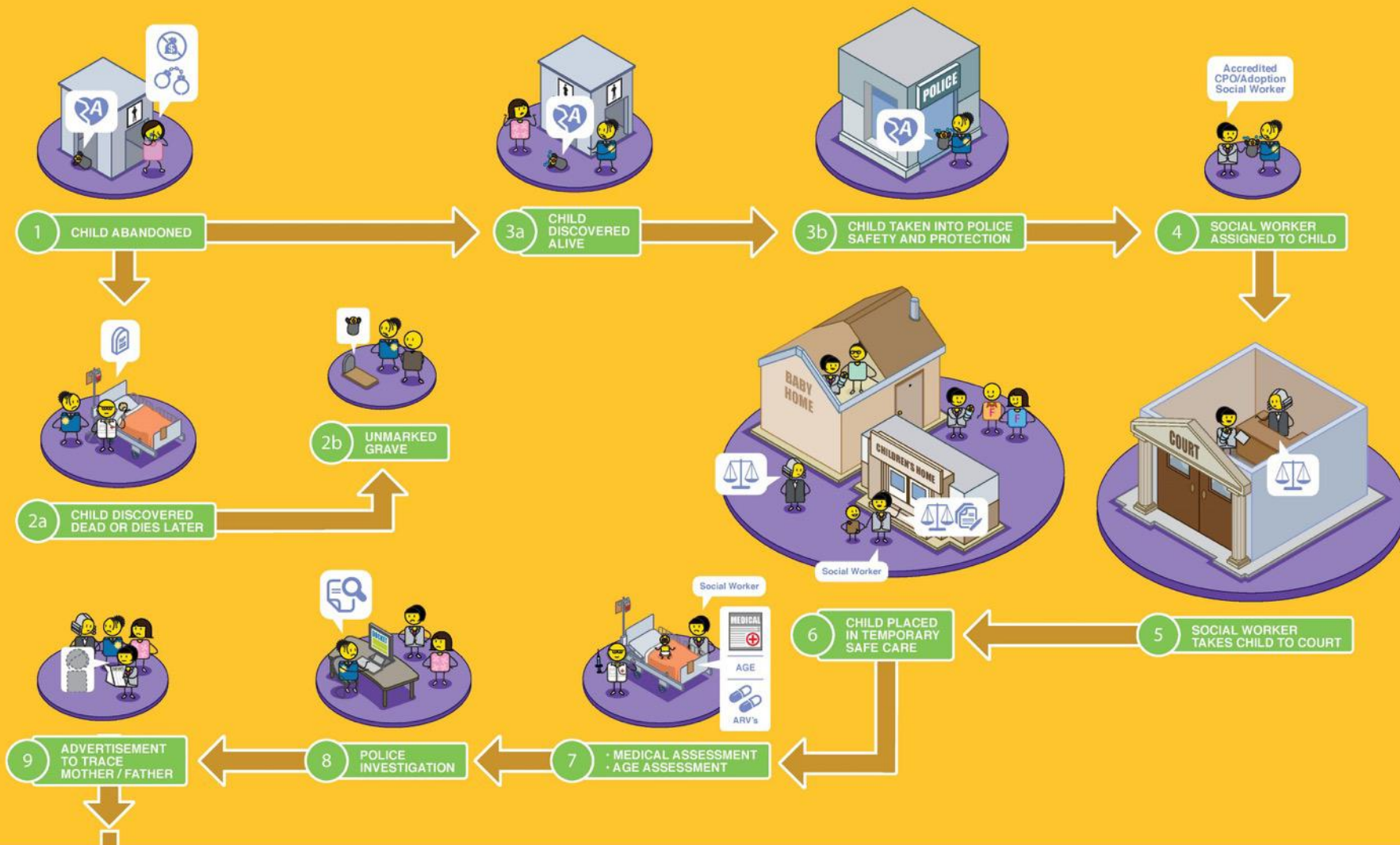
- The church made a hole in their wall and a 'Baby Box' was installed.
- Care workers on duty receive an electronic signal alerting them.

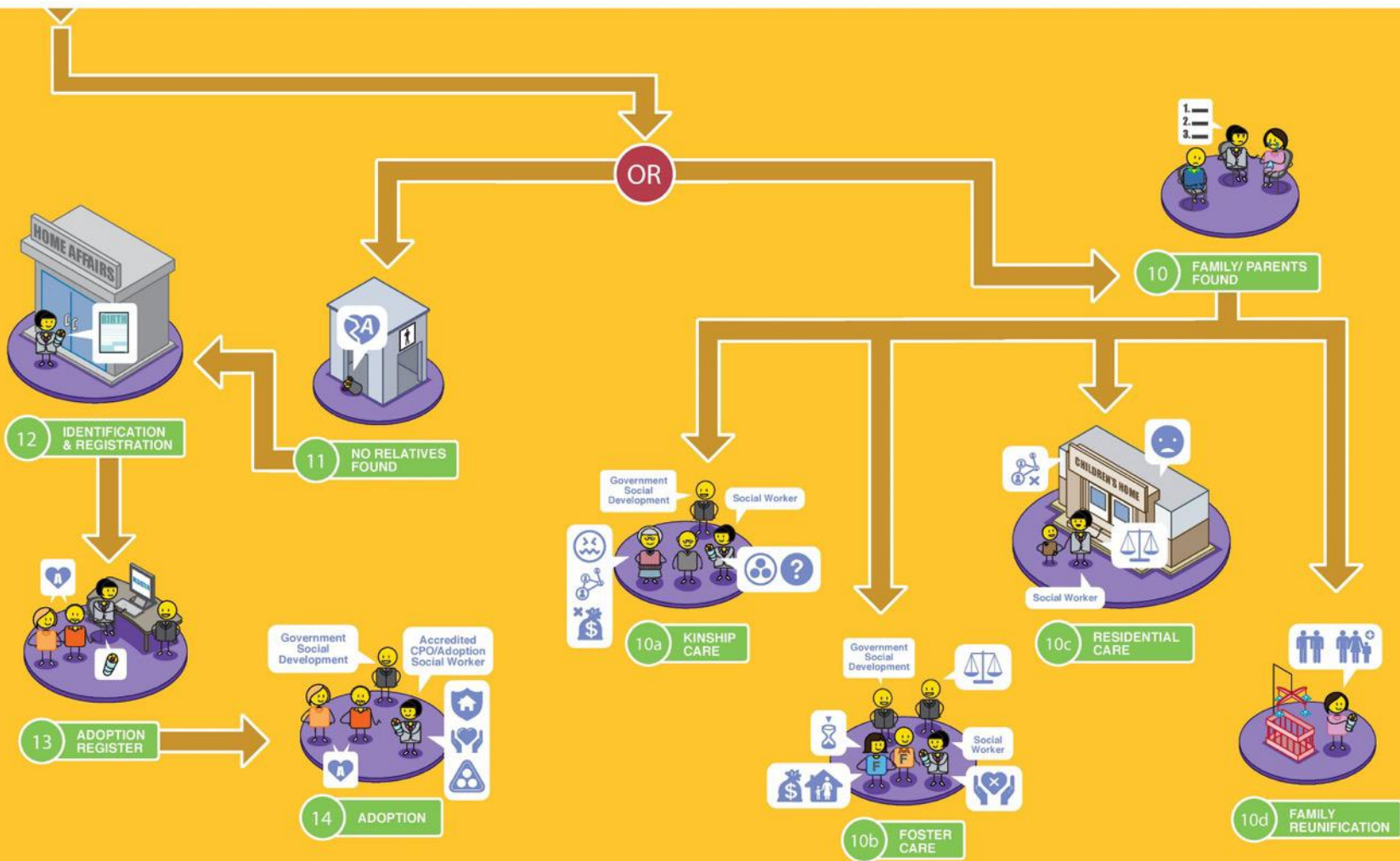
# Our History

- News spread and other babies are brought by their **mothers**
- Others come via:
  - The **Police**
  - **Community** members
  - **Hospitals** or **Clinics**.

# CHILD PROTECTION

## Statutory Intervention: Child Abandonment



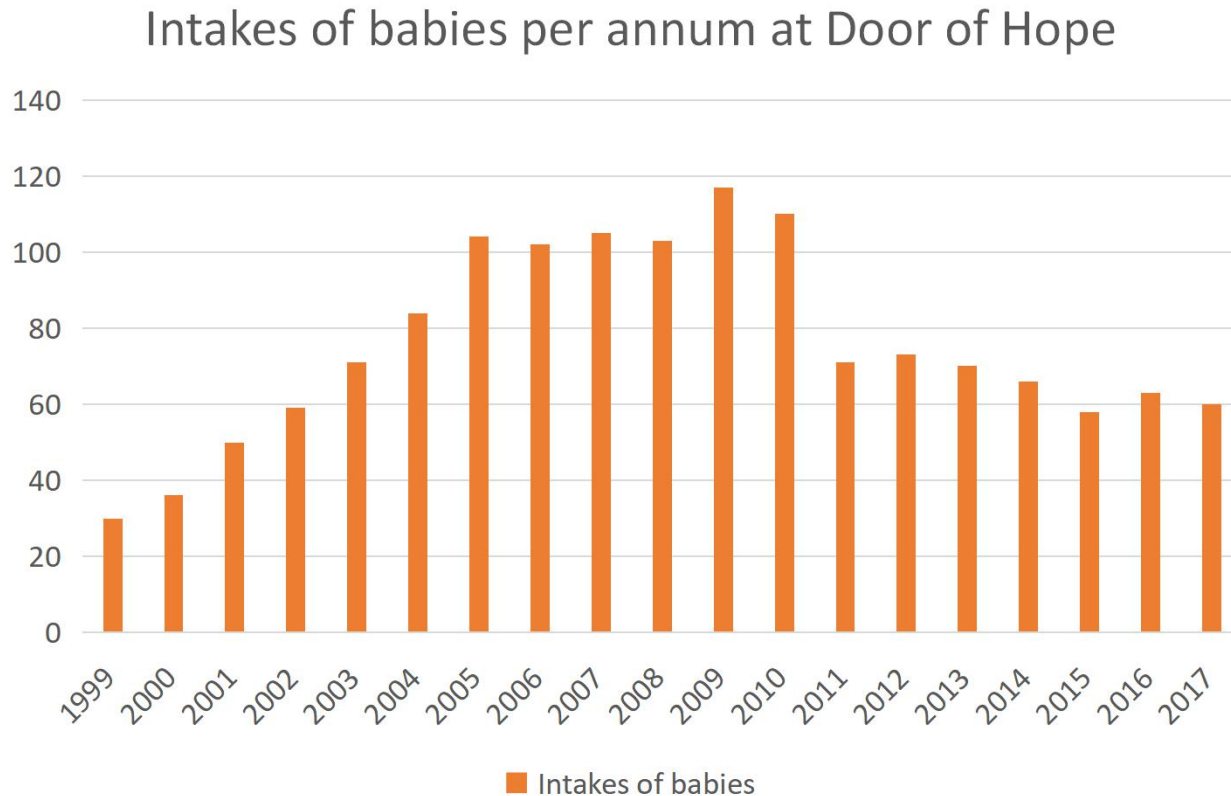


Abandoned	Legal Process	Stress	Counselling	Limited / No Bonding / Attachment	Family Reunification	ARV's	Support & Care	Biological Parents	Adoptive Parents	Adoption Social Worker	Police	Doctor
Death	Adoption	Financial Considerations	Role Confusion	Legal Document	Jail	Foster Care Grant	Stable Home	Foster Parents	Government Official	Child	Grandparents	Presiding Officer / Judge
Investigate / Report	Family Belonging	Cultural Roots	Temporary	Neglected & Rejected	Poverty	Ancestral Disconnection						



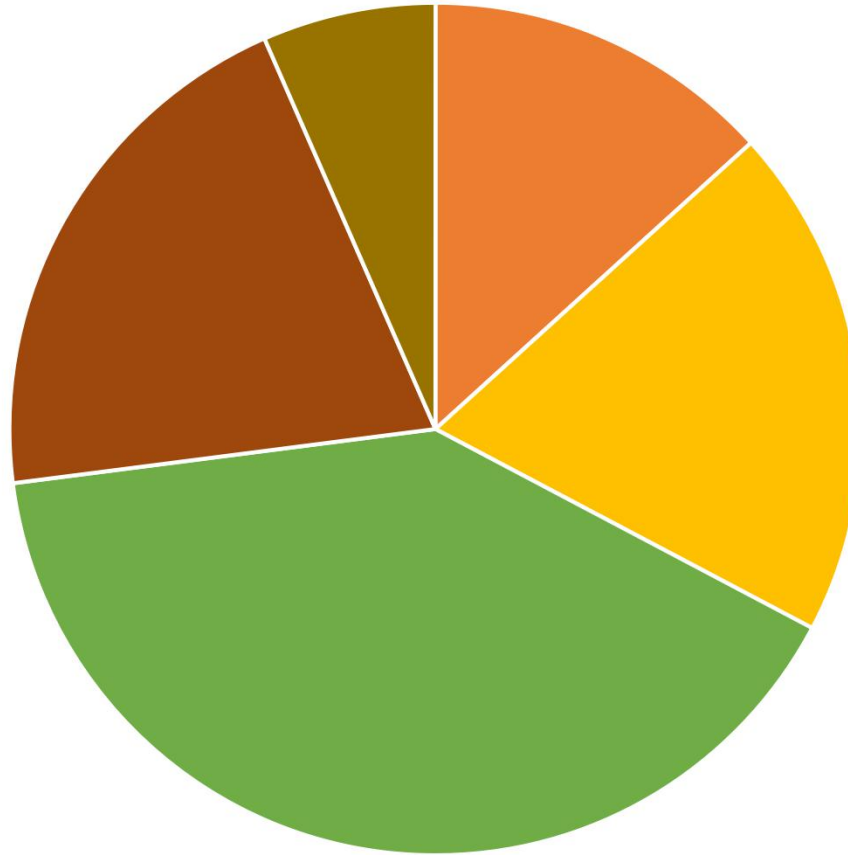
# Our Numbers

Door of Hope has taken in over 1 600 babies since 1999.



# Our Numbers

## Means of Intakes



\*Other: Child Protection organisations, Non Profit organisations, Citizens, Churches etc.

# Other Homes with Baby Boxes

- **Eastern Cape**
  - Healthy Moms and Babies Clinic (est 2009 )
- **Kwa Zulu Natal**
  - Fairhaven Baby Home (est 2012)
  - Open Arms (est 2016)
- **Gauteng Johannesburg**
  - Door of Hope Children's Mission (1999) [197 babies](#)
  - Impact Africa 3 boxes (2012) [4 babies](#)
  - Hope Ithemba (2012)
  - Open Arms of Hope ( 2012)
  - Lifehouse
- **Western Cape**
  - Hope 4 Babies (2014) [2 babies](#)
  - Helderberg Baby Saver ( 2014) [2 babies](#)

# Challenges in South Africa

Safe abandonment is illegal meaning all Baby Boxes operate illegally.

We need a system that enables mothers to relinquish their babies safely and legally and be able to stay anonymous if they so wish.



# Negatives of Baby Boxes

- **Fathers are left without rights of their children (most fathers of abandoned babies do not want any involvement in the baby's life)**
- **If a mother leaves her baby in a baby box, she can be arrested and put in jail**
- **The child's right to an identity and to know their origin is taken away**

# Positives of Baby Boxes

- To save the **lives** of children who would otherwise end up being abandoned in unsafe locations
- The child has the right to **LIFE**.  
This positive surely surpasses ALL the negatives
- Protects the **lives** of unwanted new-borns

**BABY BOX = LIFE**

# Hopes for the Future

Sadly...

South African legislation is 'reactive'.

- It deals with the issue of child abandonment and the consequences that the mother will face.

South African legislation is not 'preventative'

- It does not enact legislation that will contribute towards solutions

# Hopes for the Future

## The Good News is:

- Many child activists are working hard to get Baby Boxes made legal
- Many attorneys are working on the development of 'anonymous birth law'

Legalising baby boxes and implementing Safe Haven and Anonymous birth laws

will allow women an alternative other than abortion or infant murder

**The right to life far outweighs the right to an identity.**

**'It is better to have a baby delivered  
safely to a designated provider  
with no family or medical history  
than it is to find this same baby  
discarded in the trash'**

# Success Stories

- Georgina was our very first Baby
- She arrived in August 1999
  
- She was extremely malnourished and we thought she had brain damage
- Georgina was adopted to the USA

# Success Stories

- Georgina excelled academically
- Her passion is music
- She now lives and studies music ( Classical and Jazz) in North Carolina
- Georgina came back to South Africa in 2016 to volunteer at our Baby House

# Success Stories

Door of Hope believe  
**Every Child Matters**

And so we will continue to  
save as many children as  
we can.

Children like **Georgina**



# HOPE

## Babies through the Baby Box

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>
1999	8
2000	10
2001	14
2002	8
2003	5
2004	5
2005	5
2006	17
2007	8
2008	14
2009	15
2010	13
2011	8
2012	8
2014	11
2015	10
2016	13
2017	12
2018	4

In conclusion I would like to add that in South Africa, too many babies are born without hope. People give up on them. The world is a dark place for them. They appear hopeless. That is where we step in. We restore hope. We are a place of **HOPE**.



**Door of Hope**  
*Every child matters.*