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DUKE UNIVERSITY DOCUMENTARY FELLOW DEVELOPS MODEL HANDBOOK FOR CHILDREN LIVING WITH HIV IN SOUTH AFRICA

In 2004 Duke University graduate Sarah Leeper, a Lewis Hine Documentary Fellow of the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke, traveled to South Africa to work with the Children's Rights Centre in Durban. Committed to establishing a sustainable children's rights culture in the context of U.N. human rights principles, the CRC monitors conditions and provides support for women and children; raises awareness through exhibits, publications, trainings, and other activities; and engages in advocacy initiatives.

Early during Leeper's two-year stint with CRC, she identified a lack of materials targeted at children living with HIV. According to the South African Department of Health, 30 percent of pregnant women were living with HIV in 2005. The 2005 South African National Study showed that 11 percent of *all* South Africans over two were infected with HIV.

To address this need, Leeper began to travel to HIV/AIDS treatment sites across the country, where she worked with children, families, and health care professionals to document in photographs and words their stories of living "positively." These narratives and images were compiled into a handbook for children that addresses both medical and psychosocial aspects of the illness in age-appropriate ways. Topics include disease progression, adherence, understanding laboratory values, dealing with stigma and discrimination, and disclosure.

My Living Positively Handbook is a full-color interactive booklet for children, about living positively and participating actively in the medical management of their illness. It is part of *The Children Living Positively Series*, published by the Children's Rights Centre in South Africa in 2007. The books will be distributed free of charge to South African children living with HIV via clinics and other organizations. Two international organizations are also considering the use and distribution of this model handbook in their HIV programs.

These publications are available in English, Xhosa, and Zulu. They are also available electronically on the Children's Rights Centre website under "Publications" (<http://www.childrensrightscentre.co.za/>). The English electronic version of Leeper's publication is available on the Center for Documentary Studies website (<http://cds.aas.duke.edu/hine/leeper.html>).

“Sarah Leeper lived for two years in South Africa and immersed herself in the lives of children and communities to create her extraordinary new publication, the *My Living Positively Handbook*,” says Alex Harris, founder and creative director of the Hine Fellows Program and a professor at Duke University. “Leeper has produced an interactive book for children affected by HIV, a publication full of stories and art that should also be read by parents and medical practitioners, studied and emulated by anyone who wants to know how to speak to children about illness and to engage them in the fight against HIV/AIDS.”

The Lewis Hine Documentary Fellows Program is a project of the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University. Each year, Hine Fellows are sent to placements domestically and abroad to work with local organizations to document humanitarian issues over the course of ten months. They then return to work with documentarians at CDS to further develop their projects.

The Lewis Hine Documentary Fellows Program is supported by the Bernard van Leer Foundation, the Philanthropic Initiative, and the Jessica Jennifer Cohen Foundation. Fellows are selected each spring from a competitive pool of graduates of Duke University and of the Continuing Studies Certificate Program at the Center for Documentary Studies.