ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The success of this study was undoubtedly ensured by the support of a lot of people, many of whom I would like to acknowledge in the following pages.

Special thanks go to my supervisors, Prof. Leslie Swartz from the University of Stellenbosch, who carefully secured the theoretical and ethical grounds for the study, and Prof. Dieter Kleiber from the Freie Universität in Berlin, who safeguarded the completion of this thesis. I would also like to express my gratitude to Prof. Gudrun Ehlert from the University of Applied Sciences in Mittweida and Prof. Sulina Green from the University of Stellenbosch, both of whom supported the purpose of my study right from the beginning. Dr Yalew Endawoke from the University of Addis Ababa and Dr Fred Mengering from the Technische Universität Berlin, who became valuable sources of fruitful discussions on the design of research instruments and statistical measurements, were instrumental in composing specific columns in this study and were always patient. All these researchers have always calmly provided me with advice and had a great impact not only on my thesis but also on my understanding of being a researcher.

I would also like to name some wonderful women working in the administration centres of foundations and universities who supported this study throughout its duration: Erika Thieme and Ursula Schlupeck from the University of Applied Sciences in Mittweida, Jane Moros and Helga Islam from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), and the International Office team, specifically Dorothy Stevens, at the University of Stellenbosch. Special gratitude goes to the team of women from the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, who facilitated not only the financial basis of this study, but also the grounds for a visit of Prof. Leslie Swartz to Germany so that he could participate in my examination process in November 2006.

A person who expressed great trust in my skills and character was Dr Peter Stobinski, Director of the Solidaritätsdienst-international e.V., which supports the Child Mind Project financially.

I would also like to thank the following people for their support, guidance and comments on my thesis during the long process of evaluating the programme in the field and writing up the results: Thuso Kewana Ceo, for his advice on African culture and community ethics; Songo Fipaza, for spending so much of his time doing the field trips with me; Yeki Mosomothane, for his work on community support and his often direct talks on ethics and the contents of such a programme; Ndudu Ndlebe, for her patience in discussing health purposes in the community with me and for carrying out a health workshop at the community clinic; and Mzwandile Mgabadeli, who always did his best to manage and resolve infrastructural barriers of the project within the school setting.

Then, I would like to name Brandon Ruth and Joy Wilson from Joy for Life, who were undoubtedly my spiritual leaders in South African life and signposts in times of disorientation,

and reminded me that I have to enjoy my young adult life. S. Gertrude Gedze, a Xhosa lady, and Anne Curnow, an Afrikaans lady, both being representative of the old and new South Africa, supported me in a similar way and always had a warm welcome for me as a visitor to their loved country when I needed it most.

People who have always been a tonic of humanism and have to be honoured in this acknowledgement are my friends Alexandra Baer, Heidi Lohmeier, Katrin Morgeneyer, Sebastian Dathe and Jacqueline Sidi-Boumedien. My friend Vera Dittmar holds a special position in this group of people. She has always been the best critic of my work, but also the first emotional pillar when I stumbled, and therefore had a great impact on the success of this work.

I would also like to express my greatest thanks to Britta Hofmann, Dr Amanda Lourens and Franci Vosloo, who always maintained a holistic view while editing my thesis and released me from more than one worry.

During the course of the study the team members of the research and project team became much more than colleagues – they became the Child Mind 'feste'. First of all I would like to thank Christine Buchinger and Christina Otto, who volunteered as research assistants. They always kept in mind to be as objective as possible and did everything in their power to ensure the quality of the project. The supporting teacher, Roselind Xhamela, was a welcome partner during the intervention phase. She often invested additional time in the project and dealt bravely with resistance against the project in the school setting more than once. In the same way I would like to name Zanele Kobus, the class teacher of the control group at the Nomlinganiselo Primary School, who was always able to incorporate my visits to the school without long pre-meetings and spent so much of her leisure time to meet for discussions on the project.

It is difficult to find the right words to express what a great honour it was for me to work with two extremely courageous and open-minded young women, Patricia Mangena and Anneliesa Charmaine Mbena, the leading health promotion trainers in the Child Mind Project. They gave life to this project against all odds and despite the fears they had or which they experienced in their community.

Most importantly, I am very grateful to and impressed by the parents and children of the intervention and control group, who have always been a ray of hope and a fountain of new experiences and insights for the project, for the research part, and for me.

My final acknowledgement is to my parents. Although my time in South Africa was not easy for them, they always supported me in my aims and goals. Today I can say that what I really learned from all my experiences in the field is that I had grown up in a privileged position with loving and caring parents, who always put me first.

Mary Lindner, DPhil.

This thesis is dedicated to Anneliesa Charmain Mbena, a highly intelligent and courageous young woman who died under unknown circumstances after giving birth to her baby boy in December 2003.