

■ Naomi Campbell striking a pose with the girls.



Noami Campbell visits Amoyo

KENYA DAVIDS

Supermodel Naomi Campbell dropped in at the after-school performing arts foundation, Amoyo, in Hout Bay, on Tuesday April 9.

Kim Worrall, Nandipha Sandlana and Mandisa Qweshu, who founded Amoyo in 2015, run performing arts programmes for the youth of Imizamo Yethu and Hangberg, helping to keep them away from harmful influences such as unhealthy sexual behaviour, gang affiliation and substance abuse.

There are 120 to 130 children enrolled in the programme.

"We have got attendees who were on the verge of dropping out of school or who have openly admitted to us that they used to drink and smoke or sell drugs on street corners. They are now our top role models and excel in school and they have bright and successful futures ahead of them," said Ms Worrall.

She and Ms Sandlana and Ms Qweshu try to instil everlasting values in the children.

"We talk about how they should be seen outside of Amoyo. That's



■ Supermodel Naomi Campbell with the children at Amoyo

why children from Amoyo will hopefully not be seen littering or fighting," said Ms Worrall.

During her visit, Ms Campbell referred to South Africa as her second home.

"It's given me so much, taught me so much, and I want to give back to SA and Africa, the con-

continent."

Ms Campbell was accompanied by Kweku Mandela, one of former president Nelson Mandela's 17 grandchildren.

Ms Mandela, who has maintained a close relationship with Ms Worrall over the years, decided to bring Ms Campbell to Amoyo.

She danced with the children and spoke to them about not letting their circumstances define them.

"Naomi resonated enormously with our organisation," Ms Worrall said. "She was only supposed to spend 30 minutes with us, but she ended up spending almost two

hours with us.

"She got very tearful when one of our girls stood up to thank her for coming, and we sang our gratitude song."

Three Amoyo graduates are studying performing arts, according to Ms Worrall, but despite successes like that, she said Amoyo was struggling financially and looking for corporate sponsors to help it keep its 52 weekly classes going.

"Our most beautiful memories are the breakthroughs that we have with children. When you have a child who has no self-worth and then we keep motivating them and make them feel important, the penny drops, their eyes start shining and they become committed and start believing in themselves," said Ms Worrall.

"That's why one of our hashtags is #onechildatatime, because if we are making a difference to one child's life then Amoyo is worth it."