

# New eye for rape survivor

## Girl smiling, ready for school

SUNDILE MALULEKA

**T**he eight-year-old Gingindlovu girl who was raped and assaulted is looking forward to starting at her new school after she was fitted with a prosthetic eye yesterday.

"Thank you," said the girl as she got off a chair and dashed to hug Peter Furber at Durban University of Technology Institute.

Three months ago, the girl was attacked, allegedly by a 15-year-old boy as they were walking home to school.

She was dragged into a crowd that beat her home where she was raped and had her left eye gouged out, then was left for dead.

After the attack she was fitted

with a prosthesis. "The only thing that bothers her now is when people make comments about her not having an eye or asking what happened to her. But now she cannot stop smiling, looking at herself in the mirror".

The fitting of the eye, worth R15 000, took four days to complete.

"She says she wants to be a nurse when she grows up because she wants to help others. She was registered at a new school after the incident, but other children made fun of her because she was teased for not having an eye."

"She wanted to go to school immediately after the artificial eye was fitted, but she was fit on Monday," said the guardian.

It was not easy for the girl when

benefit and she would have the end product," said the guardian.

"The girl had been fitted with the mock eye as a temporary improvement."

"But it did not fit the eye socket properly, so it was never for people to see that it was not her real eye and questions made her upset. So, we had to recall the incident," the guardian said.

### University

Furber, who was heading the programme at the university, received a call a month ago from an optometrist who asked if he could help make a prosthesis for the girl.

"I agreed. It's a tremendous reward for me because on technical like this was so unnecessary. Unfortunately,

was necessary to create an exact replica."

"After the eye intervention was taken, the final model was made," he said.

Knowing that the first colour of the artificial eye matches that of the girl's right eye was of utmost importance.

"The eye was built in wax which was then transferred to my lab. After that the white part of the eye and the veins were painted and the final layer of acrylic was put for the eye to be ready. This process takes three to four days to complete," Furber said. The eye was made at the university's dental clinic as the same material is used to make dentures.

There is 80 percent improvement

**TRIUMPH: This is the story as it appeared in the Daily News.**

## Ray of light for Gingindlovu girl

**AN EYE** for an eye. No, not vengeance, or retribution, but one that centred on the triumph of the human spirit.

Your lead story on Friday, July 20, "New eye for rape survivor", provided a rewarding ray of light, and hope, for the unfortunate eight-year-old Gingindlovu girl, who was raped and had her left eye gouged out.

Full marks to Durban University of Technology Dental Clinic lecturer Peter Furber

and his team, for the prosthetic eye given this child. May her world be one of brighter opportunities now that some of the darkness has been removed.

I, and I am sure your many readers, wish her a speedy recovery, and hope, too, that the perpetrator faces the full might of the law for what can only be described as a most heinous crime.

**BRIJLALL  
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