

# Beyond Awareness Q2 2026 in Action

Dear AWARE.org Partner,

The second quarter of 2026 has reinforced an important reality: reducing alcohol-related harm requires more than awareness. It requires coordinated action, evidence-led interventions, strong partnerships, and solutions that respond to the realities communities face across South Africa.

## Programme Impact Snapshot

AWARE.org continued delivering meaningful impact across prevention, enforcement and support programmes during Q2, reinforcing our whole-of-society approach to reducing alcohol-related harm across South Africa.

Highlights from the quarter include:



## Building a Coordinated Response to Alcohol-Related Harm

Sustainable behaviour change requires a coordinated response, with each area playing an important role in creating lasting impact.

- Prevention**
- Education**
- Enforcement**
- Rehabilitation**
- Research**
- Partnerships**

Across its programmes, AWARE.org continues focusing on practical solutions that move beyond awareness and support communities with the knowledge, resources and platforms needed to make healthier choices.

From empowering young people to shape their futures to generating new insights into alcohol harm during pregnancy and strengthening road safety initiatives, Q2 demonstrated what is possible when stakeholders work together towards a shared purpose.



## #NOtoU18 Empowering Young People to Shape Their Futures

June marked an important moment for youth engagement as South Africa reflected on the legacy of the 1976 generation and the role young people continue to play in shaping the country's future.

AWARE.org's Youth Month Roundtable 2026, themed 'Built Through Action: Past, Present, Future.', brought together high school learners from across Gauteng, Eastern Cape and rural Western Cape, policymakers, civil society leaders, entrepreneurs and AWARE.org leadership at the University of Johannesburg's Bunting Theatre.

The conversation created a platform for young people to engage openly on leadership, resilience, responsible choices, and the opportunities available to help shape their futures.

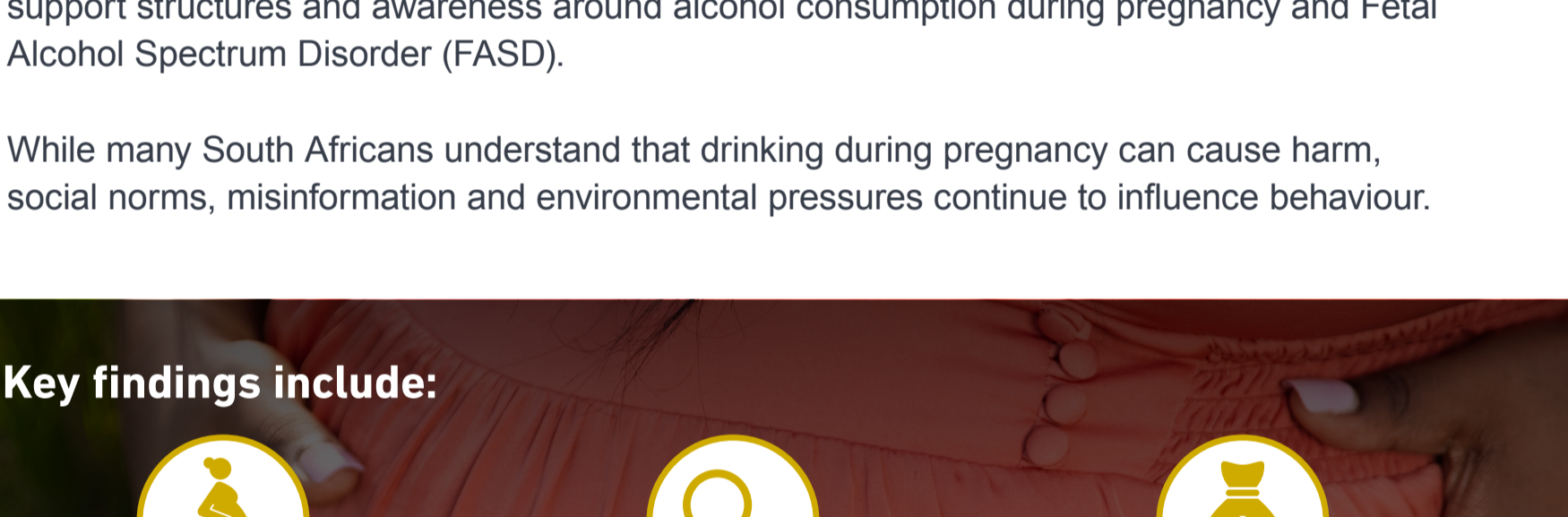
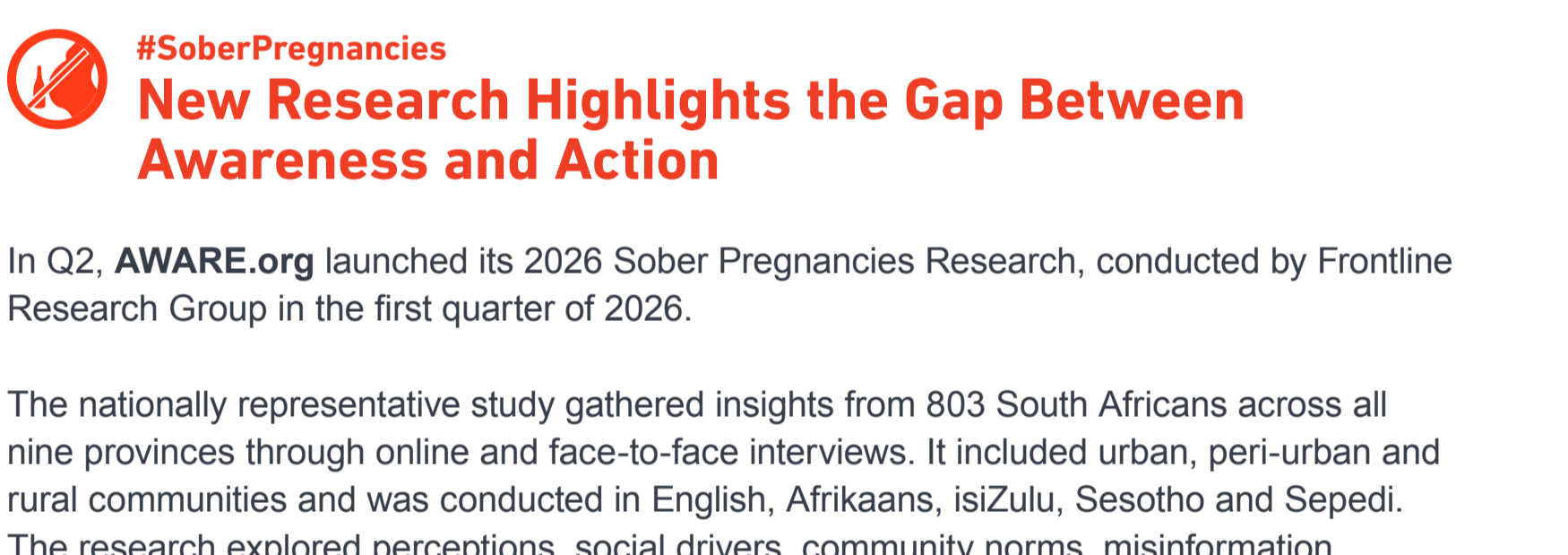
Gauteng MEC for Economic Development **Ms Vuyiswa Ramokgopa** reflected on the connection between the youth of 1976 and the young people of today:

*"At the heart of '76 was a declaration from young people refusing to be relegated to the margins. They were fighting for their place at the table. That fire from '76 is still alive today."*

She encouraged young people to recognise that shaping the future requires more than academic achievement:

*"Building that future requires more than just marks. It requires resilience and discipline."*

The roundtable also highlighted the importance of personal choices and lived experiences. Youth speaker, **Sihle Daniso**, shared her journey with alcohol and recovery, encouraging young people to recognise that alcohol does not define their identity or potential:

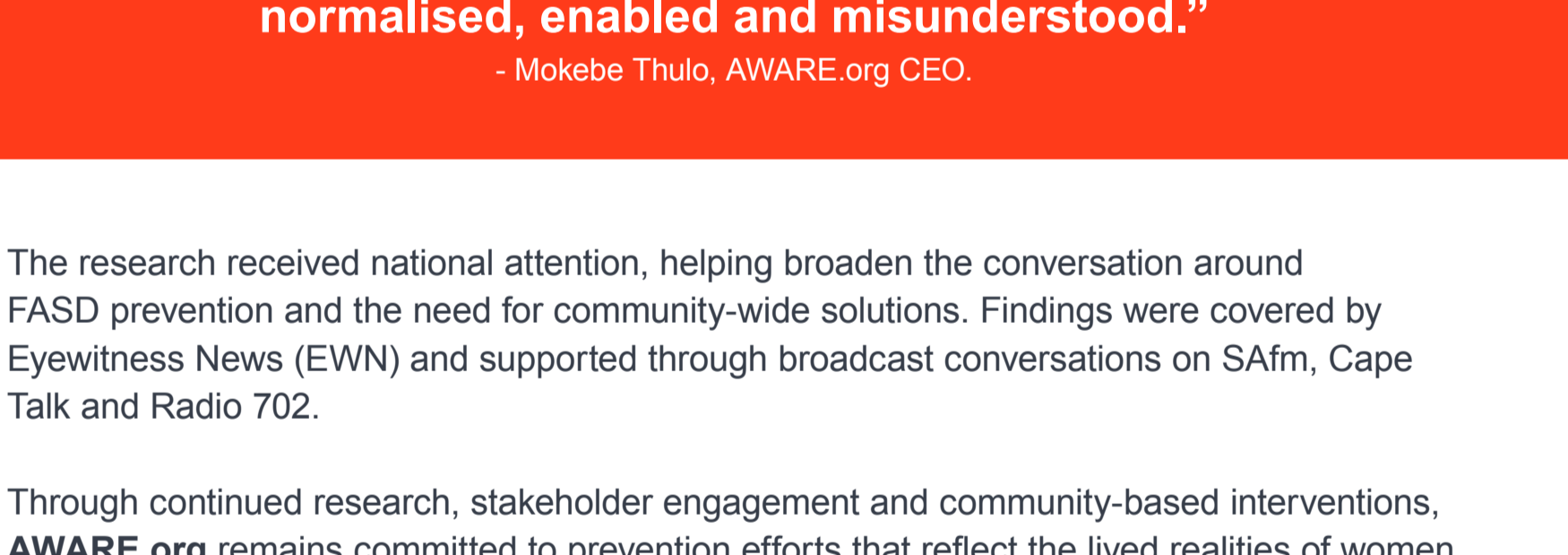


Power FM radio host and Executive Director of Re Hata Mmoho, **Sello Hatang**, challenged delegates to think differently about the way society responds to alcohol harm:

*"The most expensive thing a nation can waste is the potential of its youth."*

AWARE.org CEO **Makebe Thulo** reflected on the importance of creating spaces where young people can lead:

*"The choice to say no to underage drinking is ultimately a choice to say yes to themselves, to their potential, and to the communities that need them to succeed."*



## YOUTH MONTH ROUNDTABLE

REFLECTING ON THE PAST.  
ENGAGING THE PRESENT.  
SHAPING THE FUTURE.

**"The most powerful thing you can do right now, is to create something. Not tomorrow, not later, today."**

- Linathi Makanda, Canva Africa Community Ambassador.

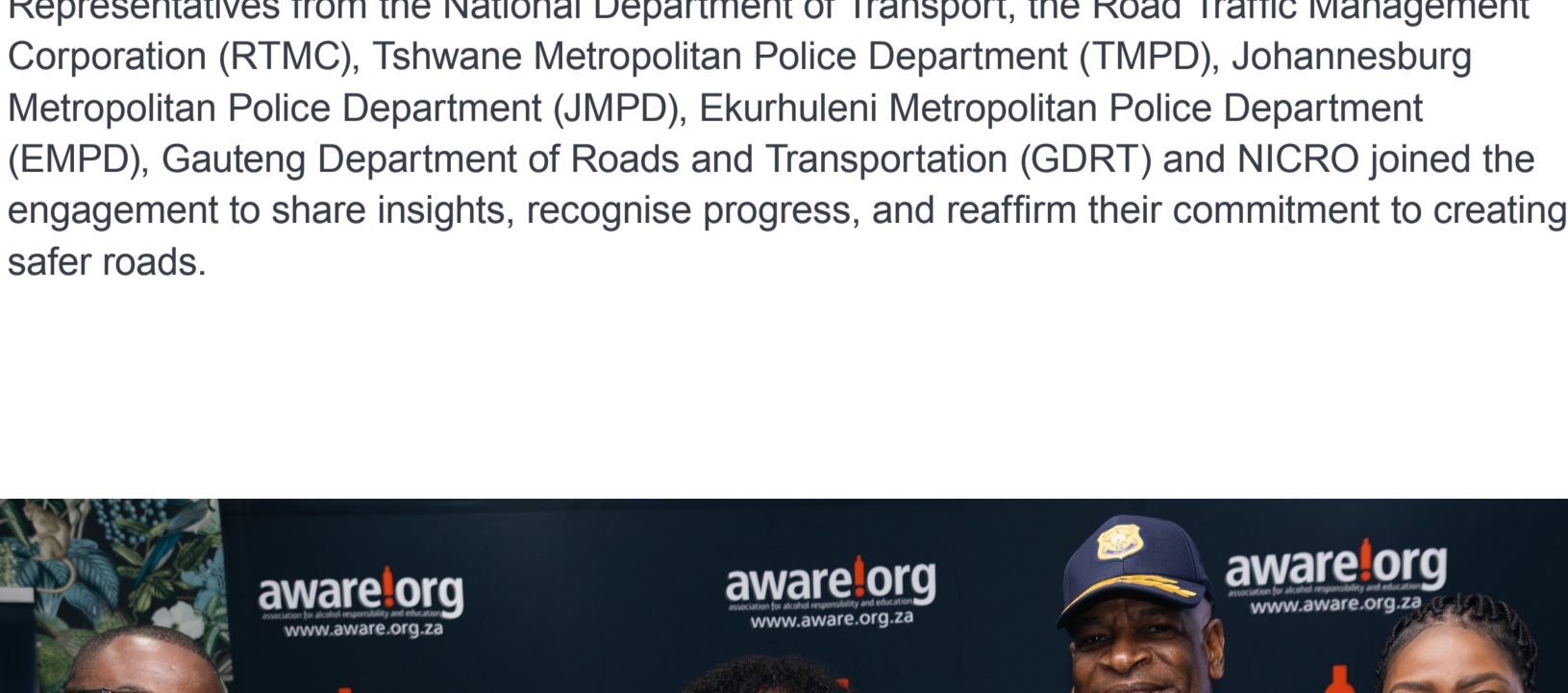
## #SoberPregnancies New Research Highlights the Gap Between Awareness and Action

In Q2, AWARE.org launched its 2026 Sober Pregnancies Research, conducted by Frontline Research Group in the first quarter of 2026.

The nationally representative study gathered insights from 803 South Africans across all nine provinces through online and face-to-face interviews. It included urban, peri-urban and rural communities and was conducted in English, Afrikaans, isiZulu, Sesotho and Sepedi. The research explored perceptions, social drivers, community norms, misinformation, support structures and awareness around alcohol consumption during pregnancy and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

While many South Africans understand that drinking during pregnancy can cause harm, social norms, misinformation and environmental pressures continue to influence behaviour.

Key findings include:



Misconceptions remain widespread, including beliefs that FASD can be cured, that the placenta protects the baby from alcohol exposure, or that there are stages of pregnancy where alcohol consumption is safe.

**"These findings point to a much bigger issue than individual behaviour. They reveal a social and structural environment where alcohol harm during pregnancy continues to be normalised, enabled and misunderstood."**

- Makebe Thulo, AWARE.org CEO.

The research received national attention, helping broaden the conversation around FASD prevention and the need for community-wide solutions. Findings were covered by Eyewitness News (EWN) and supported through broadcast conversations on SAfm, Cape Talk and Radio 702.

Through continued research, stakeholder engagement and community-based interventions, AWARE.org remains committed to prevention efforts that reflect the lived realities of women and families. Watch the FASD Webinar, [here](#).

Explore our latest infographic for a visual snapshot of the research shaping AWARE.org's programmes and informing collective action to support healthier pregnancies and prevent FASD, [here](#).

**"We must move from blaming women to supporting families."**

- Mmapaseka Steve Letsike, Deputy Minister in the Presidency: Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities.

## #DontDrinkAndDrive Building Safer Roads Together

Road safety remains a shared responsibility, and changing behaviour on South Africa's roads requires both awareness and action.

During Q2, AWARE.org continued strengthening its road safety work through the #NeverAlone Easter campaign, reinforcing the message that every decision behind the wheel affects individuals, families, and communities.

Through collaboration with key stakeholders, including the Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC), the campaign focused on encouraging safer choices and reminding road users that responsibility extends beyond the individual.



## Strengthening AWARE.org's Voice Through Partnerships and Engagement

The importance of collaboration was reinforced in Q2. AWARE.org hosted its Road Safety Partners Breakfast, bringing together partners from government, industry, law enforcement, rehabilitation and the road safety sector to reflect on progress made in reducing alcohol-related road harm.

Representatives from the National Department of Transport, the Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC), Tshwane Metropolitan Police Department (TMPD), Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department (JMPD), Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Police Department (EMPD), Gauteng Departments of Roads and Transportation (GDRT) and NICRO joined the engagement to share insights, recognise progress, and reaffirm their commitment to creating safer roads.



The discussion highlighted that lasting change requires more than enforcement alone. Education, awareness, rehabilitation, community engagement, and sustained collaboration all play an important role in shaping safer behaviours and supporting long-term impact.

Beyond road safety, AWARE.org continued strengthening its role as a trusted voice on alcohol-related harm through research, media engagement, public dialogue, and partnerships. These engagements create opportunities to share evidence, build alignment, and support coordinated action across sectors.

## Looking Ahead

The true value of combining prevention was demonstrated in Q2. From youth engagement and road safety initiatives to FASD-prevention research and community-based interventions, the quarter highlighted the importance of bringing together government, industry, civil society, researchers and communities around shared outcomes.

As AWARE.org moves into the second half of 2026, the organisation remains focused on scaling practical interventions, strengthening partnerships and contributing evidence that supports healthier choices, safer communities and reduced alcohol-related harm across South Africa.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support.

## Watch Our Latest Work



Yours in awareness,  
The AWARE.org Team