



Children First: this month and every month

October 2025

Issue No. 8

As we count down to year-end, the most important month is still ahead: **November is Children's Month in South Africa**, with [National Children's Day](#) on Saturday, 1 November 2025, and [World Children's Day](#) on **20 November 2025**.

We are looking ahead to the month while celebrating real momentum as **South Africa formally adopted Children20 under its G20 presidency**, giving children and teens a formal voice at the **G20 Social Summit** happening from 18–20 November.

Read on for media highlights and our full press release, plus our new policy brief on why a **Maternal Support Grant** is a smart, affordable step for healthier mums and babies. We also spotlight practical wins on child nutrition, hearing and early literacy from a throwback to **National Nutrition Week** to **Wordworks'** new resource hub.

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Warmly,
The Hold My Hand Team

Children20 under the G20 Presidency



This month, Hold My Hand was part of a big win for children's rights!

South Africa has officially adopted Children20 under its G20 presidency. This is a major step that gives children and teens a formal voice on global issues and means children will be part of shaping the Declaration at the G20 Social Summit in November. Milestones like these are exactly what we have been working towards. It's been making headlines, check out the coverage in [The Witness](#), [Daily Sun](#), and Children20 Chairperson Mr Kgomotso Montsho's [interview on SA FM](#).

[Read Press Release](#)





Closing the protection gap: The case for a Maternal Support Grant

**Investing in mothers, securing healthier
futures for children**

MSG policy brief

Too many mothers in South Africa are forced to go through pregnancy without the support they need and that puts both them and their babies at risk. The Maternal Support Grant (MSG) is a practical solution that could change this. It's a proposed monthly cash grant starting from the second trimester of pregnancy, designed to support expecting mothers until their babies are able to receive the Child Support Grant.

This would help close a critical gap in our social protection system. It would:

- Improve birth outcomes and early development
- Reduce low birth weight and stunting
- Reach the women most in need, especially those in informal jobs or unemployed
- Transition smoothly into the existing Child Support Grant – no extra paperwork needed

At approximately R2 billion a year, the MSG is affordable, effective, and long overdue. It's an investment in healthier moms, stronger babies, and a better future for South Africa.

[Read the full policy brief](#)

Hold My Hand Webinar



13 November
3pm - 4pm



Live on

UTC+02:00



Dr Katlego Selikane
Lead
#Keready



Amogelang Ndhlovu
Crew Member
#Keready



Pamela Ngwenya
Counsellor
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Shirley Eadie
Lead Teen Identity and Agency
Hold My Hand Accelerator



Myriam-Morênikê Djossou
Senior Policy Associate
J-Pal



Samke Mnguni
Programme Manager, Youth Leadership
The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund



Nicah Santos-Molas
Senior Policy Associate
J-Pal

Supporting Teen Identity
How schools, communities and
society can show up better

[Register Here](#)

News From Our Community



Fortifying Everyday Foods

During National Nutrition Week, Daily Maverick spotlighted practical, community-led solutions to child malnutrition. **Grow Great's** Dr Edzani Mphaphuli underscores the stakes with stubborn stunting rates and calls for coordinated action across health, social protection and agriculture. **Hold My Hand** says policy and practice must be aligned in the form of maternal income support, improved fortification compliance, and affordable

"10 Best Buys".

[Learn More](#)



Micronutrient fortification isn't a luxury

It's one of South Africa's most effective tools to improve nutrition at scale without raising costs. But two decades after it became mandatory for maize meal and bread flour, poor compliance and weak oversight mean we're still falling short. In a Daily Maverick op-ed, **Hold My Hand's** Liezel Engelbrecht and dietitian Maria van der Merwe call for urgent fixes: stronger monitoring, better lab capacity, full transparency, and long-overdue regulatory updates. Let's make every bowl of pap and slice of bread count in the fight against hidden hunger.

[Learn More](#)



The economic value of free books

Owning books can change a child's life. This Learning Lunch episode makes the case for a national book giveaway programme and why free books deliver big returns for early language and literacy.

[Listen Here](#)



World Hearing Day 2026

We're thrilled that the theme for World Hearing Day 2026 '*from communities to schools: hearing care for all children*', shines a spotlight on children. Because every child deserves the chance to hear, learn, play and grow.

World Hearing Day happens each year on 3 March, and reminds us to act early, to treat what's treatable, prevent what's preventable, and support every child to be able to communicate with the world around them.

[Learn More](#)



Wordworks turns 20 with a brand-new website

On 18 October 2025, **Wordworks** celebrated its 20th anniversary by launching a fresh new website that makes its early literacy resources and courses easier to access. Supported by Shine Literacy, the site opens the door for more families, caregivers and educators across South Africa to use materials designed specifically for our local context.

Whether you're a parent, teacher or community worker, if you're helping a child learn to read, this is for you.

[Read More](#)



Many infants are born deaf, but parents don't know

This op-ed makes a clear case for universal newborn hearing screening in South Africa, so babies don't miss the critical window for language development and families get support early.

[Read Op-Ed](#)

Our Community

Meet some of our new community members!

We're growing, and it's beautiful to see more hearts and hands joining the journey.



Enlighten Education Trust

Enlighten Education Trust Supports children through education, literacy, and life skills in the Overstrand community. They have grown into a trusted and effective non-governmental organisation, implementing 17 projects that impact 22 schools.



SAVE Foundation

The SAVE Foundation contributes to sustainable community development projects in South Africa. They partner with local initiatives that focus on education, sports, childcare, animal welfare and environmental conservation, giving volunteers the chance to make a tangible difference while immersing themselves in South African culture.



Sesame Workshop

Sesame Workshop strives to bring learning to any region where access to quality early education is severely limited. With its endearing characters, songs and stories, Takalani Sesame is the first classroom for South African children

Join Our Community



Stay connected

Get the latest updates, inspiring stories, and ways to make a difference by following us on social media.

Together, we're creating a brighter future for South Africa's children and teens. Thank you for holding hands with us on this incredible journey.

Want to share your latest news?
Drop an email at news@holdmyhand.org.za



Together, we will **change** our future.

Thank you for being a vital part of our mission to put children at the center of our future. Your involvement makes all the difference!