



Celebrating people who turn waste into something real

June 2026

Issue No. 16

This month, we're all about action – big and small. Read about Waste Not, a new competition turning waste into wins for children's health, join us for the first Metro Lives conversation on child-friendly municipalities, meet South Africa's newly

elected National RCL executive committee, and check out our new PSA reminding business leaders that they're parents too.

Hold My Hand

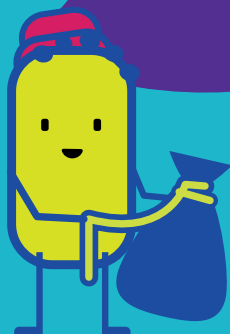


Competition

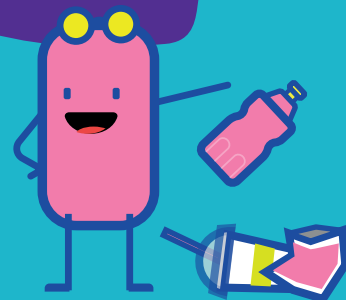
A competition celebrating people
who turn waste into something real

Submissions Open: **21 July 2026**

Closing Date: **21 August 2026**



A partnership between
 **hold
my
hand**
Action for Children and Teens



From 21 July to 21 August 2026, we're inviting South Africans to get creative about reducing, reusing and recycling, because a healthy environment means healthier children. Poor waste removal and burning rubbish don't just pollute the air; they fuel the infections and stunting that hold children back.

Entries are open to everyone: send a photo or video of your waste-busting idea to 0600 411 111, along with a voice note or text explaining what you made or did. Ten winners will share prizes from R1 500 to R5 000. Every bit of action counts. Join in at #WasteNot.

To Enter:

Send the words "Waste Not" to 0600 411 111 on WhatsApp.

Click [here](https://changewaste.dgmt.co.za) to learn more about Create Change and waste and what you can do

Submit on WhatsApp



METRO LIVES

City of Cape Town

What kind of city are we building for children and young people?

Join us for a public conversation about the cities our children deserve – and what municipalities must do to build them.

There will be a live broadcast of the event.

21 July 2026



17:30 for 18:00

Avalon Theatre - The Homecoming Centre
15 Buitenkant Street | District Six, Cape Town

Local government decisions shape children's daily lives

From safe public spaces and reliable services to opportunities to learn, play and belong, municipalities influence the environments children grow up in.

Join us for the first Metro Lives conversation, where we explore what municipalities can do to build child-friendly communities.

Date: 21 July 2026
Time: 6 pm – 8 pm (SAST)
Where: Live on Zoom

[Register here](#)



Learners lead

Meet South Africa's new National RCL Executive Committee

Congratulations to the newly elected 2026 National Executive Committee of the DBE's Representative Council of Learners (RCL), South Africa's official structure for learner voices in schools. President Katlekgo Mbonani and his team were elected at the National RCL Summit, held from 24 to 26 June, an event proudly supported by Hold My Hand.

This is exactly the kind of youth leadership Hold My Hand champions: young people speaking for themselves, shaping the decisions that affect them, and being taken seriously as leaders now - not "leaders of tomorrow." As a partner in the Summit, we were proud to stand behind a process that puts learners' voices first, and we'll be watching this committee's work closely.

2026 National RCL Executive Committee

- President: Kamogelo Mbonani (Mpumalanga)
- Deputy President: Coden Morilly (Western Cape)
- Secretary: Tshegofatso Mavalela (Limpopo)
- Deputy Secretary: Thato Mpulenyana (Free State)
- Treasurer: Thysline Olyn (Northern Cape)
- Public Relations Officer: Siphokazi Mpanza (KwaZulu-Natal)



Business leaders are parents too

We've just released a new radio public service announcement that speaks directly to something rarely said out loud: business leaders are parents too, and how well children grow shapes the bottom line just as much as it shapes society.

The private sector plays a role in child wellbeing, not just as a funder or bystander, but as parents, employers and decision-makers whose choices affect the next generation's workforce, consumers and leaders.

Download the PSA in all 11 languages and help us get it in front of the people who need to hear it.

[Download Here](#)

News From Our Community



The 15 best - and worst - districts in SA to give birth

Every day in 2024, an average of twenty-nine newborn babies died in South Africa's public hospitals before they were a month old. While the country's newborn mortality rate is close to the UN's 2030 target, the picture is far less encouraging for mothers, with maternal deaths remaining well above global goals.

New data from the District Health Barometer reveals stark differences between districts, showing that where you live can have a major impact on whether mothers and babies survive pregnancy and birth. Experts say the figures highlight deep inequalities in the quality of healthcare and underline the urgent need for stronger leadership, better-equipped health facilities and improved primary healthcare services.

[Read More](#)



SafeSigns: helping girls build safer relationships

A WhatsApp chatbot called SafeSigns is using technology to help prevent dating violence among adolescent girls in South Africa. Co-designed with young women, the platform offers private, practical support to help users recognise unhealthy relationships, build confidence, access trusted services and stay safe, all through a familiar and accessible app.

Developed by Reach Digital Health in partnership with Ipas Africa Southern Region and loveLife, SafeSigns combines interactive learning, real-life scenarios and referrals to support services in a safe, non-judgemental space. With plans to reach thousands of young people, it represents an innovative approach to preventing gender-based violence before it starts.

[Read More](#)



Why the Children's Amendment Bill could change early learning

South Africa is taking an important step towards giving more young children access to quality early learning. The Children's Amendment Bill, recently approved by Cabinet, is part of a wider set of reforms designed to make it easier for early learning programmes to register, receive government support and qualify for funding.

The Bill recognises that quality early learning can happen in a range of settings, not only formal centres, helping to remove barriers that have excluded many children in low-income communities. Together with new registration systems, better data and increased government investment, these reforms aim to bring quality early learning within reach of an additional 1.3 million children.

[Learn More](#)



Learning What Matters in South Africa

A new report by SmartStart, published as part of the global Network for Education Systems Transformation (NEST) research series, examines what it will take to ensure every young child in South Africa has access to quality early learning.

The report explores the country's early learning system through three key building blocks, capacity, commitment and cohesion and highlights how stronger collaboration between government, civil society, practitioners and communities can turn good policy into real change for children.

[Learn More](#)

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.



The Sozo Foundation is a community-based non-profit organisation dedicated to equipping and empowering the youth of Vrygrond, a vulnerable Cape Flats community in Cape Town, to live with dignity, purpose, and hope. Their mission is to directly combat South Africa's youth unemployment and school dropout crisis by building a hyper-local economic ecosystem.



Heartshine is a South African non-profit organisation working to strengthen children's emotional resilience and mental wellbeing by advocating for body-based approaches to emotional health and empowering young adults as community-based change agents.



Khululeka Grief Support is a South African non-profit organisation established in 2005 to support children affected by grief and loss.

Over the past 20 years, their work has evolved to address the broader mental health and psychosocial challenges facing children, families and schools.

They deliver evidence-informed, trauma-informed programmes that help children recover from grief, violence, abuse and other adverse experiences while building resilience and emotional wellbeing.

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!