

Dear Partners, Donors and Friends of Bridges,

As we reflect on another impactful term at Bridges, it fills us with gratitude to witness the joy and transformation happening right before our eyes. There's nothing more inspiring than being on-site during camp, hearing the excited shouts and laughter of young people as they enjoy Bridges. Your support has made this possible for another 800 children this term! Thank you for being part of this inspiring journey.

At the heart of everything we do is our mission to create positive life experiences and opportunities for growth, for children failed by the system.

One educator recently shared a heartbreaking story about a learner in her class: *"He's the second oldest of five children, raised by a single mother. The oldest didn't finish school and has turned to tik. In the morning, their mother wakes them up with a splash of water, saying, 'get out'."* This is the harsh reality many of our young visitors face. It is for children like him that we do what we do—to offer them an experience that is different, loving, nurturing, fun, safe...to inspire hope for a different future.

As we approach our third full year of outdoor education at Bridges, our team continues to adapt and strengthen, driven by our commitment to serve these children.

We hope you enjoy reading about all that has unfolded this term. Despite navigating literal storms and challenging weather, we now see the orange blossoms emerge on campus, symbolising renewal and the promise of a bright season ahead. We look forward to the warmth and growth that summer will bring to our campus and to the lives of the children we serve.

With gratitude and blessings,

*Rigby*

Chairman of the Board

# Term 3 Camp Overviews

## CAMP #1

9-11 JULY

ELNOR PRIMARY SCHOOL, ELSIES RIVER

GRADE 6

#LEARNERS: 51 | #EDUCATORS: 4

Despite the cold and rainy weather, the Grade 6 learners from Elnor Primary arrived at camp brimming with excitement and anticipation. The camp had to be cut short by a day due to severe weather warnings from the Department, but this didn't dampen the students' enthusiasm.

As the camp concluded, joyful singing lifted everyone's spirits, leaving the team with a sense of warmth and fulfillment. The learners left on a high note, already eager to return to Bridges next year for more unforgettable experiences.



## CAMP #2

16-18 JULY

JOOSTENBERG PRIMARY SCHOOL,  
STELLENBOSCH FARMING COMMUNITY

GRADE 6 CAMP

#LEARNERS: 45 | #EDUCATORS: 2

Shernel, our Camp Manager, described this camp as "phenomenal," highlighting the meaningful connections formed between the learners and the coaches. The students felt comfortable speaking openly and honestly about their lives, as they experienced the safe and supportive camp environment.

During the closing ceremony, they expressed heartfelt gratitude to the coaches, sharing how profoundly they had impacted their ability to trust and connect with others.

We were fortunate to have Coast and Country volunteers join us, who wholeheartedly engaged with the learners despite their busy lives. Their willingness to share their time and stories provided the children with valuable career inspiration. A special shout-out and thank you to Wajdi, Lezil, Evangelo, and the other volunteers for their enthusiasm and support!

**CAMP #3**

**23-25 JULY**

**JOOSTENBERG PRIMARY SCHOOL,  
STELLENBOSCH FARMING COMMUNITY**

**GRADE 5 CAMP**

**#LEARNERS: 54 | #EDUCATORS: 3**

This Grade 5 camp was a delightful experience, with manageable numbers allowing for meaningful connections.

Educators were highly engaged and provided excellent feedback about the coaches and the hospitality team, who served delicious meals throughout the camp.

Many learners participated in an optional morning devotional, which proved to be impactful and enriching for them.



**CAMP #4**

**30 JULY - 1 AUGUST**

**ALPINE PRIMARY SCHOOL, MITCHELL'S PLAIN  
GRADE 6 CAMP**

**#LEARNERS: 108 | #EDUCATORS: 7**

This camp was larger than usual, which presented some challenges in behavior management. However, our coaches handled the situation with love and calmness, even in the face of some disrespect. It was inspiring to see natural leaders emerge among the Grade 5 learners, showcasing their potential.

The learners come from underprivileged backgrounds and with the cold weather, adequate clothing was an issue for some, just one of the challenges these children face. Despite these difficulties, the camp was filled with memorable moments, including a fashion show that turned out to be a highlight, with the boys truly stealing the spotlight! We were also blessed with good weather, a welcome change after the recent rain and cold.

**CAMP #5**

**13-15 AUGUST**

**ALPHA PRIMARY SCHOOL, FISANTEKRAAL,  
DURBANVILLE**

**GRADE 5 CAMP**

**#LEARNERS: 46 | #EDUCATORS: 3**

The Grade 5 camp with Alpha Primary was a memorable experience. These first-time campers arrived feeling a bit quiet, but after orientation, they quickly began to relax and fill the air with joyful chatter.

Educators expressed how much they enjoyed the various activities, noting how well they aligned with the school curriculum and contributed to improving the students' self-awareness. They also provided wonderful feedback to the hospitality team, praising the nutritious meals that kept everyone energised throughout the camp.



**CAMP #6**

**20-22 AUGUST**

**CASCADE PRIMARY SCHOOL, MITCHELL'S  
PLAIN**

**GRADE 5 CAMP**

**#LEARNERS: 118 | #EDUCATORS: 4**

The Grade 5 camp with Cascade Primary was another vibrant experience, with learners arriving full of energy! After a brief consequence for not listening (the water activity was temporarily removed), the campers quickly adjusted their behavior and engaged positively with the coaches and educators.

It was wonderful to see the educators actively involved and present throughout the camp. They particularly valued the workshop session, which helped learners consolidate their experiences and connect what they learned at camp to their school curriculum. The Grade 5's expressed their gratitude with plenty of hugs for the coaches, reflecting their appreciation for the memorable camp experience.



**CAMP #7**  
**27-29 AUGUST**  
**RIVERLANDS AND CHATSWORTH PRIMARY**  
**SCHOOLS, MALMESBURY**  
**GRADE 5 CAMP**  
**#LEARNERS: 151 | #EDUCATORS: 6**

This camp began with rain but ended with sunshine! Even the initial rainy weather couldn't dampen the spirits or energy levels of our Grade 5 learners. Given the trauma of the recent flooding in their hometown (more about this below), camp provided a much-needed opportunity for the students to decompress and enjoy themselves.

The learners truly cherished the space to play and engage with one another. They enthusiastically embraced all the lessons from camp, discovering how to apply their newfound knowledge back in the classroom.



**CAMP #8**  
**3-5 SEPTEMBER**  
**WES-EIND PRIMARY SCHOOL,**  
**FRANSCHHOEK**  
**GRADE 6 CAMP**

**#LEARNERS: 58 | #EDUCATORS: 3**

This camp was a fantastic experience for the returning Grade 5 learners from Wes-Eind, who truly came alive during the orientation session. Educators appreciated how the activities were closely tied to the core theme of social awareness and recognised the positive impact this would have on their classroom environment.

The learners demonstrated active listening skills, building on what they had learned on camp last year. They collaborated effectively with the coaches, and it was inspiring to see new young leaders emerge, especially among the girls, alongside the familiar faces. This was particularly evident during the closing ceremony, where the learners expressed their gratitude to the coaches, sharing how much they valued the camp experience and everything they had learned.

**CAMP #9**  
**10-12 SEPTEMBER**  
**GROENDAL PRIMARY SCHOOL,**  
**FRANSCHHOEK**  
**GRADE 7 CAMP**

**#LEARNERS: 89 | #EDUCATORS: 4**

This camp marked an exciting milestone as Groendal Primary became a new partner school, and it was the first time this group of Grade 7 learners experienced a Bridges camp.

The campers thoroughly enjoyed the beautiful weather, with some even taking a dip in the pool during the raft-building and rowing activities. A highlight of the camp was the fashion show, where learners creatively dressed the coaches in outfits made from recycled materials. The creativity and teamwork displayed during this session were truly inspiring!



**CAMP #10**  
**17-19 SEPTEMBER**  
**ELNOR PRIMARY SCHOOL, ELSIE'S RIVER**  
**GRADE 5 CAMP**  
**#LEARNERS: 80 | #EDUCATORS: 4**

This camp was a fantastic way to wrap up the term! Many learners who are usually shy and quiet in the classroom blossomed at camp, stepping into leadership roles, particularly during the fashion show. Witnessing this transformation is always impactful.

The workshop session with the learners extended longer than usual, thanks to their enthusiastic participation and interaction. Educators praised our coaching team for their positive dynamic, highlighting them as excellent role models of teamwork for our learners.

# TERM 3 - IMPACT



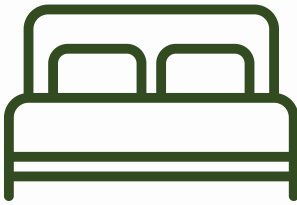
#CAMPS: 10



#LEARNERS: 800



#EDUCATORS: 40



#WARM BEDS &  
SHOWERS: 1 600



#NUTRITIOUS  
MEALS: 5600



#PARTNER  
SCHOOLS: 9



#FACILITATOR/  
COACHING HOURS: 2 532



#VOLUNTEERS: 18  
GIVING TOTAL OF 224 HOURS



#CURRICULUM ALIGNED  
ACTIVITIES : 170

## YTD 2024 IMPACT

#CAMPS: 23

#LEARNERS: 1 993

#EDUCATORS: 101

#NUTRITIOUS MEALS : 13 951

#WARM BEDS&SHOWERS: 3 986

## Feedback from our Educators



“Here on the camp, they actually learned the importance of working as a team together and that was good to see and also something that we as teachers can apply in our own work as well.”

“Thanks for all the activities... they actually filter down to one word ...and that word is love.”

**Megan, Grade 5 Educator at Alpha Primary**



“ Our children are so used to being exposed and being embarrassed... here at Bridges they could just be themselves I saw children take their usual masks off and they had the chance to just be a child... I just realised how many of our boys have a fatherless situation at home and here they call the coach Papa JP. Even to get to say that word on a daily basis is significant. Many of them don't get the chance to call somebody Papa... many of them are part of this fatherless generation... so I think it meant a lot to these boys.”

“I must also commend your team because they teach the children about teamwork, but they also model teamwork and they do it so well and that's wonderful, it's such a good example.”

“Seeing them (the learners) in this environment seeing them out of the normal classroom setup you realise how some children are labeled as naughty but here (at Bridges) they were just children, treated equally, no labels. The Bridges coaches can't believe it when I tell them which children are naughty at school. Here they act so different, we don't see that naughty side. And I realise that often they are only acting up because a lot of the time an adult has failed them.”

**Heidi, Grade 5 teacher at Alpha Primary**





# Coach Snapshot

## Coach JP - Jean-Pierre Koordom

Affectionately known as **Coach JP** or **Papa JP** by the learners, Jean-Pierre Koordom hails from the small community of Riverlands, just outside Malmesbury. Currently pursuing a BA in Counseling with a focus on Child Therapy, Coach JP brings his passion for helping children grow emotionally, spiritually, and socially to every camp.

In his role within the Outdoor Educational Programme (OEP) team, he is committed to leading with care, offering support, and being fully present for each child. Coach JP is a guiding force, helping children build towards their 'Golden Future' by motivating them, sharing the word of God, and fostering a safe, nurturing environment where they feel free to express their emotions and grow together.



## Coach Wyatt - Wyatt Afrika

Wyatt Afrika, originally from Stellenbosch, is a talented graduate of Stellenbosch University with a degree in Dramatic Arts. Bringing his expertise in acting, choreography, dance, and singing, Wyatt helps our young learners tap into their creativity and develop their presentation skills with confidence and flair.

Before joining the Outdoor Educational Programme (OEP) team, Wyatt spent five years working with children at an aftercare facility, where he honed his ability to inspire and guide young minds. Looking ahead, he has aspirations of pursuing a Master's degree in Physical Theatre, further fueling his passion for the performing arts and education.

# ***-Flood Relief-***

## ***Riverlands and Chatsworth Primary School Community***

Riverlands and Chatsworth Primary Schools, two of our partner schools were affected by flooding in August, when a nearby dam burst and resulted in severe flooding in these communities outside Malmesbury.

“When the water came down, you could see the trauma and children becoming hysterical and the chaos... as people evacuated their homes, screaming,” says Gift of the Givers spokesperson Ali Sablay.

Several residents were treated for shock at the Riverland Clinic and many residents were looked after in community centres where they are receiving food, shelter, clothing and other aid.

Common Ground Church, one of our funding partners, gave money towards flood relief for learners from Riverlands and Chatsworth Primary Schools who had lost possessions during the flood. Our team bought and delivered school uniforms and shoes to these learners.

We were so glad to welcome both these partner schools on camp the following week, to help them decompress from the social-emotional effects of this trauma, in a safe and nurturing environment.



## *Fundraising Update*

We are actively seeking funding for several of our Term 4 camps. If you've been considering sponsoring a camp this year or have available CSI budget, please reach out to Catherine [catherine@bridgesretreat.co.za](mailto:catherine@bridgesretreat.co.za)

To make donating as simple and hassle-free as possible, we've introduced a new payments option, simply scan the QR code for easy donating to Bridges.



Powered by Peach Payments.

## *Social Media*



We invite you to follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn for weekly updates from Bridges.

Your follows, likes, and shares play a vital role in helping us grow our support base and spreading the word about the amazing work happening at Bridges.



## *Thank You!*

We extend a heartfelt gratitude to all our donors and partners for your continued support. Your unwavering commitment means the world to us. As we wrap up our third year of camps, we eagerly anticipate another busy term ahead!

With love, The Bridges Team