



Term 4 2025 Newsletter

A Celebratory Milestone in the Bridges Story

Dear Bridges Community,

We close out the year with a deep sense of gratitude and celebration! Term 4 has marked another remarkable milestone in the Bridges story — since launching camps in 2022, Bridges has now provided over 10,000 fully funded outdoor educational opportunities to learners and educators from under-resourced schools across the Western Cape. This achievement reflects the power of shared vision and generous partnership.

As you read our final newsletter of the year, we hope you're encouraged by the stories and impact you've helped make possible. Thank you for standing with us in shaping brighter futures.

With gratitude,
The Bridges Team

Bridges In The Media

This term, Bridges has enjoyed some great media visibility! Our work was featured in several mainstream publications and Catherine was interviewed on both BizNews and Smile FM, sharing the heart and impact of the programme with new audiences. We're grateful for every opportunity to amplify the Bridges story and highlight the incredible learners, educators, and partners who make this work possible.

Joy News:

[Read Article](#)

BizNews:

[Watch Video](#)

Smile FM:

SA Good News:

Bridges Staff Training

This term, Shernel, our Camp Manager, led her team of eight coaches through focused training on leadership and communication. Investing in our staff's growth remains a core priority at Bridges — equipping our coaches with the skills and confidence they need to guide learners on their own journeys of development.

Rebecca, our Operations Manager, spent a morning in November training all our campus staff in child safeguarding. She worked through Bridges' Child Protection Policy, discussing what child safeguarding is, what we are protecting our learners from, and how we practically live this out on the Bridges campus. Each staff member is equipped to follow appropriate child safeguarding procedures and hold one another accountable to do the same.



Term 4 Camps Overview

With a shorter term and exams approaching, we hosted three impactful camps this term — each filled with energy, growth and memorable moments.

We were delighted to welcome the Grade 5's from Petunia Primary to Bridges for the very first time. Sponsored by the Cheslin Kolbe Foundation, who work in the Kraaifontein area, Petunia joins us as a new partner school this year. The learners arrived overflowing with excitement and curiosity as they embarked on their first-ever outdoor education experience.

The Grade 5 camp theme, self-awareness, was woven throughout all sessions, inviting learners to explore who they are, what they value, and how they relate to others. Through guided workshops and outdoor activities, learners were encouraged to think critically, communicate openly, support their peers and grow in confidence — all while experiencing the joy and freedom of nature



We also hosted two camps for Cascade Primary's Grade 5 and Grade 7 learners. Educators shared beautiful reflections on the impact they witnessed. Patricia, an Educator, noted that her highlight was seeing the Bridges team waiting at the entrance to welcome the children — waving, cheering, and making their arrival feel special. She shared that many of their learners return to empty homes due to parents working late shifts, so having someone eagerly waiting for them was deeply meaningful.



Another educator, Damian, observed an immediate shift in behaviour, especially among the boys. The values taught during camp — particularly respect — helped set clear expectations, and he saw learners holding one another accountable. By the second night, he noticed a remarkable improvement in behaviour and peer support.

Another touching moment came from a Grade 7 learner who has a stutter. During a group session, she spoke confidently and clearly — a breakthrough that moved her teachers and coaches alike.



Feedback From The Petunia Primary Educators

For many learners, camp provided the chance to discover their own potential. Educators saw children overcoming self-doubt and stepping into leadership roles.

“The coaches were great. The kitchen personnel must be commended for the great meals.”

- Frederick Julies, Educator

“When we assisted with the courses, I loved the fact that the children could come freely and ask for help. For the first time they weren't shy or scared.”

- Anthene Witbooi, Educator

“Camp was wonderful. I saw different sides of the learners- that was amazing to see.”

- Anthene Witbooi, Educator

“One of the learners came up to me excited when we won the fashion show. Saying that we won cause we all worked together.”

- Robyn Maart, Educator

“I saw change taking place in some of the learners- they have been more confident about them self.”

- Janique Esterhuizen, Educator

“There's this one boy- he doesn't speak much but this camp changed him that he speaks today and his now more ready then ever.”

- Janique Esterhuizen, Educator

“The one thing that captures my heart was the fact that everyone was loved as one and everyone is a winner no matter if you 1st or last. Thank you for that.”

- Janique Esterhuizen, Educator

“I most definitely saw changes in the learners; learners were very well behaved and loved everything. They made new friends and bonded with other children. Learners have gained a lot of confidence as they were constantly challenged with many activities.”

- Ashlene Arends, Educator

“I love the fact that the coaches is so welcoming and make all feel home. All coaches have different personalities and I love the diversity of all. You all have been an great example of how we can comfort the children. Thank you.”

- Ashlene Arends, Educator





Learners Feedback

Here is some feedback from our Petunia Primary Grade 5 learners who visited Bridges for the first time this term;

“I will always remember the food.”

“I will always remember swimming in the pool.”

“I will always remember that we learned about good sportsmanship I.”

“I will remember teamwork with my team”

“I will remember the pillow fight and sleeping in my own bed.”

“I will always remember swimming in the pool.”

“I will always remember about team work.”

“I will always remember the food and the pool.”

“I will always remember the coaches.”

“Ek sal al die aktiwiteite onthou.”

“I liked the fashion show and the coaches were very nice.”

“I will always remember how kind the coaches were.”

“I will always remember the shower, the pool, the food, my own bed and the coaches.”

“I will always remember the coaches and the teachers.”

“I learned awareness of myself.”

“I will always remember the camp fire.”

“I will always remember the tug of war because it was my favourite and the music.”

“I will always remember the coaches, the pool and the activities.”

“I will always remember the camp fire and the warcry”

“I will always remember the people and that I made new friends.”

“I will always remember that we worked together with teammates and having fun”

“I will miss the coaches who took good care of us and everything and everyone.”

“I will always remember speaking in front of the group.”

“I will always remember the hiking.”

“I will always remember the fashion show because we used team work.”

“I will always remember that the people were very kind.”



2025 Impact



39
CAMPS



2,932
LEARNERS



143
EDUCATORS



5,847
WARM BEDS &
SHOWERS

21,462
NUTRITIOUS MEALS

15
PARTNER SCHOOLS



15,000
FACILITATOR
/ COACHING HOURS

143
VOLUNTEERS

1,000
CURRICULUM
ALIGNED ACTIVITIES

Help Us Reach Our Goal

Thanks to the incredible generosity of our supporters, we've reached 82% of our annual fundraising goal! To complete the journey, we're seeking partners to help fund the final six camps (**R170 000 each**). If you'd like to join us in making this possible, we'd love to hear from you.

Donate



Snap Scan



Peach Payments

Thank You!

As we wrap up Term 4 and look back on an extraordinary year, we are deeply grateful for every partner, supporter, educator, and friend who has journeyed with us. Thank you for believing in the potential of every child we serve. We look

forward to all that 2026 will bring as we continue building brighter futures together.

With love,
The Bridges Team



Bridges Retreat Centre

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