

# BOND

**BUILDING A NEW DEAL FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN AFRICA**  
**ISSUE 2 2016**



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## Editorial

It is never easy to make the right choices, particularly when you are a girl who comes from a humble background. Opportunities seem to be beyond reach, with no alternatives in sight. It only takes a certain level of consciousness to realise that in that space of hopelessness, there is a small avenue that you can manipulate to achieve endless possibilities. It is this consciousness that I have developed over the years in the Young 4 Real Programme, a SAFAIDS initiative aimed at empowering young people and scaling up their access to Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights.



I exit the Young 4 Real programme with lots of emotions but most of all I leave a better person. It is my humble pleasure to be sharing my story and featuring as a guest editor in this fun-filled and infor-taining edition of the Bond Magazine. My hope is that my story and several others profiled herein, will inspire you.

This edition explores several hot issues plaguing young people's lives, especially sex, drug and alcohol abuse which seem to be the conduit of most sexual reproductive health challenges faced by young people. Intake of drugs like *mangema*, *musombodia*, *nyaope* and weed cakes has become a trend alongside one night stands, nude parties and sex orgies which in turn reap serious repercussions such as teen pregnancies, date rape, illegal abortions, school drop outs, sexually transmitted infections among other ills. As we say no to sex, alcohol and drugs (SAD), we profile, some testimonials from young people who have indulged in sex, alcohol and drugs and the effects of their decisions.

We also feature some exciting and inspiring stories from a network of young people across the region (YPISA) who converged in Harare for the YPISA Summit. They share with us how they have managed to navigate the challenges, pressure and temptations that come with being young, as they relive their Young for Real journeys.

Until the next edition...KEEP HEALTHY!

– Princess Sibanda (Guest Editor)

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This Edition of BOND Magazine is made possible through our Sustainable Communities Of Real Excellence (SCORE) programme operating in Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe with funding from the People of Sweden. All content is the responsibility of SAFAIDS and does not represent the views or opinions of our funding partner. BOND is published by SAFAIDS, 17 Beveridge Rd, Avondale, Harare, Zimbabwe. www.SAFAIDS.net

ISSN 2410-6143

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# Health + Activism = Healthivism



At SAfAIDS, our VISION is for ALL the people of Africa to realise their sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). We cannot do this alone.



SAfAIDS work is all about helping the people of Africa to be free from the burden of HIV, TB and other developmental diseases, including the global scourge of gender-based violence, especially towards adolescent girls and young women.



With one in every three people in eastern and southern Africa being a YOUNG PERSON, their meaningful involvement is at the heart of everything we do. They are Game Changers!



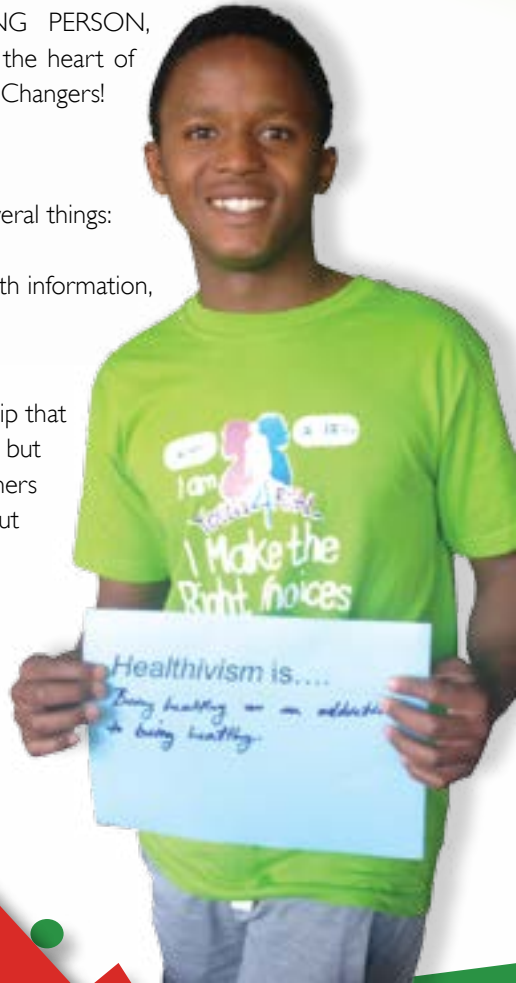
So what IS Healthivism?



We provide young people with several things:



- Important and up-to-date health information, especially around sexual and reproductive health rights
- Leadership skills and mentorship that focuses not just on self growth but on growing their service to others (what else is leadership all about really?)
- A network and platform for advocacy across the region so that their ideas, voices and hard work are amplified with and through a movement of SRHR champions!





# YOUNG PEOPLE: GAME CHANGERS

There are 1.8 billion of us young people in the world – True! That translates to a lot of energy and innovation. So why leave us out?

So how are SAfAIDS and their SRHR champions engaging young people meaningfully?

***Speaking their language*** – Information should be accessible to us. Capitalising on digital reach and social media is a great way to be seen and heard by this tech-savvy generation, as well as to mobilise them. Young people are almost twice as likely as older generations to turn to the internet and social networks for information about development issues. Mobile phone access and wi-fi is spreading throughout the region.

***Include and empower the youth*** – To benefit from quality youth input we must work with young people as beneficiaries, partners and leaders; include and support them, whether in decision-making processes or implementation.

**Empower**, not manipulate! One way to discourage youth participation and diminish trust is to resort to tokenism. Youth contributions must be taken seriously; institutions need to create spaces for youth to assume participative and influential roles. Let them lead!

**To young people**, space will never avail itself until we act!

One of our major challenges is that we don't know how to convert our energy into action; yet we possess abundant talent and creativity that is usually unleashed in the wrong spaces and for the wrong reasons.

My experiences as a leader and advocate have shown me that we can make ourselves heard, but that only the loudest voices will be heard. We need to draw on our potential and explore all possible routes to speak out and take action.

**YOUNG PEOPLE,  
SPACE WILL NEVER AVAIL  
ITSELF UNTIL WE ACT!**

We also need to manipulate our familiarity with digital technology. It paves the way for us to be key actors, holding our leaders accountable to their promises. By digitally tracking data, we can follow our governments' spending and progress on achieving development targets such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Technology can go a long way to making sure we develop our communities, just as we envision.

Through successful engagement and empowerment, I believe that young people have the capacity and the confidence to contribute to decisions that will shape our world.

Talk with us, listen to us and give us space to contribute.

Given that the future will soon be our present, it is only fair that we should have an active role in determining the future of the planet we will soon be responsible for.

**Onward Chironda**

# YOUNG4REAL WEB:

## NETTING ACROSS THE REGION



**Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educator and theorist said that true liberation and transformation can only be achieved if the affected communities are given voice and space to articulate their own issues.**

This is the philosophy that informs SAfAIDS young people's programming to scale up access to sexual and reproductive health and rights for all young people in the region, as well as to open up spaces of growth, talent development and healthivism.

The young people's sexual, reproductive health and rights services advocacy model, along with the Young People's Leadership Academy, are examples that seek to capacitate and empower young people to be agents of their own transformation and change.



### **But how has this panned out?**

Zimbabwe hosted the first ever YPISA regional summit in July 2016, under the theme "Promoting access to SRHR information and services among young people in Southern Africa". The summit was graced by delegates from Zambia, Malawi, South Africa and the hosts Zimbabwe; all young champions who, since being trained under the programme, have been working with other young people in their schools and communities.





# CONGRATULATIONS

BOND congratulates Team Zimbabwe for winning the YPISA Regional Summit Public Speaking Competition and their runners up, Team Swaziland!



## Team Zimbabwe

Tendai Chitsiga, Nyasha Munyoro, Takudzwa Zingwanda



## Team Swaziland

Siphawayinkosi Mdluli, Tenele Dlamini, Onginkosi Njcamphalala



# Where Are They Now?

*BOND correspondents traced some of the young people who have gone through the SAfAIDS YPISA and YPLA programmes to how their leadership journeys have been. And we are very proud to profile these guys' stories...*



## Young 4 Real!

### **Blessing Phiri (YPISA champion: Masvingo, Zimbabwe)**

My father died when I was only two-years-old. My mother had no one but herself, to take us through our journey to adulthood. She struggled to raise us and things got tougher when we started going to school.

Mother tried various avenues to keep us in school, from buying and selling to joining burial societies so she could get loans, but this was not always enough, as we also needed food and clothing. As a result, my brother and I spent more time at home than we did at school; every term we would be sent home because of outstanding fees.

The odds were very much against us, but I was not willing to lose. I fought hard and managed to achieve five units for my grade seven. My hard work paid off; an aunt from Zvishavane took me in and I enrolled for form one.

Sadly, my aunt passed away just before my second year at high school and I was forced to go back to my rural home and do my form two there.

I still missed school, this time more than I did in primary school, because the fees were higher. However, my mother did all she could to make sure I stayed in school.

**...many times I was tempted to make wrong choices**

When I was in form three, I joined the YPISA programme. It came at just the right time, because surely something could have gone wrong given my difficult circumstances. Often, young people from poor backgrounds resort to transactional sex, intergenerational relationships and even child marriage. I don't know what would have become of me. I would probably be a mother by now, because many times I was tempted to make wrong choices.

The YPISA programme taught us about sexual reproductive health and rights as well as life skills and helped me to realise that no matter how hard things were for me, I still needed to make the right choices and stay focused.

**Physics tells us that there is no sky and so there is no limit!**

Through the programme I learnt about the Mudadisi Old Students Association, an initiative that helps underprivileged students with potential. Mudadisi paid my school and examination registration fees the following year and though I had to wake up at 4a.m and walk seven kilometres to school, I was undeterred. As our YPISA motto says, I "set other things aside and focused on my education".

I passed my O' levels with flying colours, attaining 8 A's and a B; the first female student to have achieved such a feat at my school. My academic merit earned me an A' level scholarship to a boarding school, Chibi High.

I was very happy to learn that there was a YPISA club at my new school because it had become my cornerstone. The content we learned and the reading materials we got helped me to stay focused. I also had healthy conversations with other YPISA champions who became my biggest support system.

I went on to pass my A' levels with 20 points and got myself another scholarship to university. I am now enrolled at the National University of Science Education for a degree in Actuarial Science.

I am here because I met the right people at the right time. I am very grateful to SAfAIDS and BHASO for equipping me with life-skills and information. I will continue to use the knowledge and skills they gave me as I go up the ladder.

My mother can afford a smile now because I am in the process of rewriting our story of poverty into one of success.

Physics tells us that there is no sky and so there is no limit. I am flying high and will stop at nothing because I am young 4 real!

**My mother can afford a smile now because I am in the process of rewriting our story of poverty into one of success.**



**Make the Right Choices**  
**Less Sugar - More Life**  
**Be Young 4 Real**

**ARE YOU INTO SOCIAL MEDIA?**



**SAfAIDS**  
**Positive Talk TV**  
**Young 4Real**

For more cool info  
visit the SAfAIDS site



# One on One

with Wesley Nyabaya



*The YPISA programme has not only benefitted young women. Tintenda Goche (TG) our publications assistant interviewed Wesley Nyabaya (WN), a former YPISA champion, to establish how the programme impacted his life.*

## **TG: Who is Wesley?**

**WM:** I was born Wesley Nyabaya in Chitungwiza, Zimbabwe. I am the fifth-born in a family of seven. I did my O' levels at Seke I High. I then proceeded to Morgan High for A' level. Later I studied for a diploma in Management Information Systems at Trust Academy. My passion for development work drove me to study for a diploma in Development Studies with CCOSA and I am currently pursuing a degree in the same field with the Zimbabwe Open University.

## **TG: How did you join the YPISA programme?**

**WM:** I was identified by an organisation called Youth Advocates Zimbabwe (YAZ), who happened to be one of SAfAIDS partners implementing the young for real programme, and I was selected and trained as a YPISA champion in 2012.

## **TG: Did you find the YPISA programme relevant and useful?**

**WM:** Oh yes! It's a very eye opening programme. I gained information and skills that I am still using today. The toolkits and referral slips, especially, helped me execute my role very efficiently and I reached out and helped a number of people in my community.

I even broke barriers and began dialoguing about sexual reproductive health and rights as well as HIV and AIDS in churches, because I had the skills and knowledge. The programme is designed in such a way that you emerge a well-informed and knowledgeable champion who is equipped to deal with any SRHR issue.

## **TG: What challenges did you face as a YPISA champion?**

**WN:** Our society is still very conservative, particularly the church community. It was difficult for me to penetrate and start dialogue sessions. Sometimes I was accused of promoting early sexual debut by teaching other young people about condoms. But I managed to negotiate my way, as we had been given the skills to deal with resistance.

## **TG: Post the YPISA programme, are you still working in your community?**

**WN:** With the experience I got through the YPISA programme, I started an organisation called Youth Aspire Development Trust in 2015. We work with young people in churches doing HIV prevention programmes, entrepreneurship training and micro-financing.

## **TG: Wonderful Wesley. So where do you see yourself in the next five-to-ten years?**

**WN:** I hope to intensify the work that I'm doing within religious circles. There is still a lot of work to be done. Religious leaders are still resistant when it comes to sexual reproductive health matters. It is our duty as an organisation to capacitate them, so we hope to strengthen our capacity and devise effective strategies to engage them. We have already trained some pastors as ambassadors.

Young people are also our target group. Chitungwiza presents a very big opportunity for interventions because it has plenty of bars and beer halls and few recreational facilities. Young people are therefore bound to engage in risky sexual behaviour. So our plan is to disseminate information and positively impact as many lives as we can.

## **TG: What advice would you give to other young people out there?**

**WN:** I want them to know that life is a series of decisions. The choices you make today have a strong bearing on your future. I got where I am today because I made wise decisions. And finally, I advise them to be Young 4 Real and make the right choices!

# I am Unstoppable!

## SAfAIDS Leadership Academy Graduate, Buumba Malambo

*At age 24, Buumba Malambo has just become Zambia's youngest female politician and she is stopping at nothing in her quest for growth. A dynamic humanitarian, Buumba is a go-getter, who believes her destiny is in her hands. It was her quest for growth that saw her applying to the SAfAIDS Young People's Leadership Academy, for which she qualified after undergoing the grueling selection process.*

In my daily quest for opportunities, projects and trainings to better my skills in advocacy, I stumbled upon the SAfAIDS programme for young people. I looked at the quality of the project linking youths to the causes of HIV and felt compelled to apply.

The selection process was intense, as one had to prove that they can be a leader in their communities and advance the cause of young people and their sexual and reproductive health rights.

I triumphed and was selected, together with three other Zambians. We travelled to Zimbabwe for our first training where we met other young leaders from several countries. That training showed me that as a young leader, my goals have no limit. Prominent young people from different fields shared their journeys to success with us, inspiring us to aim higher. After my return to Zambia, there was instant growth in me and I got an opportunity to meet Queen Elizabeth, at Buckingham Palace, in London. This was just the beginning of many opportunities that followed.

*I live by Koffi Anani's quote;*

*"You are never too young to lead; never doubt your capacity to triumph where others have not!"*



After graduating, SFAIDS provided me with a grant to work with young women. This was the perfect opportunity, as I was campaigning for my political seat as a councillor for Magoba Ward in Zambia. I won, making me the youngest female councillor in my country's history. I am going to continue working with SFAIDS to change the lives of young women in my community.

A lot has changed in my life through what I learned from the SFAIDS leadership programme. I used to struggle with balancing my life and my work, but the speakers helped us with this – the SFAIDS Academy sessions are really practical! This was a real eye opener for me. Now, I allocate time to all the important aspects of my life.



Self-belief, self-confidence, hard work and teamwork are traits I gained from the course I am also running a charity, Buumbalambo Foundation, which is registered in both Zambia and Britain, and am currently working on a project with the help of the Ministry of Gender and the Ministry of Education to stop early marriages in rural Zambia. The charity has helped 435 children through its sponsorship programme since March 2015. Through Buumbalambo Foundation, I have collected over 15,000 items of clothing, toys and shoes from the University of Zambia, colleges, individuals and the Radio Phoenix Helpline project. These I have either put in the charity shop or donated to the needy.

My humanitarian work has given me the privilege of sitting on great platforms, like the Queen's Young Leaders Advisory Panel. I was the first and youngest Zambian to win the Women4Africa Award 2015, the Africa Arising Award 2015, the Zambia Woman of the Year Award 2016, the Mwape Peer Award (London) 2015, the African International Achievers Award (Nigeria) 2014 and the Voice of Youth Africa Award (USA) 2013. I have also participated in many child advocacy platforms around the world. Due to my contribution to the education sector in Zambia, I was selected to meet the President of Malta during the Commonwealth Youth Council meeting, to create collaborative opportunities in youth activities between Zambia and Malta.

These are just my baby steps. I am forging ahead and I plan to be a force to reckon with, with all thanks to the SFAIDS Young People Leadership Academy.

# My Journey of Growth!

***Michelle Chioniso from Zimbabwe, is a Young People’s Leadership Academy fellow. She is a passionate, reserved, God-loving, accommodating and fun lady. Michelle is full of ideas and takes every opportunity to share and learn. Most of all, Michelle loves people and invests in bringing the best out of them. She enjoys shopping, cooking and writing for leisure.***

She attended Marange and Mutoko High Schools and qualified as a general nurse at Parirenyatwa Hospital, in September 2013.

Michelle speaks of her childhood as having been a great one, until she lost both her parents. However, she was lucky to have a very supportive extended family. She owes the person that she is, to her uncle and aunt who raised her. “Yes, I lost my biological parents, but I had parents throughout my life. To date I really don’t feel like an orphan and my childhood was good”, says Michelle, who is now a Health Officer at Chiedza Care Centre. Let us ride with her as she relives her YPLA journey.

## **How did you find herself in the Young People’s Academy?**

During my nurse training, I was selected by the principal tutor to pioneer the establishment of a sexual reproductive health club, to help address the problem of unplanned pregnancies that was on the rise at the nursing institution. It was there that a friend of mine showed me the SAfAIDS Call for Applications.

## **How has your YPLA Journey been?**

My journey in the YPLA started off on a low note. I had a lot of fears and what if’s running through my mind. I felt inadequately prepared for the journey and incapable of surviving the academy. With this low self-esteem I never imagined myself emerging this efficient and strong leader at all.





However, as we went through the modules, I started realising there was more to me than I thought. I started identifying with who I really am and what I want in life.

### **What challenges did you encounter?**

My major challenge during this journey has been keeping going. As a young leader I have had to make life decisions that take me out of my comfort zone and staying afloat has been tough. Sometimes the old me wrestles with the new me and it is hard to keep on keeping on. I have also lost friends along the way because we do not share the same vision anymore, but that is ok because I am destined for greatness.

Currently, I am working as a health officer at a local NGO called Chiedza Child Care Centre. I got this job just after completing my second module in YPLA and I strongly believe YPLA prepared me adequately for this job.

### **Where to from here?**

I am definitely not sitting back, I still have a lot to achieve. I hope to continue working with nursing schools and helping them to establish sexual health clubs. I also plan on doing a BSc degree in Nursing and eventually, a Masters in Global health.

### **Would you recommend another young person to the Young People's Leadership Academy?**

YES! Joining YPLA is the best present any person can give themselves, because it doesn't just build your character and life skills, but it helps you discover YOU, in a fun and amazing way. The experience differs from individual to individual, but one thing is definitely common – it's a guarantee that you will come out motivated, ready to excel and make a positive impact.

### **What is Your Parting Shot to our Readers?**

To the young people, I say, life is what you make it. Identify and build on your strengths and passion. Never compromise your happiness for anything not worth the while; love yourself first before anyone else tells you they love you. Above all, put God first in all you do.

# Talking About Child Marriage

**UNICEF 2016 %  
Married by 15**



**UNICEF 2016 %  
Married by 18**



\* Child marriage prevalence is the percentage of women 20-24 years old who were married or in union before they were 18 years old (UNICEF State of the World's Children, 2016)

Source: [www.girlsnotbrides.com](http://www.girlsnotbrides.com)

Worldwide, more than 700 million women alive today were married as children; 17% of them, or 125 million, live in Africa.

Nearly four in every ten girls in sub-Saharan Africa are married before the age of 18. All African countries are faced with the challenge of child marriage.

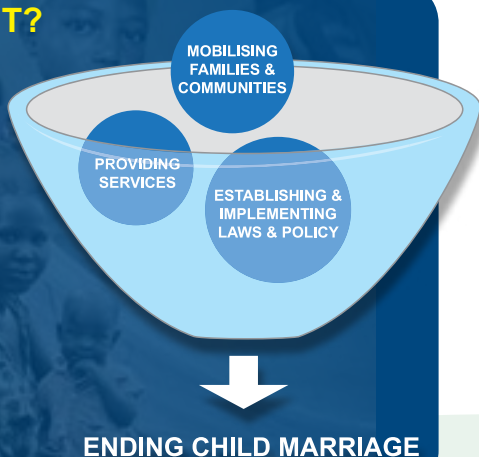
## WHY?

It's complicated. Parents may marry off their girl children due to poverty or out of fear for their safety. Sometimes it is justified by a non-changing culture or tradition. Definitely, gender inequality and the low value placed on girls contribute to the practice.

## WHAT CAN WE DOING ABOUT IT?

By 2050, if nothing is done, the African continent will have the largest number and global share of child brides in the world. The time to act is now!

GIRLSNOTBRIDES says 'Ending child marriage requires work across all sectors and at all levels. It requires us to understand the complex drivers behind the practice in different contexts and adapt our interventions accordingly'. They have developed this (see the diagram on the right) theory of change to help end child marriage. Hearing and sharing the experiences of others is also important to raise awareness towards actions.





# Child Marriage Murdered My Dreams! - By Memory

***"If my mother had paid more attention to me, I would be saying a different story today. I believe a good relationship with parents is needed for every child to reach their potential"***

It is very true that child marriage can lead to a lifetime of disadvantage and deprivation. I realised I was growing very fast at the age of 15. I started noticing guys and wanted so much to have a boyfriend. My friends were doing it too and I didn't want to be left behind. Then I was staying with my mom, who never noticed the changes. As a single parent, she hardly paid attention to me. She had her own problems to take care of. She spent most of her time away from home, trying to make ends meet. As we never had time to discuss important matters; she barely knew what was happening in my life.

I spent most of my time with friends and my mother's little sister who stayed nearby. It was there that I met an older man in his late 30s. She always complemented this guy and felt he would make a good boyfriend for me. I thought it was a good decision, so we started dating. In no time, I fell pregnant, much to my mother's disappointment. My grandmother, with whom we were staying, ordered me to go back to the 'culprit' who had impregnated me. So I dropped out of school and eloped with him.

The guy accepted me and tried to be nice, at least for the first two years of our marriage. Sometimes it's not the people who change; it's the mask that falls off. That is what happened with my husband. He started revealing his true colours. He became violent and got involved with many girls. Knowing that my mom didn't want me to return home, I suffered in silence for a long time. Then came the day that I could not take it any more and we got divorced.

***"Sometimes it's not the people who change; it's the mask that falls off"***

After parting ways with this man, I found out that I was HIV positive. At 18, I was HIV positive and a divorcee with a child to take care of. I have so many responsibilities to bear.

To all those young people who still have the chance to go to school and pursue their dreams – make the right choices. Prevention is better than cure!

# Drug & Alcohol Abuse

## The case of Swaziland by Onginkosi Njcamphalala

The problem of drug abuse among Swaziland's adolescents has increased drastically in recent years. This is affecting families and society at large as crime, violence and corruption are on the increase in many communities. Parents often learn of their adolescent children's drug abuse for the first time when the police arrest them; they are either too busy, or unable to tell the symptoms of drug abuse in their children. Adolescents, on the other hand, are not empowered enough to say no to peers who lure them into the shady world of drug abuse.

There are many reasons why drug and alcohol abuse have escalated in my country. Chief among them is the geographical location.

Swaziland is a landlocked country that shares borders with KwaZulu-Natal Province of South Africa in the west, south and north and with Mozambique to the east. This makes drug trafficking into Swaziland easy as the borders are very easy to cross. In addition, our country tends to have more complex problems with substance abuse because of poor socio-economic conditions.



As a YPISA champion, I have committed myself to fighting the problem of drug and alcohol abuse in Swaziland. The adolescents I work with in Msunduzi township and Mbabane who abuse drugs have confessed that since they started abusing drugs their school work has deteriorated. Most of them have been arrested for criminal offences at some point.

Peer pressure is a big problem, combined with the fact that more than half of young people live with only one parent and have a poor relationship with their guardian.

I am confident that with the skills and information I have and continue to gather, things will improve in my community. I am proud to be a YPISA champion and I will continue to remind other young people that there is more to life than wasting it with drugs and alcohol ■



Don't do SEX, ALCOHOL & DRUGS

## **SPORTSMANSHIP ON AND OFF THE FIELD!**

(Avoid **SEX**, **ALCOHOL** and **DRUG ABUSE**)

### **RULES OF THE GAME:**

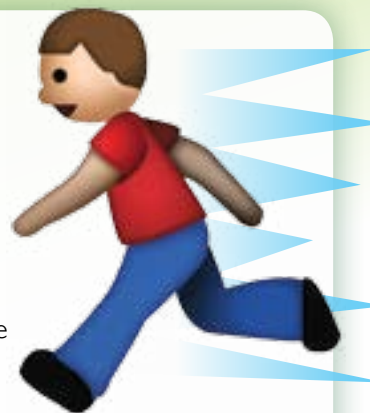
1. **Be a good team player:** You and your friends need to look out for each other
2. **Play your position:** Know who you are! make decisions that have a positive impact on your life and that will not make you regret or be sad tomorrow
3. **Make the right pass:** Are you a positive influence or are you the one instigating SAD abuse?
4. **Make the right moves:** How are you getting home? Is it safe? Don't drink and drive or be a passenger when the driver has been drinking
5. **Kick the ball to win:** Don't end the games to start a life with HIV and/or a pregnancy
6. **Live the message:** Say NO to SEX, ALCOHOL and DRUG ABUSE!



Say **NO** to **SAD**

**#DontDoSAD**

# Baleka, Run Away, Flee!



By Siphwayinkosi Mdluli – YPISA champion (Swaziland)

I have been labelled a coward and endured a lot of pressure and embarrassment for turning a blind eye towards girls. I am sure most teenagers and adults know the drill, when the bad boys follow you around school like a tail bellowing, “Boo!” simply because you could not get that girl. That does not bother me at all, because I am smart and make smart decisions.

I just love that boy I see in the mirror too much to let him be a victim of lung cancer, sexually transmitted infections (STI) or teen fatherhood. If being a coward means living a longer, fulfilling and healthier life, then I am the world’s proudest coward! I love the boy I see every day in the mirror. When danger looms and no is not enough, *ngiyabaleka*, I run for my life!

“If it’s too hot in the kitchen, you simply have to get out, you have to *baleka*.” I remember saying these words at the Regional YPISA Summit in Harare, Zimbabwe. I was talking about running away from sexual temptation. We are young, and at a point where hormones are raging and temperatures constantly hike. Sometimes it is so difficult to say no, and so easy to follow blindly, especially for us young men. They say a real man does not just stare at a bird that flaunts her feathers in his nest, he preys on it. I say a real man makes informed choices and decisions to stay out of trouble. When the brain has been taken over by feelings and reason subdued by emotions, just run! *Baleka!*

It is very essential for young people to run away. Run away from drugs, alcohol and sex. Run away from blessers! What a pity they use such a beautiful title for something so destructive. Run away from the ‘hot’ girls or six-packed boys, if it is not yet time. Pursue that which matters first. You will have all the time in the world to do hot.

Yes! Run away from negative friends. Lest you end up in a dumpster from an overdose of drugs. Know your worth and value your body. Be selfish with it, and when they try to trespass, simply *baleka!*

I love the boy that I see every day in the mirror. I want to keep him healthy and happy. So he runs for his life when it gets too hot. You can run too when it gets hot!

Be young 4 real and make the right choices!



# LESS Sugar, MORE Life!

*Kwete Sugar Mummies,  
Kwete Sugar Daddies*

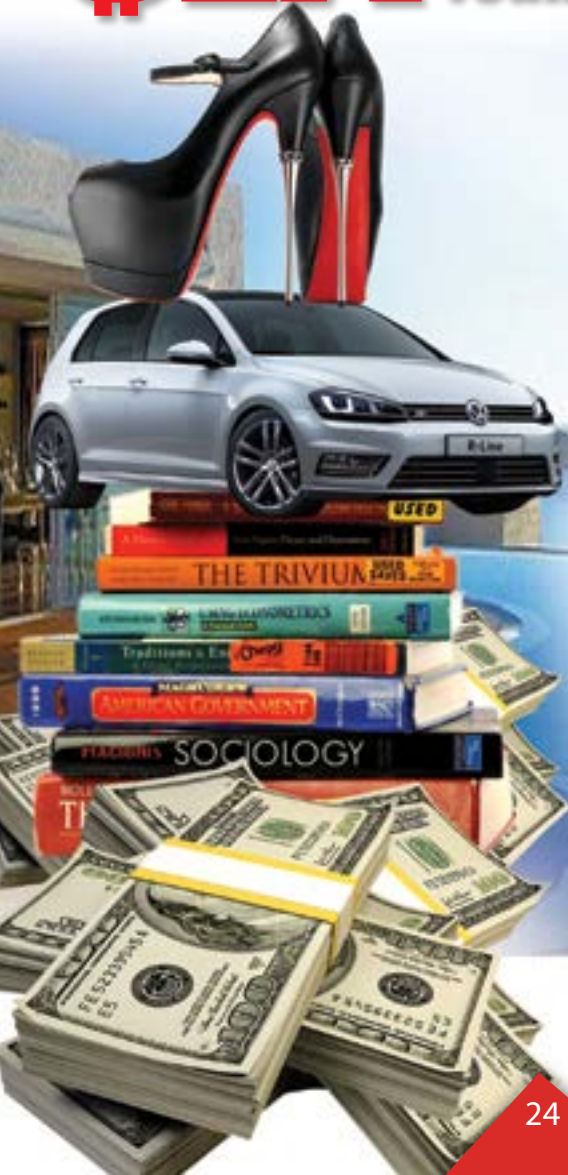


**Make the right choices  
-Be young for real**

# TRANSACTIONAL SEX

## Surviving the Blesser-Blessee Era as a Young Woman

By Nyasha  
Phanisa Sithole



Tendy wants the latest fashion and fancy makeup kit. She also wants to enjoy the convenience of moving from one point to the next in that fancy car and frequent expensive joints. All this she desires, but her pocket will not permit and jobs are very scarce. John is the CEO at a company that is performing very well. He has it all and many times he has offered to bless her with all she fancies and more, if she can just bless him with her body. This is the dilemma facing many young women and girls in Zimbabwe today as the economic climate gets harsher.

In my work as an activist and leader, I have seen a lot of young women and girls fall by the wayside in an attempt to bite off more than they can chew. Some swallow the blesser's bait and drop out of school, while others end up teenage mothers. Others not only get pregnant, they contract HIV too. The 'fortunate' ones are not dumped but become second or third wives to their blesser. It all starts out rosy but blesser-blesee relationships bear grave consequences.

So how does one survive this blesser-blesee phenomenon in such a hostile environment? Here are some tips I have adopted in the past 10 years that I have volunteered as a passionate advocate in the field of sexual reproductive health and rights.



## Tip One – Set Your Goals

Setting immediate, medium and long-term goals has helped me stay focused, no matter what I go through. When I set these goals I also ask myself what does it take for me to attain them and I have realised that no blesser can make me the president of Zimbabwe. Mr Blesser cannot confer on me the PhD that I badly want. He can possibly give me money, but I am not ready to sell myself cheap because I come from a humble background. I opt for scholarships and I am blessed that way.

## Tip Two – Know Your Values

It is very important to have a set of values and principles that guide you. These are powerful in defining who you are and what you can do. The moment you appreciate your own values you will try by all means to live according to them, not to break your principles. Valuing hard work has made me strive to be the best I can be all the time. So when I see Mr Blesser, who wants to bless me with a car in exchange for my body and my freedom, I walk away, because I value myself enough. My values keep me on track for what I want to be.

## Tip Three – Keep Your Eyes on the Ball

People come from different backgrounds and have different stories. It's easy to look at your peers and admire what they have, but pause and remind yourself that you have your own life to live. Stay focused on your goals, run your race and better yourself. You never know how they acquired what they have, it may be hard work or 'hard love'. Just keep your eyes on the ball and you will never regret it.

As young women, we tend to look at people who have succeeded with a single lens. They didn't just wake up like that one day. It took a lot of hard work, sacrifice, courage, discipline and good decision-making. Discipline is the highest level of self-control and a key principle that young women and girls who are aspiring to leave a legacy should have. It is the highest level of self-control one can practice. It means staying focused and refusing to like and adopt

easy ways of acquiring materials things and/or positions. It also means refusing to live a fancy life you have not worked for. Most of all it means refusing to lower your standards, values and principles just to be like 'everyone else'.

## Tip Four – Spirituality

It is very important to subscribe to a belief. Personally I am a Christian and the bible warns against sexual immorality, which of course is what the blesser-blesee relationships are about. God also says that he will bless the works of your hands... not the works of your body. One has to believe in something to stay in track.

I have practised the above tips every day of my life for the past ten years and they have helped me survive the sugar daddy – now blesser-blesee era. I have often found myself in very tight financial situations. There are times when I am unable to pay for my school fees or even to buy a pair of shoes. Blessers have approached me a number of times but I shun them because I have chosen the path of hard work rather than hard love.

So to my sisters out there... as far as I know only God can bless, but even he does so with conditions such as; if you obey my laws... if you work hard... So next time before you get blessed, ask yourself how much you will have to bless him and at what cost.

This message also goes to my colleagues who are activists themselves,

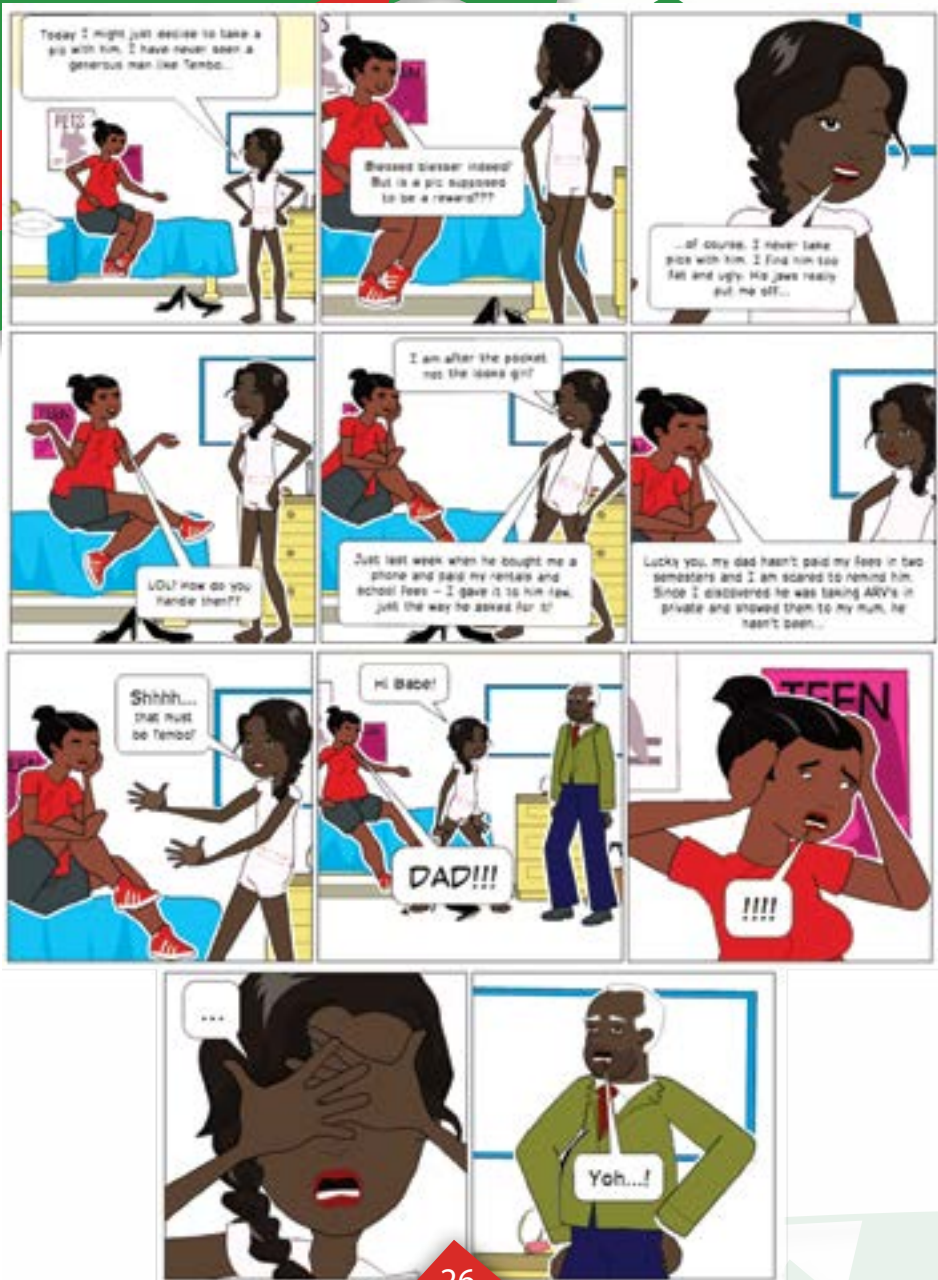
No one is immune!

It all starts out rosy  
but blesser-blesee  
relationships bear  
grave consequences



# CARTOON TIME

Less Sugar, More Life!





# FOCUS ON FICTION

## Sharing the Real through the Unreal!

# It's Never Too Late

## A Story by Princess Sibanda

*"Bvisa bvisa hembe iyo chop chop, I have other students to serve my dear."* bellowed Mr Moyo as he locked his office door. Semester after semester she had gone through this in order to pass Moyo's tough modules. Her brain alone could not take her through, she felt. It had stored too many pains and heartaches to be able to master theories. Yet she needed to graduate. It was painful. So painful that it brought hurtful memories.

Christmas had always been a big day for Thoko. Not merely because it was Christmas, but it was her birthday too. Yes! She shared a birthday with Jesus. This Saturday, she was on a massive cloud ride. She wondered what Uncle Putu and aunt Martha had for her this time around. They had never missed her birthday, ever since she was five years old. From that lovely red dress she often wore during fun days at school, to her Samsung mobile phone – it was them.



Uncle Putu was her late father's best friend. He and his wife were the only people who visited her at the children's home, where she had lived since the bus and train collision that claimed her parents.

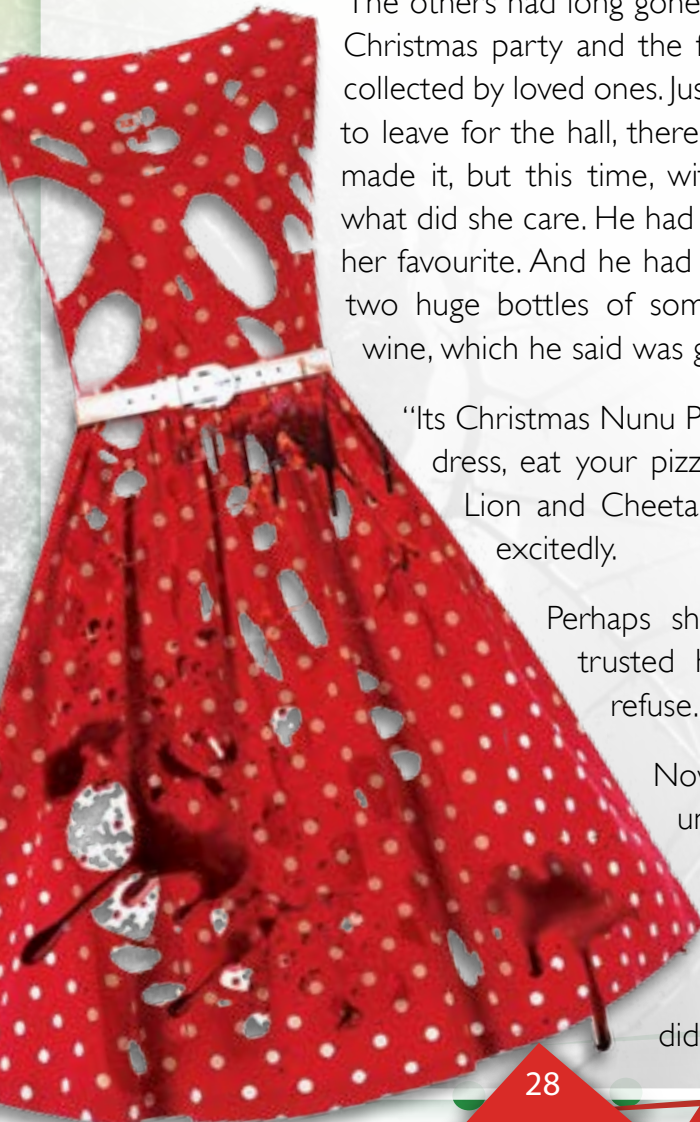
They had promised that her 16th birthday present would be out of this world so she could barely contain her joy. One minute she was walking around the home, the next peeping through the keyhole hoping to see them walk through the hall. Once... twice... thrice, still there was no one.

The others had long gone to the dining hall for the Christmas party and the fortunate ones had been collected by loved ones. Just as she opened the door to leave for the hall, there was Uncle Putu. He had made it, but this time, without Aunty Martha. But what did she care. He had brought her a large pizza, her favourite. And he had also brought a dress and two huge bottles of some drink he called grape wine, which he said was good for brain growth.

"Its Christmas Nunu Pie! Change into your new dress, eat your pizza and we will go to the Lion and Cheetah Park", said Uncle Putu excitedly.

Perhaps she was too excited and trusted her uncle too much to refuse.

Now in her nakedness, uncle Putu's face changed instantly. He would not extend the new dress to her. Instead he whispered in her ear, "I did say I would make this



your special day, huh.” Caught between disbelief, confusion and a large dose of disappointment, she gave an awkward grin. Before she knew it, the neck of a wine bottle had invaded her mouth and the sour beverage was forcing its way down her throat... This man she loved and trusted with all her heart had decided to make her birthday ‘special’ by inducting her into womanhood... through RAPE!!

If she told the matron, who would take her in after her time at the children’s home had lapsed? She told no one. She stayed with her pain. For the next two years, Uncle Putu brought her the large pizza and forced himself on her. He rewarded her silence by taking her in after she turned 18, but he never made it to her 19th birthday for he succumbed to meningitis. Aunt Martha, however, sent her to university.

So here she was with Mr Moyo. Trapped. She began to cry. The tears were not only from pain, but out of defeat and hopelessness.

As she looked everywhere but at Mr Moyo, her eyes landed on a poster inscribed, “Be young for real. Make the right choices” and underneath, “Don’t do Sex, Alcohol and Drugs”. There were phone numbers on that poster. Was she making the right choice here? Could she make the right choices after years of silence and sexual transaction? Did she deserve help? Was it too late to say no and run for her life? She didn’t only have to make the right choice. It needed to be quick too. Mr Moyo was in a rush to finish with her...

Trapped. She began to cry. The tears were not only from pain, but out of defeat and hopelessness.



“I don’t want to do this any more!” she snapped as she put her dress on, quickly tore the list of numbers off the poster and ran for her life...

# Speechcraft



## Be Responsible and Stay In The Game!

I can feel it running through my veins,  
Is it the adrenaline or the combination of weed and alcohol?  
Light headed I walk on  
Trying not to show something is wrong.  
The whistle goes and I'm shaking a little  
But ready to show who the best is.

My turf, my zone, my game!  
It's all exciting, yet so scary.  
The crowd is cheering  
My head is now ringing.

10 minutes into the game,  
My body's weak and I'm so weary,  
But I soldier on.  
I see the gold medal on me  
And the trophy in my hands,  
I won't let this unpleasant feeling get the better of me.

Minutes pass  
It just gets worse  
I'm out of breath  
My head is about to burst  
Then... all turns black  
As my body hits the ground  
Head first...The rest who knows?

*Doping and or using any form of substance to enhance performance is toxic. It affects you physically, mentally and emotionally and you will never be the same. Playing sport should give you a sense of pride not shame. I am a proud and responsible Zambian basketballer, I say no to doping and substance abuse.*

**– Mwila Mwale (Zambia)**

## *Recipe for success*

Reason and passion are like a rudder and sails,  
They propel you to your desired destination,  
Reason alone is like a flame that burns to destruction,  
Passion is like fuel that keeps the flame burning,  
Determination keeps you in lane  
The recipe to success is not complete without  
determination.

Like a seed that sprouts on a bare land,  
The potential lies deep in every young person  
It takes courage and confidence to exploit that potential,  
Success does not come on a silver platter

– **Juliet Kipchirchir** (Nairobi, Kenya)

## *A Flame So Hot*

He was not just a flame but a hot flame  
A love so strong or so I thought it was  
The slaps I welcomed with glee  
It is how love should be he said  
The pain was so raw  
And thorough was the pounding  
A swollen eye and a broken rib or two  
They told me that's how love is supposed to be  
Too hot a flame it was, But I could not walk away  
I was too hungry and desperate for love  
I just hoped and prayed that rain would put it away  
But my misery only rekindled it  
A love that felt like pain, One day I woke up tired  
Love became too hot I could not bear it anymore  
I walked away from the flame  
And embarked on a journey of freedom  
Look back I will not  
For where a flame so hot laid once  
Only ashes lie scattered.

– **Sidumisile Tshabalala** (Bulawayo, Zimbabwe)

## *This is My Story*

This my ink, Will today be my voice  
And you dear reader, my audience  
Please... let me tell my story  
At the tender age of 15 years

I knew what it was like to be screened by a gynaecologist  
I knew the pain that came with resting my feet on metal pedals  
And opening my legs wide whilst looking directly at a fluorescent light  
I knew the jerks of pain that surrendered the cold metal objects  
That penetrated me in that doctor's room.

Yet a lot of whys, sang in my mind  
I didn't understand why I was admitted into hospital,  
With just my mother's consent

I didn't understand the importance that was placed on my  
uterus shredding tissue every month...

This 15 year old had not started her menstrual cycle  
For nearly a decade now, every month has been the same...

I don't bleed and I have never bled

I can't and I won't be able to carry life

I don't know the price of pads nor tampons

Because I have never been in a position to use them

But I have had to understand my sexual reproductive health in a different context.

Every day for the next decade or two I will need to take birth control

To trick my body into understanding that my body is caging life

I have been in a relationship with myself  
where I felt I was less of a womxn because...

I don't bleed - I can't bear children naturally

But... I'm trying to exit that dangerous relationship

Being a womxn is not bleeding every month

Being a womxn is not determined by carrying life

Being a womxn is a feeling that comes with understanding your body

Being a womxn is not responding to people calling me infertile... because Im not

Being a womxn is personal and it sure is beautiful.

- **Mbali** (South Africa)



## *Wish I Had Spoken*

From birth to teenagehood, I raged with pain  
As I watched her suffer. I could not free her  
I just watched her writhe in pain  
At the hands of that monster I called my father.

Yes! he was a monster. Ever angry, never happy  
I just watched him prey on my mum  
Help she prayed for, But she found it not  
A deaf ear they all paid,

To free herself from him would be a disgrace they said!  
“A real woman holds on” she was told.  
Society mattered more  
Than her own safety and happiness

Broken, defeated and hurt. She endured in silence  
She said she would stay strong for me  
Yet I could not be strong for her  
I was too young, too powerless to confront the monster  
So I just watched...

All the hurtful piercing words that hit her ears  
The countless fists that pelted her body  
The bottles that hit her head  
Crushed my little heart into tiny pieces. But I just watched

I watched right up to that day  
That one day she hit him back  
And he dug an axe into her head  
Death met her, at the hands of the man she loved. My father!  
Memories of the ruthless battles my mother fought will never fade  
They haunt me day and night!  
I was the reason she stayed put  
The reason she stayed strong  
But I couldn't be strong for her  
Too young and powerless I was  
But maybe, only maybe  
I should have spoken.

– *Theophillus Nenjerama (Harare, Zimbabwe)*

# JOG YOUR MIND...

**Back to our healthivism theme...**

**Tip – a healthy psyche and a healthy intellect, a healthier body. How many words of four letters or more can you make out of this target? And there's a nine-letter word too! On your marks... get set, ready and get your brains cracking!**

**Good – 10 words**

**Very Good – 15 words**

**Excellent - 20 words including the nine letter word.**

M	W	E
P	D	R
E	O	E

# Start Now!

**By Tariro Tandi**

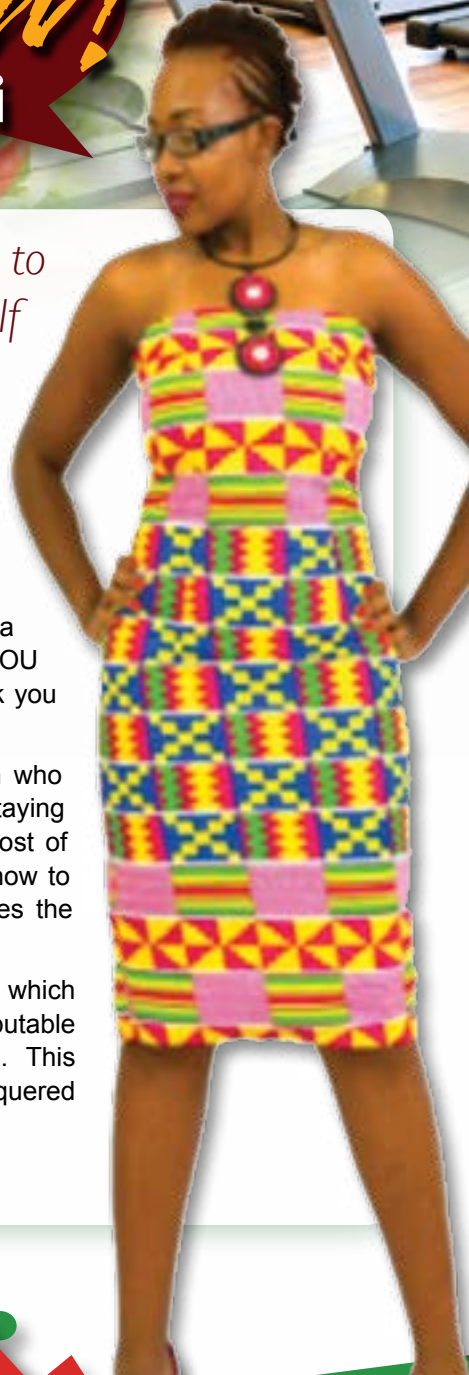
*“You don't have to break a bank to lead a healthy and fit lifestyle. If you can afford it, good but if you can't that is not an excuse”*

Many of us wish to lead healthy lives, but never set ourselves to do it. We find comfort in excuses like, “I will do it later” and later becomes never. Procrastination kills our dreams. The idea is **START NOW; START FROM WHEREVER YOU ARE** and your new fit and healthy self will thank you for it.

The question now is, how can a young person who is still a student, work on losing weight and staying fit without breaking the bank, considering the cost of gym subs and complicated diet plans. Here is how to do it in a very affordable way which also makes the process sustainable and within reach;

Firstly it's very important to know the 80/20 rule which states that 80 percent of our weight loss is attributable to eating right and 20 percent to exercising. This means the greater part of the journey is conquered through the mouth.

Now, I'm going to break down this 80/20 rule.



## Eating Right (80 percent)

1. Our meals should consist of whole foods whenever possible. Instead of buying white bread or white rice, go for brown products. Eat sweet potatoes (*mbambaira*), yams (*madhumbe*) and *sadza rezviyo*, *mapfunde* or *mhunga*. When you cannot get whole foods, watch your portions. Reduce the amount of carbohydrates and increase your vegetable intake, say 2 to 3 tablespoons of *sadza*, lots of vegetables and a small portion of meat.
2. Stay away from junk and fast foods because undoubtedly these are real enemies when it comes to weight loss.
3. Reduce or cut out sugar completely. This includes soft drinks AND 100 percent juices. Water is always the best to quench our thirst. Drink lots of it!
4. Never starve yourself, eat right and moderately to nourish your body. Aim always to have a balanced diet with proteins, carbohydrates, vitamins, healthy fats and calcium.
5. Vegetables and fruits should be your best friend; how your body and skin will thank you for it.

## Exercise (20 percent)

If your goal is to lose a large amount of weight, then it is important to exercise so that your body is well toned and does not sag after losing the weight. No money for the gym? Don't stress!

1. Running and walking – This just requires you to be on the road without any money involved. Reflecting on my weight loss journey, nothing – and I mean nothing – beats running and walking.
2. You can also buy training discs such as DVDs and CDs and use them at home (these can be found from as little as 50 cents).
3. Play sport – There is that sport you enjoy so much, find a team that you can join locally (even the 'Boozers').
4. Basically keep your body on the move to burn some calories.
5. I am no expert, my advice is purely borne out of the lessons I have learnt through my own weight loss journey. Having lost 47kgs my motto is: It is only we who limit ourselves. Limits like fear are simply an illusion. Keep that body healthy!

Tariro Tandi is a human rights lawyer by profession and gender activist who has since embarked on a fruitful weight loss journey and continues to share her experiences with other young people in Zimbabwe. She can be followed on facebook @afrofabulousgoddess.

# SAFAIDS Information Development and Production Services

## What we offer

Excellence in targeted information development and production - enabling you to communicate effectively with your target audience.

We can provide a total information and communications package through:

- Conceptualisation and content
  - development
  - Branding
  - Editing
- Translation and back translation
  - Design and layout
- Final production and printing

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We have a dedicated team of skilled information and design specialists with over 15 years experience in the production of developmental health information, responding to the information needs of different sectors and communities in southern Africa.

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Knowledge for action: **The power to make a difference!**

SAFAIDS Information Development and Production Services – delivering quality content and quality design

# FASHION

FOR THE GUYS - 'DON'T TOUCH THE SHOE' BY HILLARY RWAINGESU

*Now back with a bang, skinnier and more fitted, with gracious patterns and colours that scream fashionista, the trousers don't dare touch a man's shoe! Have you tried this trend yet? All you have to do is figure out the right shoes and socks to pair up with that suit of yours.*



*If you are more of a casual wear type of man, no worries. For the everyday man, the trend comes with much relaxation and fresh air, as you can go with a pair of short secret socks to give your legs a breather. Plus there are a lot of prints and styles for the trousers too, from traditional denim to much lighter choices.*



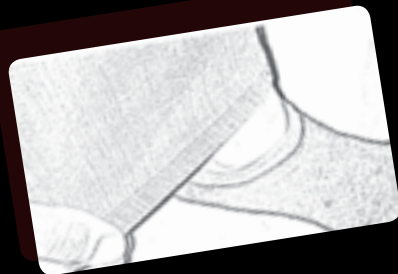
## NO BUDGET? NO WORRIES

You can work with your everyday trousers. All you have to do is cuff your old pair. Try the look and if it does not work, try with some other trousers. I am certain one type will work for you. In addition to a simple double cuff fold, you can also try this easy three-step pin roll fold that will transform your normal trousers into a fashion forward pair.

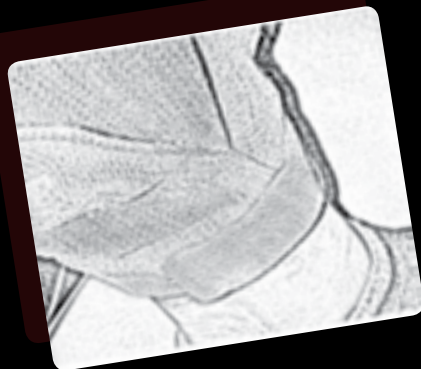
# NEW FOCUS

## THE PIN-ROLL

**Step One:** Pinch the fabric and pull it tight against your ankle



**Step Two:** Fold the loose fabric all the way round your ankle



**Step Three:**  
Roll your pants up twice

So there you have it gentlemen;  
snip snap, let the pants get shorter!

FOR THE GAL'S - IT'S IN THE BAG

# FASHION

*So what's new? Paper Bag Skirts and Pants that's what!  
It's a great way to show off that waistline and that hour-glass figure!!*

*So what is a Paper Bag Skirt? It is not actually made of paper or bags but cinched in at the waist, top of paper bag style. Perfect, no zipper needed.*

*Take a look!*





# W FOCUS

Here is a 'sew-to' guide!

- 1 To make, form a cylinder with your fabric that is at least a couple of inches wider than your hips (mine is 6 inches wider than my hips). Fold over the top hem generously.



- 2 Sew in a separate casing for an elastic waist. I used seam binding because it is so thin (who needs extra waist bulk?) Sew the casing over where you folded down the top to secure the top hem. Leave a small opening to thread the elastic through, then close that opening once your waistband elastic is in. Like this.

↑ This is what it looks like on the inside.

Add a generous bottom hem for balance →.



And a simple belt (mine is recycled from another outfit. You can use fabric to make one or a matching coloured plastic or leather belt).

There you have it-  
All glammed up and trending!



# A PERSPECTIVE (with a Twist) SHOES



I love shoes! Not just because they make a girl look great but because shoes have a way of defining the type of person she is and can be.

Picture a girl in high platform heels. She spells confidence, authority and command over her personality, choices and character.

High-heeled shoes are not fancied by everyone. They are usually desired by those who want to try out the extreme and defy odds; those who don't mind being laughed at when they trip simply because they have made the personal choice to look great in the 'hard to walk in' type of shoe.

## **Short Cuts!**

We live in an era where quality standards seem too high for young people to attain. They prefer shortcuts. Simple and fast routes to fun, batting no eyelid to the implications that particular fun shoe can have on their lives. Many a times, young people hesitate to make the right choices and decisions, simply because they want to fit in with the crowd. Much like wearing the wrong size of a shoe that hurts the feet or prematurely kills the shoe, living a reckless, unprincipled life will either ruin one's life or murder your dreams.

*"Self-respect is the only foundation for empowerment"*

## **Raise the Bar...**

Aim for what is deemed a bar too high because much like a pair of high heels, high standards will not allow you to walk anywhere or anyhow. Instead, they teach one to be self-conscious and selective of the choices and decisions you make. One is unavoidably made aware that anything that compromises your balance can cost you a fall. Young people should train themselves to walk in high heels and with time they will find comfort and satisfaction in their chosen paths.

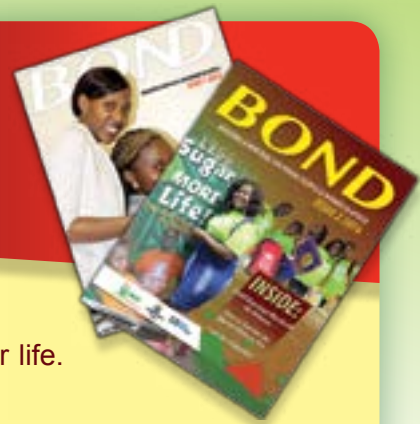
Self-respect is the only foundation for empowerment because instead of feeling judged, you feel awake to those things or activities that define a 'self' you can also be proud of. When you decide to wear an inappropriate shoe, your feet will suffer and this will affect many other things.

Find your own size, colour and type of shoe and start living up to who God made you to be.

**by Mantate Mlotshwa**



# Until the Next Issue Remember...



Your circumstances are just the canvas of your life.  
The final painting is up to you.

– **Tafadzwa Bete**

The only person who can perfect what you want is you.

– **Khotso Makhamo (YPLA Lesotho)**

Success oriented people never look into the future with fear and never give it the benefit of doubt because doubt itself has no benefit.

– **Onward Chironda (YPLA Zimbabwe)**

Things turn out best for those who make the best out of the way things turn out.

– **John Wooden**

If you want to live a happy life, tie it to a goal, not to people or things.

– **Albert Einstein**

Your current circumstances do not determine your destination.

– **Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda**

So, do it. Decide. Is this the life you want to live?

Is this the person you want to love?

Is this the best you can be? Can you be stronger?

Kinder, more compassionate?

Decide. Breathe in. Breathe out and decide.

– **Meredith Grey**

# BOND

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→ Check out who was at the  
**SCORE Y4R Youth Summit!**



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