

Tomy Takkies by Bata tackles period poverty ahead of World Menstrual Hygiene Day

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More than 250 girls in the eThekweni township of Inanda will have a greater chance of staying in school to reach their full potential, thanks to a donation of sanitary hygiene products from footwear giant, Bata South Africa and its Tomy Takkies brand, in partnership with the Imbumba Foundation and its Caring4Girls programme.



Lihle Mthethwa, Nombuso Ncapai, Anele Mphuthi, Mrs Bongzi Mthembu

Representatives of Bata, Tomy Takkies, Caring4Girls and the Imbumba Foundation this month visited Ziphembeleni Secondary School to hand over a portion of a year's supply of sanitary towels to girls from Grade 8 through to matric. The girls also received Bata shoes.

Founded by social entrepreneur, Richard Mabaso, the Imbumba Foundation, through its Caring4Girls programme, is on a quest to provide menstrual hygiene support and education to two million disadvantaged South African girls. It aims to help eradicate absenteeism among young girls, who often skip school when they do not have access to basic sanitary protection during their menstrual cycles.

The Caring4Girls partnership forms part of the global Bata Children's Programme (BCP), which focuses on four key areas of children's development: Education, Health & Safety, Living in a Sustainable World and Mentoring and Skills.



Michael Wyatt, managing director of Bata SA, said, “As Bata South Africa, we are proud to be able use our global Bata Children’s Programme to collaborate locally and support Richard Mabaso and the Caring4Girls programme. What Richard has created is amazing and I trust that this work done in Inanda is another step towards a long-standing relationship between Bata and Caring4Girls.”

Mabaso added, “We are very grateful for this partnership. It is through such collaborative efforts that we can ensure that all girls, regardless of race and status, won’t have to miss out on school days due to their menstrual cycles. This thus ensures equal opportunities educationally, socially, and economically.”

Lack of access to menstrual health support and feminine hygiene products has a devastating impact on school going young girls in rural and semi-rural communities.

Tomy brand manager Swastika Juggernath, said, “With World Menstrual Hygiene Day due to be observed on 28 May, our donation to the school and its girls aims to reinforce the day’s key message – that menstruation is a normal fact of life and that women and girls should not be prevented from getting an education, earning an income and fully and equally participating in everyday life because of a natural bodily function.”

“Bata’s BCP strives to positively impact the lives of South African children and those around them. As Tomy Takkies specifically, we’re passionate about female inspired programmes and supporting the spirit of women empowering other women. Partnering with Caring4Girls gives us the opportunity to give back to the community and to young women in particular,” added Juggernath.

“It is our sincere hope that this donation will help to lessen the burden on these young girls on a monthly basis by providing them with access to these basic requirements,” said Juggernath.

School principal Mrs Bongi Mthembu said, “We are so happy and excited to be recipients of this donation because our school is located in a poverty-stricken community where learners sometimes do not come to school because they do not have pads, so we appreciate this programme so much because it will help our girls feel comfortable and protected at that time of the month. We also thank God for this opportunity and moving Bata’s hearts into coming to our school to offer us such important assistance because we really needed it.”

Headgirl Anele Mphuthi added, “This Caring4Girls programme means so much to us I feel relieved and happy that Bata donated pads to our girls because some of us can’t afford them and are struggling, so the donation has taken this burden off our shoulders.”

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