

We're all part of the problem. Rethink GBV normalisation

 By Leigh Andrews

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HelloFCB+ and the City of Cape Town's "Boys do what men teach them" campaign tied in with this year's global #16daysofactivism campaign, standing out for taking an educational tactic set to inspire behaviour change rather than just raise awareness of the serious gender-based violence (GBV) issue.



Scenes from HelloFCB+ and City of Cape Town's "Boys do what men teach them" campaign.

The three-part campaign, featuring "My first joke", "My first catcall", and "My first touch", makes the viewer feel uncomfortable for the young girls being objectified, and wishing you could step in and correct the young boys' inappropriate behaviour.

HelloFCB+ CCO Mike Barnwell explains that these are the actions and inactions young boys see happening on a daily basis. As a result, they learn to think that this is simply how a man should act...

“ *In reality, it's our responsibility to teach the next generation of men how they should behave so that we can break the cycle of gender-based violence.* ”

The provocative campaign puts a spotlight on the realities of gender-based violence through seemingly 'innocent' or 'victimless' acts like locker-room talk.

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Instead, it calls on South African men to lead by example against gender-based violence by speaking out when they see these things happen, much like what we've already seen in a number of behaviour change campaigns took root before the #16DaysOfActivism.

These include the SA-based #ItStartsWithMe crowdfunding campaign, launched by Wesley Mathew, Meltwater's head of marketing for UKI and India, in association with Brothers For Life.

The campaign aims to raise R100,000 for programmes that seek to help change male-held beliefs and attitudes that contribute to violent behaviour against women.



#FairnessFirst: Taking a stand against GBV with Brothers For Life and #ItStartsWithMe

Leigh Andrews 14 Oct 2019



Local government taking a stand against GBV

Priya Reddy, director of communication for the City of Cape Town, said as #16DaysOfActivism takes place from 25 November to 10 December, it's a time when South Africa stands together with women and children, to send a clear message that gender-based violence is not welcome in this country.



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“ As a local government, we don't always allow ourselves to be as bold as we would like. But we have seen how much gender-based violence affects and matters to our residents and felt it was our duty to get involved in the conversation. And it was time to focus the conversation on men and how it is solely their behaviour that can either perpetuate or stop the cycle of GBV. ”

Entrepreneurial founder of the *The Threaded Man* blog Siya Beyile acknowledged just this when he concluded his Cape Town Startup Week (CTS UW2019) Heavy Chef Raw talk on the power of personal branding for entrepreneurs during the #16DaysOfActivism.



#CTS UW2019: The power of personal branding for entrepreneurs

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Just standing by makes you part of the problem

Beyile said: The annual 16 Days of Activism campaign brings home the fact that the country will never go anywhere if we keep hurting our women, as they are the foundation of our society. But it needs to go deeper than committing to stand against physical or sexual violence.

“ What do you do if someone calls a girl a bitch? We're all part of the stereotype, we're all responsible. It's what we do on a daily basis and that's where abuse begins, it starts with the young. We need to have the conversations to become a better society. ”



#FairnessFirst: Taking action beyond #16DaysOfActivism

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Hear, hear. We all need to stand together all day, every day to stop GBV at its cause and turn the tide.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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