

Unlock Youth Potential with Kids Haven

Every year, nearly one million young people enter the South African labour market – yet only 20% secure formal employment, and another 20% access further education. The reality is stark: in 2024, youth unemployment (ages 15–34) reached 4.8 million. The “Not in Employment, Education or Training” (NEET) rate climbed to 45.1%, with young women disproportionately affected. Among youth aged 15–24, the NEET rate stands at 37.1%. This growing youth lockout is a crisis. Nearly half of our young people are not building skills, earning an income, or gaining experience. The youth are bearing the brunt of this crisis. South Africa’s young people are talented, hungry to learn and eager to work, but they need the opportunity to gain real-world skills that translate into jobs.

Workplace exposure matters

One of the most impactful ways to combat youth unemployment is through structured work-based learning – something that a classroom alone cannot deliver.

The Pathway Programme: A practical solution

Kids Haven’s Pathway Programme is a proven, holistic initiative supporting young people as they transition from care – or from under-resourced households – into further education, training, or employment. We build confidence, remove practical barriers (like transport and professional clothing), and provide ongoing support to ensure young people are not only work-ready, but positioned for long-term success. Each young person’s journey is different.



**That’s why our approach is individualised – one size does not fit all.
We walk the path together.**

Why Partner with Kids Haven?

Corporate South Africa has the power to create real, measurable impact - while accessing well-prepared, supported, and motivated young people for entry-level opportunities. Our partnerships are flexible and designed to align with your specific needs. Whether you can offer time, space, training, or employment, there’s a way for you to be part of the solution.

Opportunities to get involved:

- **Job Shadowing:** Provide exposure to your industry and help young people envision their future.
- **Internships:** Offer an in-person internship to a young person. This can range from a short placement of 1–2 weeks to a more extended opportunity of up to 12 weeks. Kids Haven covers stipends and transport for the first 3 months, reducing your financial risk while ensuring structured support remains in place. The intention is to hopefully provide a permanent placement if the fit is correct.
- **Learnerships:** Provide accredited training for matriculants and graduates – a gateway to meaningful employment.
- **Entry-Level Placement:** We match candidates to your organisation’s needs and manage the screening process, easing your HR burden.
- **Mentorship & Soft Skills Training:** Share your time and knowledge to inspire the next generation.
- **Career Expos:** Career expos are held several times a year at Kids Haven Benoni and are aimed at Grade 8-11 teenagers. Our goal is simple: To expose young people to a wide range of professions and industries so they can choose the right subjects at school and commit to doing their very best in school.
- **Entrepreneurial experience:** Hands-on experience on how to start your own business is immensely important in our country. Our young people are exposed to local entrepreneurs who share their trade and offer some practical experience such as re-upholstering pre-loved furniture, sewing, cooking, panel beating, graphic design, and more.

Let’s work together to build futures.

Youth unemployment is a national challenge – but with your partnership, we can change the narrative. Kids Haven brings heart, structure, and impact. You bring opportunity, expertise, and the chance to transform lives.

It starts with one opportunity. One connection. One future.
Partner with purpose. Be part of the solution.

Contact us today to explore partnership opportunities.

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011 421 4222

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What makes the Pathway Programme different?

Nearly half of South Africa's youth are not building skills, earning an income, or gaining work experience – a trend that deepens over time and reinforces long-term exclusion.

Exposure Matters

South Africa's young people are talented, hungry to learn and eager to work, but they need the opportunity to gain real-world skills that translate into jobs. Workplace exposure matters!

One of the most impactful ways to combat youth unemployment is through structured work-based learning – something that a classroom alone cannot deliver. In addition many of our young people are also disadvantaged by having no support structures, no exposure to real life workplaces, limited transport access and a lack of confidence.

This is where Pathway makes all the difference – we provide the social capital.

Providing a supportive network - Developing personal skills for workplace readiness

Before entering the world of work, young people need to be empowered with the essential skills needed to successfully transition from a school environment to a professional setting.



- **Personal development:** Participants are equipped with tools to build confidence and self-esteem. They also receive training on gender-based violence (GBV) awareness, effective communication, listening skills, and developing agency.
- **Exposure:** The programme fosters a mindset of possibility, rooted in the belief that “We become what we know.” This exposure helps ignite curiosity and broaden perspectives.
- **Workplace readiness:** Practical training includes CV writing, basic computer literacy, interview preparation, financial literacy, and guidance on how to secure and sustain employment.
- **Networking opportunities:** Young people are introduced to the broader Pathways and Kids Haven ecosystem, including partner companies and individuals who can assist in their career journeys.
- **Active engagement:** Participants are encouraged to volunteer and engage in active citizenship to build responsibility and a sense of community.
- **Taking action:** By the end of the programme, participants are confident, self-motivated, and ready to take the initiative to shape their own futures.



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Wraparound Support

More than just a 12-week work readiness programme, Pathway is designed to remove the barriers that prevent young people from participating meaningfully in the economy. Support is holistic and includes:

- Access to an in-house counsellor throughout and after the programme
- Home visits by a social worker if needed
- GBV mentoring
- Crèche access for participants with children aged 3–6
- Transport assistance, including support for interviews and job access
- Professional clothing available for interviews or first workdays
- Payment of essential registration or exam fees
- Ongoing support through our active Alumni Network
- Continued access to our computer lab, career resources, and events

The programme provides some or all of these, wraparound support value added features to young people to empower them to succeed and grow.



Tailored Approach

Every young person follows a personalised pathway plan based on their circumstances and goals. The programme also adapts to the needs of corporate partners – there is no one size fits all model. Kids Haven work closely with employers to:

- Identify real opportunities for job growth
- Co-create training solutions that meet both youth and business needs
- Offer creative and flexible placement models that benefit all parties

Research confirms that programmes engaging with employers to shape relevant, real-world skills are essential to reducing youth unemployment.



Many participants find placements through the programme. Others find something even more powerful – the confidence to take initiative.

Impact in Numbers (June 2024 - May 2025)

Pathway Programme Outcomes:

A skills development programme for young people transitioning from residential care and those in struggling families from under-resourced communities.

Participation Outcomes:

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| • 66 young people participated | • Only 5 participants dropped out | • 3 working part-time |
| • Attendance rate increased from 76% in year 1 to 92% in 2025 | • 15+ professional/company exposures | • 18 are in full-time jobs |
| • 58 organised their own volunteering project during the course | • 9 now in college or university | • 46% of participants are now in work or training |
| | • 1 received seed funding for his business | |

Kids Haven is actively building a web of opportunity around each participant, helping them to access and retain meaningful work.

A voice from our graduates

“It gave me back my motivation and dedication.” – Programme Graduate

“Before Pathway, I was at home, unsure of who I was or what I could do. No one ever told me I could just try. This programme gave me a network, confidence, and the belief that I have a future worth pursuing.” – Recent Graduate

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Kids Haven: 30+ Years of Youth Impact

Kids Haven has been a trusted anchor of hope, care, and development for children and families in Benoni and the wider Ekurhuleni metro since 1992. What began as a safe shelter for children living on the streets has grown into a full-service Child and Youth Care Centre, offering protection, education, and wraparound support to up to 170 children and young people at any given time. But our work does not stop at the gates of the care centre. Kids Haven actively supports family reunification, early childhood development, and significantly, the transition of young people into independent adulthood.

Our 3 Pillars of Care

Family Care

Kids Haven strengthens families by nurturing communities through initiatives such as parent support, food gardens, an afterschool Teen Hub for teenagers, and a community preschool.

Residential Care

Kids Haven provides 24/7 care in our Children's Home to protect vulnerable children. All attend school, play sport, learn life and digital skills, and receive counselling and support.

Youth Care

Kids Haven extends care and support to young people leaving residential care and those living in families under challenging circumstances. There's a particular focus on employability and skills development.

What the 3 Pillars Provide:



At our core, we remain committed to residential care - providing a safe, nurturing home for vulnerable children and young people. But our impact reaches far beyond our gates.

We understand that true care begins long before a child enters the system, and it must continue long after. That's why we expanded our work to include prevention and family strengthening – an ambitious yet essential vision: Can we support and stabilise families and communities so they are empowered to care for their own children? This is where our family care comes in – helping to keep families together and capable.

Similarly, we recognised that the journey doesn't end when a young person leaves residential care. Navigating life after care – finding your path, your voice, your future – is a daunting challenge, not only for those in our programme, but for many young people in our community. Our Youth Care steps in to meet this need, offering targeted support and real opportunities for growth.

The Pathway Programme

In 2024, we launched our Pathway Programme – a natural extension of this commitment. It sits firmly within the Youth Development pillar, drawing strength from both of the other two pillars to create real, lasting impact. It's a focused, person-centred initiative that empowers young people to transition into adulthood with the skills, confidence, and support they need to build a meaningful life beyond care. Care is our DNA.

Why Partner With Us

Partnering with Kids Haven means more than funding a programme – it means being part of real, long-term change.

By working with us, you invest in human potential, align with proven impact, support transformation, contribute to inclusive growth and access tailored engagement.

We believe in the power of second chances – and in the untapped potential of every young person. At Kids Haven, we nurture dreams and ignite opportunity. **Join us in building pathways to possibility!**

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