

Taking playtime seriously - BFirst by Bata launches playgym and wellness initiative

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Playtime is the most important time - and [BFirst](#) by Bata is taking playtime seriously. The global shoe brand is proud to launch its #BeWellwithBFirst competition - open until 30 July 2022 - that will see three lucky schools winning a brand new playgym and a live Wellness Workshop.



The initiative is part of the company's commitment to improving the wellbeing of children in the countries it operates in, under the Bata Children's Programme.

Managing director, Michael Wyatt, said: "There has never been a more important time to focus on the wellbeing of our children. At Bata South Africa, we are committed to providing children with the opportunities they need to help them reach their full potential. Playtime, according to experts in childcare, is important to help them learn about their environment, to learn to be social, to learn about teamwork, and to be challenged. It helps them grow mentally and physically."

Playtime in early childhood development is viewed as critical for cognitive, physical, mental, and emotional development.

According to the South African Child Gauge 2021/2022 Report, developed by researchers at the University of Cape Town's Children's Institute, the early years of life were critical in determining adolescent and adult mental health outcomes, and that children, between the ages of 2 to 9 years old, would benefit from early and sustained intervention.

The Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown measures placed an additional toll on children's wellbeing with loss of caregivers,

social time, and access to school. Recently, The Institute's Children and Covid-19 Advocacy Brief newsletter stated that primary school learners lost 70 to 100% learning time between March 2020 to July 2021, coupled with a three-fold increase in school dropout rate with 750,000 children no longer attending school.

"The sad reality is that not every child has access to people who will speak with them, listen to them or help guide them through challenges they face. Importantly, many children have experienced great losses during Covid-19 lockdown or have been unable to access school in lockdown. We don't know what the long-term impact of this isolation will be. We hope that with this competition, we can equip deserving schools with communal playtime equipment that children can enjoy and have fun with," said Wyatt.

One of the winning schools will also benefit from a Wellness Workshop hosted by wellness champions and yoga instructors, sisters Nomzamo and Nosizwe Mji who run The Toolbox.

Their wellness workshop teaches learners how to develop healthy coping mechanisms for life challenges such as stress, relationships and their environment. They use yoga, play, storytelling and theatre to equip young people with tools to develop awareness, focus, confidence, trust and curiosity.

"We are so excited to be part of this competition with BFirst by Bata. The wellbeing of our children is important to us and as they say, it takes a village to raise a child. We want to be part of that and help equip children with the tools they need to become resilient emotionally and physically."



About the competition

Three lucky schools stand a chance to win 1 of 3 grand prizes!

Each prize includes a brand new playgym to be built at the winning schools, as well as a live Wellness Workshop hosted by @thetoolboxlife for one lucky class at the winning schools, plus other spot prizes from BFirst.

The first round is now open, and nominations close at midnight on 30 July 2022.

To enter, simply nominate a school by commenting on the competition post on the [BFirst Facebook](#) or [BFirst Instagram](#) pages and tell BFirst why you feel the school deserves this awesome prize.

Anyone can nominate any school within South Africa.

Read the full terms and conditions at bata.co.za/brands/bfirst.

#bfirstbybata #BeWellWithBFirst #win #wellness

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