



**BEYOND THE
WORDS CAMPAIGN**

BEYOND THE WORDS CAMPAIGN REPORT

**PART 2: EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE
EDUCATION WORKSHOP**

APRIL - JULY 2025

Prepared by: The Centre for Emotional Intelligence SA (CFEI), in partnership with City of Tshwane,
Alkantrant Community Library & Tateni Community Care Services

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CFEI extends its gratitude to Ms Thandeka Tembe, who served as the Event Coordinator and played a central role in spearheading all workshop-related activities. Her responsibilities included stakeholder engagement, logistical planning, coordination of meetings, and the review and preparation of workshop materials, all of which were critical to the smooth execution of the event.

We sincerely thank Ms Mbali Mashaba, the Guest Facilitator, for leading the workshop with professionalism and insight. Her facilitation and learning materials enabled participants to engage meaningfully with the concepts of EQ, leadership, and everyday emotional awareness.

Our appreciation is extended to Tateni Community Care Service for partnering with CFEI in the Beyond the Words Campaign and for enabling the participation of learners from their Youth Development Programme. Their collaboration ensured that the workshop reached young people who would benefit most from EQ education.

CFEI gratefully acknowledges the City of Tshwane – Alkantrant Community Library for supporting the workshop through the provision of a suitable venue. Special thanks are extended to Ms Moremadi Kgonyane for facilitating this partnership and for her ongoing support of educational and community-based initiatives.

We further thank City Lodge Hotels Lynnwood, Hatfield, and Centurion for their generous sponsorship of refreshments and stationery packs, which significantly contributed to the learners' overall workshop experience. Our sincere appreciation goes to the Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI) for providing branded promotional materials for the workshop participants. Special mention is made of Mr Pierre Schoonraad, whose support and facilitation of this contribution are gratefully acknowledged.



We also extend our thanks to Mams Radio Station 92.9 FM and Pheli FM 95.0 for offering complimentary media support, providing valuable platforms to promote the workshop and raise awareness of EQ education among their listeners.

CFEI is deeply grateful to Ms Hope Mathole and Ms Janetta Boshoff for offering pro bono emotional and psychological support to participants, ensuring that appropriate care and referral mechanisms were available throughout the workshop.

Finally, we thank all volunteers who contributed their time and effort on the day of the workshop, assisting with setup, facilitation, participant support, and close-out activities. Their commitment and support were instrumental in the success of the event.

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Beyond the Words Campaign (BWC) 2025 is an initiative of the Centre for Emotional Intelligence (CFEI) South Africa aimed at advancing public understanding and practical application of emotional intelligence (EQ). Launched on 1 April 2025, the campaign sought to raise awareness of the role of EQ in improving communication, relationships, wellbeing, and leadership across personal, academic, and community settings.

As part of the 2025 campaign, CFEI implemented an Emotional Intelligence Education Workshop as a capstone activity, delivered on 19 July 2025. The workshop was designed specifically for Grade 10 to 12 learners (aged 16–18) to support their emotional wellbeing, resilience, and decision-making as they navigate academic pressures and prepare for post-school transitions.

The workshop was delivered in partnership with the City of Tshwane (Alkantrant Community Library) and Tateni Community Care Service, with additional sponsorship and support from City Lodge Hotels, the Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI), Mams Radio, and Pheli FM. Twenty-five learners from Tateni Community Care Service, primarily from youth-headed households in Mamelodi, participated in the programme.

The workshop combined interactive learning, reflection, and experiential activities focused on emotional awareness, self-regulation, empathy, leadership, and communication. Particular emphasis was placed on practical application of EQ skills, linking EQ to academic success, leadership development, and everyday decision-making. The programme also drew inspiration from the leadership example of former President Nelson Mandela, aligning with the broader context of Mandela Month.

Ethical safeguards were prioritised throughout the workshop, including compliance with child protection requirements, informed consent from parents and guardians, and the provision of professional emotional and psychological support for participants where needed.

Overall, the workshop demonstrated a clear need and strong appetite for structured EQ education among young people. Participants actively engaged with the content, reflected



meaningfully on their emotions and behaviours, and demonstrated increased awareness of how EQ influences their academic performance, relationships, and future aspirations.

This report documents the planning, partnerships, implementation, and outcomes of the workshop. It also outlines lessons learnt and recommendations to inform future programming. The success of the workshop reinforces the value of EQ education as a preventative, empowering, and scalable intervention, and provides a strong foundation for future partnerships, funding opportunities, and programme expansion.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background of the Beyond the Words Campaign Workshop

On 1 April 2025, the Centre for Emotional Intelligence South Africa (CFEI) launched the Beyond the Words Campaign (BWC) 2025. The campaign was guided by five core objectives, with a primary focus on raising awareness of the importance of emotional intelligence (EQ) in everyday interactions.

The Beyond the Words Campaign is a flagship initiative of CFEI aimed at advocating for and promoting EQ education. Established in 2025 as an annual campaign, BWC seeks to explore creative, accessible, and community-centred approaches to increasing public understanding of EQ and its practical application in daily life.

The 2025 campaign was implemented over a four-month period, from April to July 2025, by a dedicated team of five campaign members. During this time, the campaign engaged communities through 50 one-on-one “coffee conversations” as well as the delivery of an EQ education workshop.

This report focuses specifically on the workshop component of the Beyond the Words Campaign. The workshop was delivered in partnership with the City of Tshwane Alkantrant Community Library and Tateni Community Care Service, with additional support from City Lodge Hotels, the Centre for Public Service Innovation Pheli FM and Mams Radio.

2.2 Purpose of the Workshop

To mark the conclusion of the Beyond the Words Campaign 2025, a dedicated emotional intelligence (EQ) education workshop was hosted on 19 July 2025, tailored specifically for Grade 10 to 12 learners aged 16 to 18 who are preparing for their academic and post-school journeys.

As Grade 12 learners prepare for their final examinations and transition to higher education, and Grade 10 and 11 learners continue to build foundational skills for senior high school, EQ plays a critical role in supporting their development. EQ equips young people with the skills to manage academic pressure, regulate emotions, make informed decisions, resolve conflict, and build healthy relationships—competencies that are essential both within the school environment and beyond it.

The workshop was designed to introduce learners to the core principles of EQ through age-appropriate, engaging, and practical content. It aimed to strengthen emotional awareness, promote self-reflection, and provide learners with tools they can apply in their academic, personal, and social lives.

The workshop programme included the following components:

- Educational Presentation: An introduction to EQ, including the recognition and naming of key emotions.
- Reflective Session: Exploring how Nelson Mandela exemplified EQ in leadership, resilience, and reconciliation.
- Interactive Activities: Practical, real-life applications of EQ in academic, social, and personal contexts.
- Group Discussions: Guided conversations on applying EQ to common challenges faced by high school learners.

2.3 Workshop Objectives

The EQ education workshop aimed to equip high school learners with practical emotional skills to support their academic success, personal well-being, and future transitions. Specifically, the workshop sought to:

- Strengthen emotional awareness and the ability to recognise and name a range of emotions in oneself and others.

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- Improve active listening and effective communication skills to support healthy relationships and collaboration.
 - Encourage self-reflection on emotional responses in both academic and social environments.
 - Demonstrate the role of EQ in achieving success at school and in post-school pathways, including higher education and the workplace.

Through these objectives, the workshop aimed to support learners to:

- Cope more effectively with exam-related stress and academic pressure.
- Build emotional resilience and develop healthy self-regulation strategies.
- Strengthen communication and interpersonal skills necessary for peer engagement, leadership development, and the transition to university or adult life.

2.4 Scope and Limitations

The workshop was designed to accommodate a maximum of 25 learners, taking into account resource availability and the physical capacity of the venue. While the workshop space could accommodate up to 35 people in a classroom-style setup, participation was intentionally limited to ensure effective facilitation, meaningful interaction, and a supportive learning environment.

The workshop was specifically targeted at learners aged 16 to 18 who were enrolled in Grades 10 to 12. However, due to the timing of the workshop, participation from Grade 12 learners was limited, as many were preparing for their preliminary examinations during this period.

Additionally, the workshop took place towards the end of the June/July school holiday period, coinciding with national activities commemorating the life and legacy of late former President Nelson Mandela. While this context aligned well with the workshop's focus on leadership and EQ, it also influenced availability and attendance levels.

3 WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES

3.1 Workshop Partners

The Emotional Intelligence Education Workshop was initiated and led by the Centre for Emotional Intelligence South Africa (CFEI). To ensure effective implementation and community reach, CFEI engaged strategic partners whose contributions were instrumental to the success of the workshop.

The City of Tshwane partnered with CFEI by providing the venue, programme director and guest speaker support. The workshop was hosted at the Alkantrant Community Library, which offered a suitable learning environment equipped with lighting, desks, and seating. This partnership enabled the workshop to be conducted in a safe, accessible, and well-resourced public facility.

Tateni Community Care Services also partnered with CFEI by integrating the workshop into their after-school development programme. Tateni facilitated learner participation by identifying and registering suitable beneficiaries and managing the required parental consent and indemnity documentation.

These partnerships strengthened the reach and impact of the workshop by combining community access, public infrastructure, and shared commitment to youth development and emotional well-being.

3.2 Sponsorship and Support

Following the establishment of the campaign team, the Events Coordinator developed a comprehensive event proposal outlining the key activities and logistical requirements necessary to deliver a successful workshop. This included securing a suitable venue, appointing a workshop facilitator, coordinating participant attendance, and managing all operational and logistical arrangements.

The successful delivery of the workshop was made possible through the generous support and sponsorship of a range of organisations and individuals who contributed both resources and expertise. CFEI gratefully acknowledges the following organisations and individuals for their contributions:

- City Lodge Hotel Lynnwood – Provision of 30 lunch packs for participants

- City Lodge Hotel Hatfield – Provision of 30 stationery packs
- City Lodge Hotel Centurion – Provision of refreshments
- Mams Radio – Complimentary radio interview in support of campaign awareness
- Pheli FM – Complimentary radio interview in support of campaign awareness
- Ms Mbali Mashaba – Guest Workshop Facilitator
- Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI) – Provision of promotional materials
- Ms Hope Mathole – Emotional support services
- Ms Janetta Boshoff – Emotional support and referral services

The collective support from these organisations and individuals significantly enhanced the quality, reach, and impact of the workshop. Their contributions reflect a shared commitment to youth development, mental well-being, and the advancement of EQ education within communities.

3.2.1 Participants

At the outset of the campaign, the campaign team initially resolved that workshop participants would be drawn from individuals who had taken part in the 50 one-on-one interviews, as well as partners, sponsors, and members of the public who registered their interest through an open registration process.

Following engagements with the City of Tshwane Alkantrant Community Library, this approach was refined. The campaign team was encouraged to prioritise collaboration with a school or community-based organisation in Mamelodi, an area formally adopted by the library as part of its community outreach mandate.

With the support of the City of Tshwane, a meeting was subsequently arranged with Tateni Community Care Service, a registered non-profit organisation working with learners from youth-headed households in Mamelodi. The meeting took place on 16 May 2025 with the organisation's Director, Ms Gratty, who expressed strong interest in integrating the Emotional Intelligence Education Workshop into Tateni's school holiday programme.

It was jointly agreed that 25 learners, supported by three caregivers, would participate in the workshop. This partnership ensured that the intervention reached learners who would benefit most from EQ education, while also aligning the workshop with existing youth development and care programmes.

3.2.2 Workshop Venue

No budget was allocated for venue hire as part of the campaign planning process. As a result, the campaign team relied entirely on securing venue support through partnerships and sponsorship arrangements.

Several organisations were approached to explore the possibility of venue support. Among these was the Brooklyn Community Library, which, while willing to assist, advised that their facilities would not be suitable for the nature of the workshop. The library instead recommended that the team engage with the Alkantrant Community Library, which offers an activity room better suited to hosting educational and interactive programmes.

On 12 April 2025, an in-person meeting was held with Ms Moremadi Kgonyane, a Library Assistant at the Alkantrant Community Library. Following this engagement, the library formally confirmed its willingness to partner with the CFEI by providing a venue for the workshop at no cost.

This partnership formed part of the library's broader mandate to support community development initiatives, with particular emphasis on education, emotional literacy, and youth empowerment. The provision of the venue was instrumental in ensuring the successful delivery of the workshop and demonstrated the value of collaborative, community-based partnerships in advancing EQ education.

3.2.3 Refreshments

On 05 July 2025, members of the campaign team visited City Lodge Hotel Lynnwood Manor, Pretoria, to formally deliver a sponsorship request letter in support of the Emotional Intelligence Education Workshop. During this visit, the team was received by the Assistant General Manager, Ms Wania Malik, who acknowledged receipt of the request and undertook to revert after consulting with management.

On 11 July 2025, Ms Malik confirmed in writing that City Lodge Hotels had agreed to partner with the Centre for Emotional Intelligence SA and support the workshop. This commitment reflected City Lodge Hotels' ongoing support for community development and youth-focused initiatives.



City Lodge Hotels provided the following in-kind contributions:

- City Lodge Hotel Centurion – Arrival snacks for participants
- City Lodge Hotel Hatfield – 30 stationery packs
- City Lodge Hotel Lynnwood Manor – 30 lunch packs

These contributions ensured that participants were adequately catered for throughout the workshop, creating a welcoming and supportive learning environment and contributing significantly to the overall success of the event.

3.2.4 Gift Packs

The workshop gift packs comprised stationery packs and promotional materials, aimed at equipping learners with practical tools to support both their academic work and continued engagement with the principles of EQ.

The stationery packs were generously sponsored by City Lodge Hotel Hatfield. Each pack included essential learning materials, namely: Pens, Pencils and erasers, Exam pads, Scissors, Pritt adhesive and Pencil case.

On 16 July 2025, the team was invited to the Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI) to collect promotional material. This engagement followed an initial informal interaction with Mr Pierre Schoonraad, Head of Research and Development at CPSI during Africa Week at the University of Pretoria, where opportunities for collaboration were first discussed.

At the Africa Week event, the campaign team presented an overview of the Beyond the Words Campaign and the objectives of the Emotional Intelligence Education Workshop, with particular emphasis on promoting emotional literacy among young people. Through the support and facilitation of Mr Schoonraad, CPSI committed to sponsoring promotional materials for the learners. As a result, CPSI provided 30 travel coffee mugs, notebooks, and shopping bags, all branded with CPSI insignia.

These contributions not only enhanced the workshop experience for participants but also reinforced key messages of learning, wellbeing, and personal development beyond the duration of the event.

3.2.5 Transport

Following confirmation of the partnership with Tateni Community Care Service, arrangements were required to transport learners from Tateni to the Alkantrant Community Library, the workshop venue.

The campaign team approached several institutions to request sponsorship for transportation; however, these efforts were unsuccessful. As a result, transportation costs were covered through an organisational claim to ensure that learners were able to attend the workshop without barriers to participation.

Transport services were provided by Dan from Mamelodi All Stars F.C, which enabled the learners to travel to and from the workshop venue.

Following the workshop, learners raised concerns regarding the driver's manner of driving and expressed discomfort during the journey. Based on this feedback, it is recommended that an alternative transport service or driver be considered for future activities to ensure the safety, comfort, and wellbeing of participants.

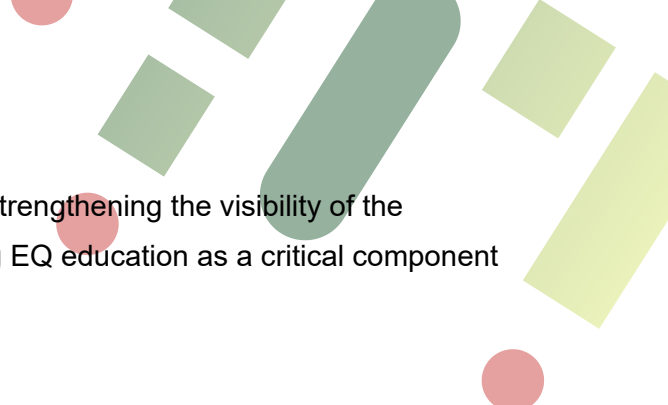
3.2.6 Marketing and Public Awareness

The workshop was primarily promoted through the organisation's official social media platforms, which served as the main channel for sharing information about the Beyond the Words Campaign and the Emotional Intelligence Education Workshop.

In addition to digital outreach, the organisation received valuable support from Mams Radio and Pheli FM, which assisted in amplifying awareness of the campaign and promoting the workshop to broader community audiences.

On 16 July 2025, representatives from the campaign participated in a live radio interview on Pheli FM 95.0, hosted by TT and Tshiamo during the Drive Through show. This engagement provided an opportunity to discuss the objectives of the Beyond the Words Campaign, the importance of EQ education, and the upcoming workshop.

This was followed by a second radio interview on 17 July 2025 on Mams Radio, where the campaign team was hosted by Tash and Nthabiseng on their Breakfast Show. The interview further highlighted the organisation's work, the relevance of EQ for young people, and the impact of the workshop.



These media engagements played a significant role in strengthening the visibility of the campaign, enhancing public awareness, and positioning EQ education as a critical component of youth development.

3.2.7 Emotional and Psychological Support

Discussions centred on emotions and personal experiences can at times prompt participants to revisit difficult or potentially traumatic events. Recognising this risk, the organisation proactively ensured that appropriate emotional and psychological support mechanisms were in place throughout the workshop.

To support participants, Ms Janetta Boshoff, an Occupational Therapist, and Ms Hope Mathole, a registered Psychologist, generously offered their services on a pro bono basis. Both professionals made themselves available to provide emotional support, guidance, and referrals where necessary for any participants who experienced emotional distress during or following the workshop.

The availability of qualified mental health professionals formed an essential part of the organisation's ethical and duty-of-care approach, ensuring that participants' wellbeing remained a priority while engaging in reflective and emotionally sensitive discussions.

In addition to the emotional and psychological support provided, the organisers also ensured that broader safety and welfare measures were in place. A designated first aider was on standby throughout the duration of the workshop to attend to any medical needs or injuries that may have arisen. Furthermore, the South African Police Service (SAPS) was formally notified of the event as part of standard safety and compliance procedures. These measures collectively reinforced the organisation's commitment to creating a safe, supportive, and well managed environment for all participants.

3.3 Ethical Considerations

The workshop involved engagement with minors between the ages of 15 and 18. In line with legal and ethical obligations, all facilitators and staff involved in the workshop were required to complete Form 30, as prescribed under the Children's Act 38 of 2005. Form 30 is utilised to verify whether an individual appears on Part B of the National Child Protection Register, which lists persons deemed unsuitable to work with children due to findings related to abuse, neglect, or exploitation.



All individuals involved in the delivery and facilitation of the workshop were successfully cleared prior to the event.

In addition, learners were required to submit two consent-related documents completed by their parents or legal guardians. The first was an indemnity form, indemnifying Tateni Community Care Service, the Centre for Emotional Intelligence, and all partners and sponsors against unforeseen incidents, while affirming the organisers' commitment to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all participants. The second form sought parental consent for photography, allowing images captured during the workshop to be used for organisational reporting and promotional purposes.

All required documentation was completed and submitted prior to learners boarding transport to the venue. These documents were subsequently scanned and securely stored for record keeping and compliance purposes.

The workshop content was reviewed in advance to ensure alignment with the organisation's Ethical Guidelines Policy and was deemed age-appropriate, sensitive, and suitable for the intended audience.

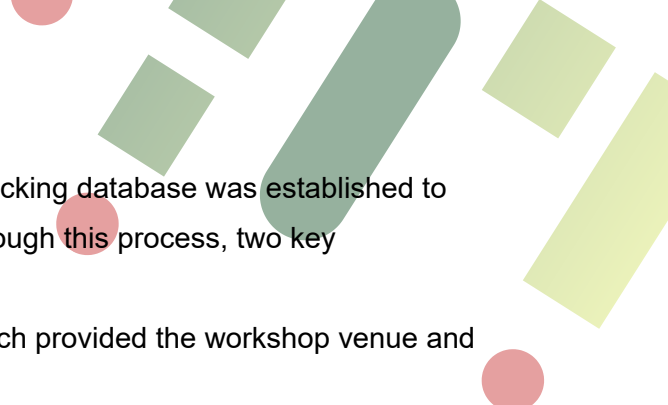
In accordance with Tateni Community Care Service's safeguarding requirements, learners were accompanied by three designated caregivers throughout the workshop. This ensured continuous supervision and compliance with Tateni's regulations governing learner participation in external activities.

4 WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

4.1 Pre-Workshop Preparation

Following the establishment of the campaign team, the Events Coordinator was tasked with leading the preparatory phase of the workshop. An internal event plan was developed and presented to the campaign team for review, feedback, and strategic guidance. This was followed by the development of a concept note, which provided a clear framework for the workshop and ensured alignment with the campaign's objectives.

Formal partnership and sponsorship request letters were subsequently drafted and distributed to prospective partners and sponsors via both email and in-person engagements.



To support effective coordination and accountability, a tracking database was established to monitor correspondence, responses, and follow-ups. Through this process, two key implementation partners were secured:

- City of Tshwane – Alkantrant Community Library, which provided the workshop venue and associated facilities; and
- Tateni Community Care Service, which facilitated participant recruitment and coordination.

Additional once-off sponsorship and in-kind support were received from City Lodge Hotels, the Centre for Public Service Innovation, Pheli FM, and Mams Radio. These contributions played a critical role in enabling the successful delivery of the workshop.

In preparation for the workshop content and learner wellbeing, several organisations and professionals, including social workers, psychologists, counsellors, and occupational therapists—were approached to support facilitation and emotional containment. Ms Mbali Mashaba was confirmed as the guest facilitator, while Ms Hope Mathole and Ms Janetta Boshoff were appointed as emotional support practitioners. Their role was to provide immediate and post-workshop emotional support to participants who might experience distress during reflective discussions.

4.2 Workshop Delivery

The Emotional Intelligence Education Workshop commenced at 09:00 with the arrival of learners and their accompanying caregivers. Participants were welcomed by the Centre for Emotional Intelligence (CFEI) team, in collaboration with Alkantrant Community Library staff, and were requested to complete an attendance register upon entry.

As part of the programme's educational component, learners were given a guided tour of the library. This introduction familiarised them with the various sections of the facility and emphasised the value of accessing library resources, including the process and benefits of obtaining a library membership.

Following the tour, participants were escorted to the workshop venue, which had been prepared the previous day. Light refreshments—including tea, coffee, juice, and a breakfast platter—were provided. The formal programme commenced at 09:45, with the Programme Director, Mr Moremadi Kgonyane, inviting participants and guests to take their seats and officially opening the session.



Welcoming remarks were delivered by Mr Fanyana Mokoena, who provided a brief overview of the history of Alkantrant Community Library and highlighted the importance of community-based educational initiatives such as the Beyond the Words Campaign. This was followed by an address from Mr Ishmael Mbhokodo, Senior Specialist: Heritage Resources Management at the City of Tshwane, who spoke on the significance of leadership in everyday life and reflected on the relevance of Mandela Month, encouraging learners to embody leadership values in their communities.

The Programme Director then handed over to the guest facilitator, Ms Mbali Mashaba, who facilitated Part One of the workshop. This segment focused on understanding leadership and exploring how EQ can be used to unlock individual leadership potential. Interactive discussions and reflective activities were used to engage learners and contextualise EQ concepts within their lived experiences.

Following a tea break, Part Two of the workshop commenced, which focused on more experiential and practical activities. Learners demonstrated increased emotional awareness through guided experiential exercises designed to evoke and explore different emotions, allowing them to reflect on their emotional responses and behavioural patterns in real-life situations.

The workshop concluded with a reflection session, during which participants were invited to share their experiences and key learnings from the day. Closing remarks were delivered by the Programme Development Manager, Mr Anele Zondi, who thanked the learners, partners, and supporters for their participation and engagement.

The programme concluded with a group photograph, after which participants received lunch packs before departing for home.

4.3 Post-Workshop Activities

Following the conclusion of the workshop, the campaign team undertook a series of post-workshop activities aimed at recognising contributions, strengthening stakeholder relationships, and ensuring proper record-keeping and accountability.

Certificates of appreciation, formal letters of thanks, and personalised thank-you cards were prepared for all partners, sponsors, and supporters who contributed to the successful delivery of the workshop.



Communication was also disseminated to the organisation's database and across CFEI's social media platforms, expressing gratitude for the support received and highlighting the successful implementation of the workshop. As part of this communication, CFEI reaffirmed its commitment to transparency by indicating that a comprehensive report on the workshop would be made publicly available.

In addition, follow-up meetings were scheduled with partners, sponsors, and supporters. Members of the campaign team visited their respective offices to hand-deliver certificates, appreciation tokens, and thank-you cards. These engagements also provided an opportunity to share key highlights and outcomes of the workshop, reinforcing collaborative relationships and demonstrating the impact of their support.

From an administrative and compliance perspective, all physical indemnity forms completed prior to the workshop were scanned and securely stored electronically by CFEI. The original hard-copy documents were subsequently returned to Tateni Community Care Service for their records and filing, in line with agreed data-management and safeguarding procedures.

5 WAY FORWARD

Following the successful implementation of the Beyond the Words Campaign 2025 Emotional Intelligence Education Workshop, a reflection and planning meeting was convened with the campaign team to identify key next steps and sustainability opportunities. The following actions were agreed upon:

- A comprehensive formal report detailing the outcomes, learnings, and impact of the workshop will be produced to ensure accountability, documentation, and knowledge sharing.
- The final workshop report will be shared with all participants, partners, sponsors, and supporters, reinforcing transparency and maintaining stakeholder engagement.
- A formal partnership framework will be pursued with the City of Tshwane, with the intention of institutionalising the Emotional Intelligence Education Workshop as an annual programme hosted at different community libraries across Tshwane. This partnership aims to expand reach, strengthen community impact, and promote emotional literacy at a local level.

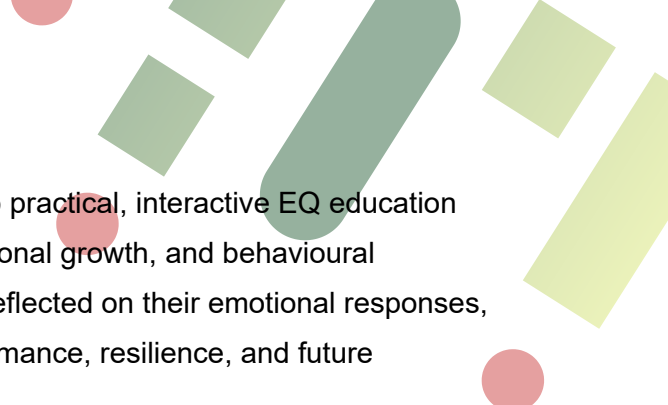
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- A formal relationship will be explored with City Lodge Hotels through the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), recognising their continued support and establishing a structured approach for future collaboration, sponsorship, and social impact initiatives. These actions are intended to strengthen sustainability, deepen partnerships, and ensure that EQ education remains an accessible and impactful intervention for young people and communities.
 - Building on the success of the 2025 workshop, CFEI will also explore opportunities to scale the programme, including engaging additional corporate partners, community organisations, and educational institutions to support broader implementation in future campaign cycles.

6 CONCLUSION

The Beyond the Words Campaign 2025 Emotional Intelligence Education Workshop demonstrated both the relevance and urgency of structured EQ education for young people in South Africa. While emotions form part of daily human experience, the findings from the workshop reaffirm that EQ is not instinctive, nor is it universally understood. Learners, like many adults, often struggle to accurately identify, name, and regulate their emotions, despite engaging with them constantly in academic, social, and personal contexts.

The workshop highlighted that participants most easily recognised primary emotions such as anger, happiness, and sadness, relying largely on observable cues including facial expressions, tone of voice, and behavioural changes. More nuanced or neutral emotions proved difficult to interpret, reinforcing the need for deliberate emotional literacy education that moves beyond surface-level recognition to deeper emotional understanding and regulation.

Cultural norms, upbringing, and social expectations were evident influences on how learners relate to emotions—shaping which emotions are expressed, suppressed, or considered acceptable. This underscores the importance of culturally responsive and contextually grounded EQ programming, particularly for young people navigating complex social environments and life transitions.



Importantly, the workshop demonstrated that exposure to practical, interactive EQ education creates meaningful opportunities for self-reflection, emotional growth, and behavioural awareness. Learners engaged openly with the content, reflected on their emotional responses, and began to connect EQ to leadership, academic performance, resilience, and future aspirations.

The success of the workshop was made possible through strong partnerships, ethical practice, and collective commitment from community organisations, sponsors, facilitators, and supporters. It further affirmed EQ as a critical life skill that supports not only individual wellbeing, but also social cohesion and long-term community development.

As South Africa continues to confront social, economic, and educational challenges, initiatives such as the Beyond the Words Campaign offer a practical and preventative approach to strengthening emotional resilience, communication, and leadership among young people. Investing in EQ education is ultimately an investment in more self-aware, empathetic, and capable future citizens. The outcomes of this workshop provide a strong foundation for programme expansion, deeper partnerships, and sustained impact in the years ahead.