

## **'Make Local Government Work for Early Childhood Development'**

Media Release by the "Real Reform for Early Childhood Development (ECD)" Campaign

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**#MakeECDanElectionIssue #ECDaForgottenSector #ECDReform**

We are all aware of the upcoming local government election on 1 November 2021 and we have a good idea of the basic visible responsibilities of our local Council.

Less well known among both candidates and constituencies are Council's responsibilities for Early Childhood Development, yet this is an area of work that is critical for the future of children, the future of our communities and our nation.

The lack of visible awareness of this important responsibility by local governments is regrettable; the [silence on early childhood development in the manifestos](#) of all major political parties is deafening. Very few parties even mention young children in their manifestos, apart from rare and general statements relating to child safety.

All political parties know that we live in a deeply unequal society and should know that the development of our youngest members of our country is a critical aspect for progressively reducing these inequalities. There are presently [over seven million children under the age of six](#) (15% of the total population) and that number is increasing; they are our future.

Is it not therefore reasonable that we, as the electorate, start to ask those who wish to represent us whether they will ensure that early childhood development will be a priority for their work in the newly formed councils?

At present there is a distinct likelihood that candidates, who will be asking for our support on the 1<sup>st</sup> November will be unaware of the policy and legal framework for early childhood development, the responsibilities of local government, and the barriers and blockages associated with that responsibility.

We aim to increase awareness and ensure prioritisation of local government's role in ECD in the short period before the election, and, importantly, in the period up to the development of council's plans for their forthcoming term in office. South African children deserve sufficient allocation of resources to support the growth of early childhood development. The complexities that inhibit the growth of this critical sector can and must be reduced and simplified.

The time has come for politicians to realise that the children they encounter on the election trail are our future and that as Councillors, their new administration can make a real difference for the personal and collective development of the youngest members of their constituency.

**[END]**

For further information on the “Real Reform for Early Childhood Development” Campaign please visit [www.ecdreform.co.za](http://www.ecdreform.co.za).

Some images and posters have been attached.

*To arrange media interviews please contact:*

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