

East Coast Radio raises more than R1.6 million for KZN's children

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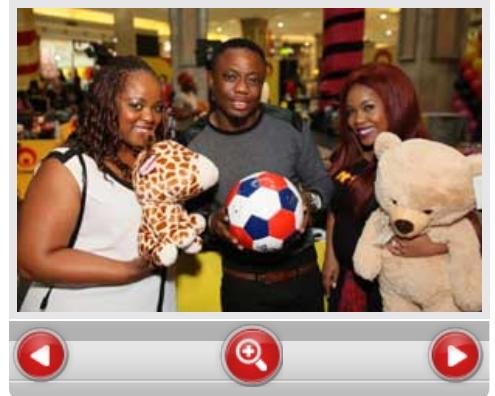
1 Dec 2014

East Coast Radio raised R1,649,612 in 12 hours this month for its key annual CSI initiative, East Coast Radio's Toy Story with Game.

In a new record for the campaign which is now into its 14th consecutive year, individuals and corporates across KwaZulu-Natal heeded the call to pledge during a marathon telethon at the Pavilion Shopping Centre.

Packing an added celebrity punch, the station's Corporate Day Challenge on 21 November 2014 involved a live 12-hour broadcast from the mall together with a robust social media rollout.

A galaxy of stars - musicians, actors, sports celebs and celebrity bloggers - joined East Coast Radio presenters at the pledge lines. Olympic golden boy Chad le Clos, musicians Lloyd Cele, DJ Tira, Matthew Mole, Mandoza, Gangs of Ballet, Majosi, Rubber Duc, Miss eThekwini, Lisanne Lazarus, and sports stars Cameron Delport (The Dolphins) and Sharks' players Tonderai Chavhanga and Francois Kleinhans all cleared their diaries to help KZN's disadvantaged children.



The station's general manager, Trish Taylor, says: "Toy Story is a deeply meaningful project for East Coast Radio. With the help of our listeners and key partners, we are able to help the poorest of the poor in our community and make a real difference in their lives. East Coast Radio and Game - our key sponsor, is committed to building a better society for KZN."

The initiative's Corporate Day Challenge is testament to how the right combo of fun, interactive radio, multi-faceted social media engagement and a powerful celebrity factor can mobilise an entire province for a single cause.

East Coast Breakfast presenter, Darren Maule, raised the bar early in the day, receiving R545,000 in pledges. Darren made good on his promise to dye his hair "Eminem blonde" after accepting the challenge from listeners. "I can tell blonde jokes now," says Darren, "because I'm one of them!"

eThekwini mayor, James Nxumalo, pledged R1,000 from his own pocket when he joined the team at the outside broadcast. "It is the responsibility of everyone to help the children of our province because they are our future leaders," Nxumalo said. "Therefore as a municipality we have decided to support the campaign to assist child-headed households, especially those who have lost their parents to HIV/AIDS. All of us have to support initiatives like this."

Every cent of the R1,649.612 million raised goes towards buying food parcels for underprivileged children in KZN, in particular child-headed households. Each is valued at R350 and contains items that can feed a family of four to six for around five weeks. This ensures the children do not go hungry over the long end-of-year school holidays.

Food parcels are one facet of campaign, the other being collecting new toys. Every child in a government hospital, crèche, orphanage and children's home receives a new toy. For many, this is the first time their little fingers would have unwrapped a new toy; the first time they would have experienced a shiver of excitement when presented with a gift; and the first time they would have the joy of holding something that is completely theirs.

East Coast Radio's Toy Story with Game team is currently visiting hospitals throughout the province to distribute the toys.

The Department of Health's Air Mercy Service is on board to deliver toys and food parcels to areas that our team cannot get to by road. The initiative wraps up on 17 December 2014. There is still time to get involved and make a contribution. Details on www.ecr.co.za.

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