



# Renovation Unlocks New Futures for Deaf Children at Carel du Toit Centre

BY NOTHANDO MTHEMBU    [@GOODTHINGS GUY](#)    APRIL 14, 2026



Carel du Toit Centre Parent and Child waiting area beautifully renovated. Photo Credit: Supplied

# We're celebrating a beautiful renovation at the Carel du Toit Centre, creating a vibrant space where hearing-impaired children can find their voices and thrive!

*Cape Town, South Africa (14 April 2026)* – A fresh coat of paint and beautifully renovated facilities are now brightening the halls of the Carel du Toit Centre, strengthening the organisation's heart and its ability to support deaf and hearing-impaired children during their most critical years of development.

The renovation, unveiled on Thursday, 9 April, was made possible through the generous support and partnership of: the **Rotary Club of Bellville** (South Africa), the Rotary Club of Bristol Breakfast (United Kingdom), the National Lottery Commission, Janie Mouton Foundation and the Lewis Group.

For children born with hearing loss, the gift of being able to listen, speak, and connect with the world shapes the entire course of their lives. This upgrade does more than just refresh a building; it strengthens the Centre's capacity to nurture children at their earliest stages – a time when intervention has the greatest impact on their ability to communicate, learn, and truly thrive.

At its core, the project reflects the power of sustained collaboration, particularly the longstanding partnership between Rotary Clubs in Bellville and Bristol Breakfast, which has evolved in the last decade into a model of international cooperation in action.

Rotary's involvement has helped improve the facilities and expand the programmes that children and families rely on every day. Together, the partnership demonstrates how shared purpose can translate into tangible, life-changing outcomes.

“Our partnership shows just what can be achieved when communities come together with a shared commitment to service and opportunity. The impact is seen not only in the facilities, but in the futures of the children who benefit from them every day,” says President Pieter van der Walt from the Rotary Club of Bellville.



Rotary Club of Bellville and Carel du Toit teams

## The Sound of Early-Stage Change

Based at Tygerberg Hospital in Cape Town, the Carel du Toit Centre, together with its CHAT Early Intervention Centre, continues to champion early diagnosis and intervention as the most decisive factor in a child's development.

Its listening-and-spoken-language approach is rooted in natural language acquisition and maximises the critical early years of brain development.

Through audiology services, speech and occupational therapy, parent coaching, and family-centred support, children with hearing loss are allowed to develop spoken language skills that enable them to participate more fully in everyday life.

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“Early intervention changes everything. When children are identified and supported early, their communication skills and, in turn it changes the entire trajectory of their lives, and those of their families,” comments Louise Eksteen, director at the Carel du Toit Trust.

## How the Centre Changed Everything for the Peterson Family

The launch also marks the return of Sue Petersen to the **Rotary Club of Bristol Breakfast**. Peterson’s personal journey has become closely intertwined with the Centre’s history and growth, after her son, Hughan, was diagnosed as deaf at 14 months old and became one of the earliest children to receive cochlear implant support in South Africa in the early 1990s.

What began as a moment of uncertainty for her family evolved into a lifelong commitment to advocacy and support for deaf children, and Peterson’s involvement ultimately helped spark the connection between Rotary Bristol Breakfast and the Rotary Club of Bellville, forming the international partnership that continues to support the Centre today.

Reflecting on her journey, she explained that discovering the Carel du Toit Centre changed everything for her family.

“What we have achieved through partnership and shared purpose shows how powerful it is when people come together across countries to give children the ability to listen, speak, and thrive,” Louise adds.

## A Call to Help Shape More Futures

While the renovation marks an important milestone, the centre emphasises that its work is ongoing, and as a specialised institution, it continues to face essential maintenance needs, including roof, plumbing, and long-term facility upkeep, costs that are often not covered through traditional funding streams.

In addition, the **centre** relies on philanthropic and corporate support to sustain its core services, including therapy, audiology, educator training, and family support programmes. It is now calling on businesses and donors to consider long-term partnership models that ensure sustainability beyond capital upgrades.

Initiatives such as ‘Sponsor a Child’ offer meaningful opportunities for individuals and companies to contribute directly, with potential BBBEE recognition benefits for corporate partners.

“While this renovation is an important milestone, the daily work of changing children’s lives depends on sustained support. We invite and challenge businesses and other partners to join us in building facilities and shaping futures,” adds Nicky Jacobs, head of fundraising at Carel du Toit Trust.

Find out more by visiting [www.careldutoit.co.za](http://www.careldutoit.co.za).

*Sources: Carel du Toit Centre*

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