

# #HASHTAG

OCTOBER EDITION, 2025



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NETWORK**

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*Together we can  
fight cancer!*

**Brot**  
für die Welt



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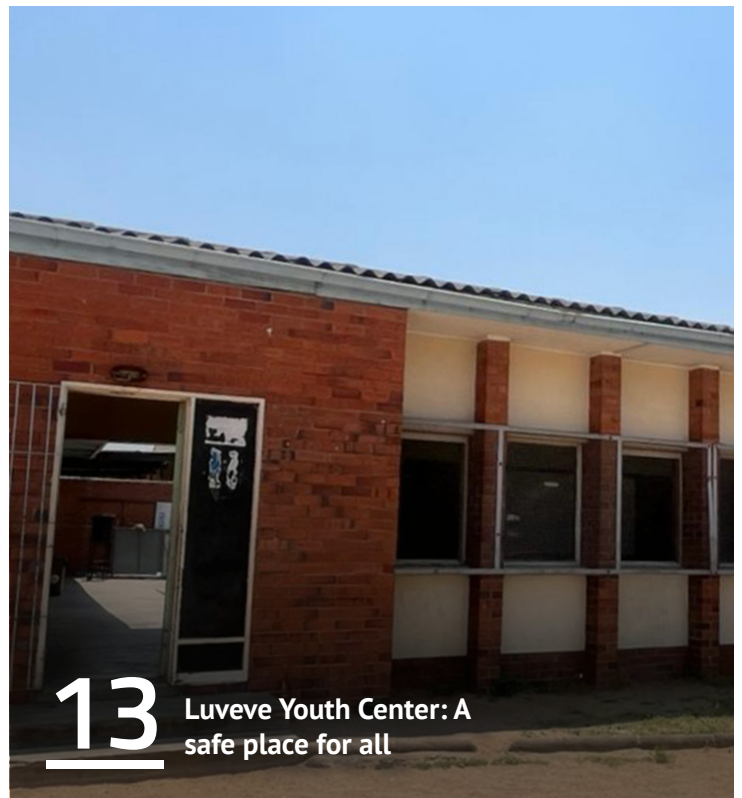
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# Editor's Note

October was a significant month for health awareness, with a particular focus on Breast Cancer Awareness.

#Tag Magazine explored the importance of prioritizing health, wellness, and support for those affected by breast cancer.

We featured stories and articles on breast health and cancer research, highlighting the importance of early detection, self-care, and community support.

These stories aim to inform, inspire, and empower our readers to take charge of their health and support others in their journey.

This issue is dedicated to educating and supporting individuals in their health journeys. We hope it serves as a valuable resource for those seeking information and connection.

By sharing knowledge and experiences, we can work together to make a difference in the fight against breast cancer.

Thank you to our readers and supporters for making a difference in the fight against breast cancer.

Your support and awareness mean the world to those affected by this disease. As we move forward, we remain committed to raising awareness and promoting health and wellness in our community.

We hope you'll join us in this effort and continue to prioritize your health and the health of those around you.

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**Melinda Ncube**  
CITE Youth Network Coordinator



# Unfiltered: The courage to be real in a filtered world



By  
Ruvarashe Munyoro

**W**e live in a world obsessed with perfection. Every scroll through social media reveals flawless smiles, curated happiness, and lives that seem effortlessly beautiful. Yet behind every polished photo lies a person: complex, imperfect, and human. Unfiltered is not just a statement; it's an act of quiet rebellion in a world addicted to appearances.

For too long, we've been trained to hide behind filters not just on our photos, but in our lives. We filter our emotions to seem strong, our opinions to seem agreeable, and our dreams to seem realistic. But perfection is a mirage. It promises valida-

tion and delivers emptiness. The truth is, our unedited selves are where the magic lives.

Living unfiltered doesn't mean exposing every detail of your life. It means allowing honesty to lead. It's about showing up as you are not as you think you should be. When you laugh too loud, when your plans fall apart, when your makeup smudges or your voice trembles that's real life. That's connection.

The pressure to perform has quietly shaped us. We measure our worth in likes, compare our behind-the-scenes to someone else's highlight reel, and curate our lives to look "put together." But authenticity doesn't trend it transforms. The moment you stop performing for approval is the moment you begin to

feel free.

Being unfiltered is not recklessness; it's intentional truth. It's learning to protect your peace while being honest about your story. Sometimes being real means admitting, "I'm not okay." Sometimes it means saying no, setting boundaries, or choosing rest over hustle. It's the gentle courage of self-respect.

Vulnerability, once mistaken for weakness, is the heartbeat of authenticity. When we dare to be seen fully, not just in our achievements but in our uncertainty, we invite real connection. The right people won't be drawn to your perfection; they'll be drawn to your truth.

Let go of the pressure to appear flawless. Let go of the

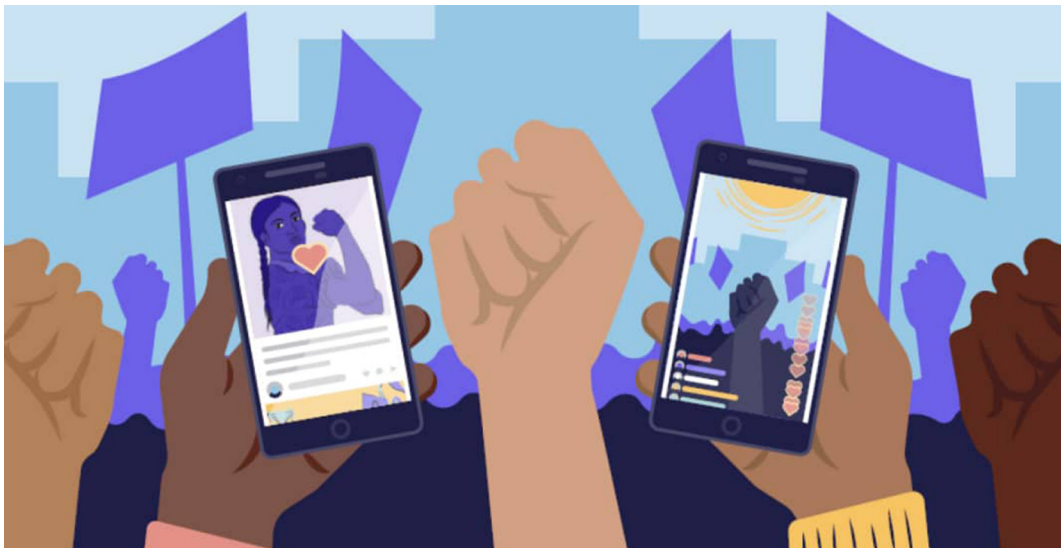
fear of being misunderstood. Let go of the idea that you must shrink yourself to fit someone else's comfort.

Realness is liberating. When you stop editing yourself to please others, you begin to experience life as it truly is: beautiful, raw, and full of meaning. Because the world doesn't need another perfect version of you; it needs the real one.

So, here's your reminder: take off the filter. Speak your truth. Laugh without shrinking. Cry without shame. Be bold in your softness and honest in your journey. Unfiltered isn't about being perfect, it's about being present, being human, and being free. Perfection hides. Authenticity heals.



# How digital media is changing health awareness in Zimbabwe



By  
Tafadzwa Gumunyu

Every October, pink ribbons flood our social media feeds and a reminder that it's Breast Cancer Awareness Month. For many young people in Zimbabwe, those pink posts are often the first time they stop and think about a disease they once believed only affected older women.

In Harare, 15-year-old Nozipo Lerato Maguta says she first learned about breast self-examination on Instagram. "I saw a post that showed how to do it properly and why it's important. I didn't know girls my age should even check," she says. Nozipo's curiosity led her to join an online health course run by Youth Advocates Zimbabwe in October 2022, which gave her confidence to talk about health issues more openly. "I am now confident to discuss SRHR issues, listen to others and make the right decisions," she told NewsDay.

Digital platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp are becoming powerful tools for awareness in Zimbabwe, not just about sexual health or HIV, but also diseases like breast cancer, which are still surrounded by silence and myths.

In 2023, The Herald reported that health groups such as the Cancer Association of Zimbabwe (CAZ) and Island Hospice used Facebook and

WhatsApp campaigns to encourage young women to learn about early detection. They shared short videos showing how self-exams are done and testimonies from survivors who discovered lumps early through online education.

UNICEF Zimbabwe has also played a big role in spreading health messages online. In a 2022 youth-led campaign with Youth Advocates Zimbabwe, they used digital art, social media challenges and WhatsApp discussions to talk about HIV, mental health and even breast cancer myths like the belief that tight bras cause cancer or that it's a "rich woman's disease." Those false ideas still circulate, but online campaigns are slowly breaking them down.

Scholars say these digital conversations are changing the face of public health. A 2023 study by Tafadzwa Dzinamarira and Roda Madziva found that edutainment, learning through music, drama, and social media storytelling helps health messages reach young audiences more effectively. The research, published through the University of Nottingham, explained that when information is delivered in a fun, relatable way, youth are more likely to listen and share it.

Meanwhile, Harare-based researchers Tapiwanashe Hadzizi and Samson Mhizha found that social media posts by peers and influencers strongly shape youth attitudes toward health

and wellness. "What young people see online changes how they view diseases and even how they talk about them," the study noted.

That power of influence has been especially visible during Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Young Zimbabwean women

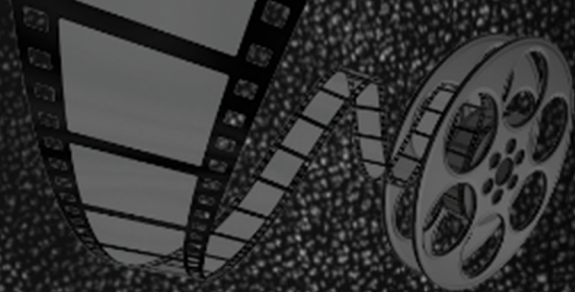
like Tafadzwa Mapininga, who uses her Facebook page to talk about living with HIV and encourage early breast checkups, have become digital voices of hope. Her openness, shared on allAfrica.com, shows how storytelling online can save lives and challenge stigma.

Art has joined the movement too. In Chipinge, Petronella Charlie, a 21-year-old artist, paints bright murals showing women examining themselves or holding pink ribbons. Her work, featured by UNICEF Zimbabwe, brings breast cancer awareness into communities where internet access is still low and proving that digital media isn't the only creative space for awareness, but it can amplify local voices and art to reach the world.

Of course, challenges remain. Mobile data is expensive, and not everyone in rural areas can easily join online campaigns. False information still spreads fast. But even with those limits, the digital world has become a key tool for spreading truth and saving lives.

From the pink posts in October to year-round health hashtags, Zimbabwe's youth are learning to use their phones not just for chatting or fun, but for sharing hope and awareness. Every story shared, every hashtag posted, every pink ribbon emoji matters because it carries a message that health is for everyone, and awareness starts with a click.





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# Pink October: Every story is unique, every journey matters



By  
Amanda Ndlovu

**B**reast cancer remains one of the most significant health challenges worldwide. As of 2025 it continues to affect millions of lives, not just medically, but psychologically, socially, emotionally and economically. Advances in detection, diagnosis, treatment and survivorship have been made. Yet many inequalities persist. This year's theme "every story is unique, every journey matters", reminds that behind every pink ribbon is a heartbeat. Behind every campaign photo is a woman who has faced fear, found courage and continued to live, love and fight in their own way.

The pink ribbon has long been a symbol of awareness, unity and strength. Yet for many, pink October is more than just a campaign, it's a reminder of hope, strength, loss and survival.

al. Breast cancer is not a single story told in one voice, it's millions of stories of mothers, sisters, aunts, friends, survivors who walk different roads but share one fight. Some discover a lump while bathing; some go for routine checkups and leave with news that changes everything. Some fight through chemo while raising children. Others navigate the fear of recurrence or live gracefully with metastatic disease. Each of these journeys deserves to be seen, heard and honored.

For years, October has been known for awareness drives, the pink t-shirts, the walks, the fundraisers, but awareness without action is just noise. This pink October, the call is louder and clearer than ever, get screened, get informed and get involved. Early detection saves lives that is not a slogan its science. When breast cancer is found early, treatment is more successful, and survival rates soar. So book a mam-

mogram, encourage a friend, remind your mother, your aunt and your neighbor, because one conversation can save a life, maybe even your own. Breast cancer is not just about statistics or cells under a microscope, it's about people. About their quiet strength it takes to face each day, and the love that carries them through.

Across Africa, breast cancer still faces barriers, stigma, late diagnosis, limited access to care; too many women are lost not because the disease cannot be treated but because they are diagnosed too late. This October is our chance to change that. In markets, churches, schools and workplaces, conversations about breast health are finally taking root. Nurses, advocates and community groups are working tirelessly to bring screening closer to home, because every woman deserves a fair chance at survival. When women talk openly, when communities rally

around them, the pink ribbon becomes more than a symbol, it becomes a promise that no one will fight alone.

Not every battle is visible, some survivors face depression after recovery; others deal with body image struggles or financial burdens from treatment. That's why survivorship is not just about living it's about healing, physically, emotionally and socially. Let this October be a reminder that healing doesn't end when treatment does. It continues in the support groups, the friendships, the moments of laughter that return after months of tears.

Yes, men can also get breast cancer, though it's rare, it's real. Many men ignore symptoms because they think breast cancer is a "women's disease". The silence can be deadly. So, let's come together, make the conversation inclusive. Let's remind our fathers, brothers and sons that awareness is for everyone.

Pink October is not just about remembering those we've lost, it's about honoring those who live, fight and love through it all. It's about science, yes but also about sisterhood, about rewriting what strength looks like, about ensuring that no woman faces silence or shame because of a diagnosis. So, this October, let's paint the world pink, not for fashion, but for hope. Let's carry the message beyond this month. Let's keep talking, screening, supporting and believing, because indeed every story is unique and every journey matters.

Pink October isn't just a colour, its courage, compassion, and community woven together. It's a reminder that the fight continues and that hope, like love never fades.



# Traditional misconceptions VS Medical facts



By  
Privilege Mathema

**T**his October, also known as #PinkTober, we debunk many myths surrounding breast cancer and enlighten you, dear reader, on what to look out for. Breast cancer is a serious medical condition that has affected many women globally. In developed countries, institutions with proper medical facilities offer services to women affected by the disease. They also go to great

lengths to educate the public on how to check for early symptoms and seek medical help when the condition worsens. While such knowledge has spread through social media even in developing countries, what has seemingly caught people's attention are the many traditional remedies believed to cure breast cancer. An anonymous source from a village in Gwanda stated that there is a tree that bears a very large fruit called umveba. The fruit is sliced into small cubes, soaked in water, and given to the person to

drink. The source also said that umveba is sometimes used in powdered form and applied to the affected area to help with healing. Another remedy involves the use of coal or charcoal. The charcoal is preheated to a moderate temperature and then placed near the affected area to allegedly stop the lump from growing. However, with all these remedies being shared, it is important for people to seek professional medical assistance to avoid worsening their condition. A word of advice to those

living with breast cancer survivors or people affected by the disease: make them feel loved and appreciated. Their condition is neither a curse nor the end of their normal lives. Just like HIV/AIDS, breast cancer also carries stigma and discrimination. Many women who have undergone surgical removal of their affected breasts, especially in less enlightened communities, may feel rejected or lonely. It is therefore important to offer knowledge, information, and counselling to help them feel accepted and supported.



## #GirlPowerInAction: Young women taking control of their health



By  
Nicole G. Moyo

**A**fter speaking with Michelle Princess Mguni, a Joint Hands Welfare Champion, it's clear that the Joint Hands Welfare Organisation (JHWO) is transforming the lives of adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) across Zimbabwe.

In partnership with the Ministry of Health and Child Care, the organisation is at the forefront of the fight against HIV, TB, and malaria, empow-

ering young women to take control of their health and their futures.

Through a comprehensive programme, JHWO provides health education, economic empowerment, and psychosocial support. The initiative focuses on preventing infections, promoting contraceptive use, discouraging early marriages, and motivating girls to stay in school and make informed health decisions.

"The earlier you get help at the clinic, the better for you," says Mguni.

Her message underscores the importance of early intervention and access to healthcare services. By equipping young women with knowledge, life skills, and confidence, the organisation is helping them make positive choices even in moments of despair.

JHWO's approach combines community outreach, peer education, and collaboration with local health facilities to make clinics more youth-friendly and accessible. Regular meetings bring together AGYW, nurses, and community leaders to address challenges and find

lasting solutions.

"By working together, we can create a brighter future for AGYW and help them reach their full potential," Mguni adds.

Through this initiative, young women are gaining confidence, leadership skills, and a sense of purpose. The impact of JHWO's work continues to ripple across communities, proving that when girls are empowered with the right tools and support, they don't just survive, they thrive.

# Lets do the breast self-exam together 101



## BREAST CANCER AWARENESS

### LEARN ABOUT THE RISKS, SYMPTOMS, AND SCREENING

By  
Persistence Nkomo

#### **S** STEP 1 : LOOK

Stand in front of the mirror with your shoulders straight and your arms on your hips. Look at your breasts in the mirror.

#### **STEP 2 : TOUCH**

Stand and raise your right arm. Slowly move the fingertips of your left hand around your right breast in small circles with light, medium and firm pressure, covering the entire breast and armpit. Gently squeeze the nipple to check for discharge.

NEXT lie down

And put your right arm behind your head.

Examine your right breast using the same method as above.

#### **What is Breast Cancer?**

Breast cancer is a complex and multifaceted disease that

occurs when abnormal cells in the breast grow and multiply uncontrollably, forming a tumor. These cancer cells can invade surrounding tissues and potentially spread to other parts of the body (metastasis). Breast cancer can affect both women and men, although it is more common in women. The disease can manifest in different forms, including invasive ductal carcinoma, invasive lobular carcinoma, and ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS), among others. Understanding breast cancer and its various forms is essential for early detection, diagnosis, and treatment.

Breast cancer develops when genetic mutations occur in the DNA of breast cells, leading to uncontrolled cell growth and tumor formation. These genetic mutations can be inherited or acquired through environmental factors, such as exposure to radiation or certain chemicals. Hormonal

influences, such as estrogen and progesterone, can also play a role in the development and growth of breast cancer cells. As breast cancer cells multiply, they can form a tumor that can invade surrounding tissues and potentially spread to other

parts of the body.

There are several types of breast cancer, each with distinct characteristics and treatment options. Some common types of breast cancer include Invasive ductal carcinoma: This is the most common type of breast cancer, accounting for about 70-80% of all breast cancer cases. It begins in the milk ducts and invades surrounding tissues. Invasive lobular carcinoma: This type of breast cancer begins in the lobules (milk-producing glands) and can spread to surrounding tissues.

Ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS): This is a non-invasive type of breast cancer that occurs in the milk ducts and has not spread to surrounding tissues.

Triple-negative breast cancer:-

This type of breast cancer lacks estrogen receptors, progesterone receptors, and excess HER2 protein, making it more aggressive and difficult to treat.

Breast cancer is staged based on the size of the tumor, the involvement of lymph nodes, and the presence of metastasis. The stages of breast cancer range from stage 0 (non-invasive) to stage IV (metastatic). Understanding the stage of breast cancer is essential for determining the best course of the treatment and prognosis.

It is important to be aware because that helps one to take proactive action to protect their health. Some of the actions that can be taken include maintaining a healthy weight as it is crucial for overall health, and research suggests that it can also play a role in reducing breast cancer risk. Being overweight or obese can increase the risk of breast cancer, particularly after menopause. This is because excess body fat can lead to increased levels of estrogen, which can stimulate the growth of breast cancer cells. Furthermore, obesity is also linked to other health problems, such as diabetes and heart disease, which can further increase the risk of breast cancer.

By maintaining a healthy weight through a balanced diet and regular exercise, individuals can reduce their risk of breast cancer and other chronic diseases. Aiming for a body mass index (BMI) between 18.5 and 24.9 is recommended, as this range is associated with the lowest risk of breast cancer and other health problems.



## CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

### STEP 2 : TOUCH

Stand and raise your right arm. Slowly move the fingertips of your left hand around your right breast in small circles with light, medium and firm pressure, covering the entire breast and armpit. Gently squeeze the nipple to check for discharge. NEXT lie down

And put your right arm behind your head. Examine your right breast using the same method as above.

Regular exercise is also an essential component of a healthy lifestyle, and research suggests that it can also help reduce the risk of breast cancer. Exercise can help reduce breast cancer risk by regulating hormones, improving insulin sensitivity, and boosting the immune system. Studies have shown that women who engage in regular physical activity, such as walking, running, or swimming, have a lower risk of developing breast cancer compared to those who lead a sedentary lifestyle. The American Cancer Society recommends at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity exercise per week. Exercise can also help improve overall health and well-being, reducing the risk of other chronic diseases, such as heart disease and diabetes.

By incorporating physical activity into daily life, individuals can take a proactive approach to reducing their breast cancer risk. Breastfeeding has also been shown to have numerous health benefits for both mothers and babies, and research suggests that it may also help reduce the risk of breast cancer. Breastfeeding can help reduce breast cancer risk by delaying the return of menstrual cycles, reducing the number of menstrual cycles a woman has in her lifetime, and lowering levels of estrogen. The longer a woman breastfeeds, the greater the reduction in breast cancer risk. A study published in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute found that women who breastfed for more than a year had a significantly lower risk of breast cancer compared to those who never breastfed. Breastfeeding can also have other benefits, such as improving mother-child bonding and providing optimal nutrition for babies. By breastfeeding their babies, mothers can not only nourish their children but also take a proactive approach to reducing their own breast cancer risk.

In addition hormone replacement therapy (HRT) is a treatment used to alleviate symptoms of menopause, such as hot flashes and night sweats. However, research suggests that HRT may increase the risk of breast cancer, particularly when used for extended periods. HRT can lead

to increased levels of estrogen, which can stimulate the growth of breast cancer cells. The Women's Health Initiative study found that combined estrogen and progestin therapy increased the risk of breast cancer, heart attacks, strokes, and blood clots. While HRT may be beneficial for some women, it's essential to discuss the risks and benefits with a healthcare provider and explore alternative treatments for menopause symptoms. By limiting HRT use and exploring other options, women can reduce their breast cancer risk and make informed decisions about their health.

Getting enough sleep is also essential for overall health, and research suggests that it may also play a role in reducing breast cancer risk. Poor sleep quality and duration have been linked to increased breast cancer risk, possibly due to the disruption of hormones and the immune system. During sleep, the body repairs and regenerates tissues, builds bone and muscle, and strengthens the immune system. The National Sleep Foundation recommends 7-9 hours of sleep per night for adults. By prioritizing sleep and establishing a consistent sleep schedule, individuals can help regulate their hormones, improve their immune function, and reduce their breast cancer risk. Additionally, getting enough sleep can have other benefits, such as improving mood, cognitive function, and overall quality of life.

Understanding individual risk factors is crucial for breast cancer prevention and early detection. Risk factors can include family history, genetics, lifestyle, and environmental factors. Knowing your risk factors can help you make informed decisions about your health and take proactive steps to reduce your risk. The Breast Cancer Risk Assessment Tool, developed by the National Cancer Institute, can help estimate a woman's risk of developing breast cancer. By understanding your risk factors, you can work with your healthcare provider to develop a personalized plan for breast cancer screening and prevention. Regular screenings and check-ups can help detect breast cancer early, when it is more treatable.

Regular screenings are essential for breast cancer detection and treatment. Mammograms, clinical breast exams, and self-exams can help detect breast cancer early, when it is more treatable. The American Cancer Society recommends annual mammograms

for women over 40, as well as clinical breast exams and self-exams. By getting regular screenings, women can detect breast cancer early and improve their treatment outcomes. Additionally, regular screenings can provide peace of mind and reduce anxiety related to breast cancer. By prioritizing breast health and getting regular screenings, women can take a proactive approach to their health and well-being. Performing monthly self-exams is a simple and effective way to become familiar with your breasts and detect any changes or abnormalities. Self-exams can help women detect breast cancer early, when it is more treatable. The American Cancer Society recommends performing self-exams monthly, ideally at the same time each month. By performing self-exams, women can become more aware of their breast health and detect any changes or abnormalities. Self-exams should not replace regular mammograms or clinical breast exams but can be a useful addition to breast cancer screening. By taking an active role in their breast health, women can take charge of their breast health and detect any changes or abnormalities.

Supporting breast cancer research and awareness is essential for improving treatment outcomes and reducing mortality rates. By donating to reputable organizations or participating in fundraising events, individuals can help support research and awareness efforts. Breast cancer research has led to significant advances in treatment and care, and continued funding is necessary to find a cure. By supporting breast cancer research and awareness, individuals can help make a difference in the lives of those affected by breast cancer. Additionally, raising awareness about breast cancer can help reduce stigma and promote education, ultimately leading to better health outcomes. By working together, we can support those affected by breast cancer and work towards a future where breast cancer is no longer a threat to women's health.

**#WearyourPinkthismonth.**



# October Music Playlist

By Lethokuhle Mpofo

Here's what youth across Southern Africa  
are vibing to this October — songs that carry rhythm, stories,  
and energy. Dive in, feel them, and let them soundtrack your month.

1. Aweh [Remix] – lordkez ft. Cassper Nyovest (South Africa)  
A soulful yet fiery blend of R&B and rap — lordkez's smooth vocals meet Cassper's confident bars in this anthem of self-belief and cool composure.  
A reminder that calm power still wins the room.
2. uValo – JAZZWRLD ft. Dlala Thukzin, Babalwa M (South Africa)  
Bass-heavy, soulful, and made for night drives.  
That mix of vulnerability and pure energy.
3. Ruzhowa – Jah Prayzah (Zimbabwe)  
Zimbabwe's storyteller with rhythm and emotion.  
A track that speaks to heritage and hope.
4. Bengicela – MaWhoo, GL\_Ceejay, Thukuthula ft. Jazzworx (South Africa)  
Smooth amapiano with spiritual undertones — perfect  
for late-night chill or soul talk.
5. Pote – Learn Zimbabwe ft. Shona Prince, Tamy Moyo & Takura (Zimbabwe)  
A homegrown collab brimming with confidence and creativity.  
An anthem of youth making waves.
6. Lerato – Gabopatwe & Mpho Sebina (Botswana)  
Soft, tender, and soulful — a track that slows time.  
Ideal for love, reflection, and healing.
7. uMoya – Thukuthula, GL\_Ceejay, JAZZWRLD, Makhadzi (South Africa / Regional)  
Where amapiano meets heart. Groove, warmth, and  
a spirit-lifting vibe that never fades.
8. Ngoyozama – Kabza De Small ft. Sykes, Young Stunna, Nkosazana Daughter & Dlala Thukzin (South Africa)  
A layered amapiano hit with energy that builds and  
never drops. Dance floor certified.
9. Tholukuthi (Clap Song) – JAZZWRLD, GL\_Ceejay ft. MaWhoo (South Africa)  
That one track you hear once — and it sticks.  
Rhythm that gets a room clapping in sync.
10. Too Much – Nutty O (Zimbabwe)  
Dancehall meets Afrofusion — Nutty O proving that Zimbabwe  
music deserves the global spotlight.



# Luveve Youth Center: A safe place for all



By  
Ulathi M. Mpofu

**E**very October, pink ribbons flood our social media feeds and a reminder that it's Breast Cancer Awareness Month. For many young people in Zimbabwe, those pink posts are often the first time they stop and think about a disease they once believed only affected older women.

The Luveve Youth Centre, located in Luveve, has long been a safe space for young

people to gather, learn, and grow.

'Every day, youths come to the center to engage in different activities such as singing, netball, carpentry, and even receive counselling,' said Shylet Fuzane the student social worker at Luveve youth center. Gift Mpofu one of the youths doing carpentry at the youth center mentioned the youth center as a safe space that keeps them off the streets, bad behavior and drugs.

The Councilor of ward sixteen Greater Gumedede praised

the center for its continued impact, saying it keeps young people busy and away from harmful behavior. However, she raised concerns about its poor state. "The structure is old and needs renovations. Once helped clear the overgrown grass, but more work is needed," she said.

Junior Ndlovu, who is learning carpentry at the youth center, said 'the center equips him with valuable skills and he gets an opportunity to socialize with others.'

Dumoluhle Nyathi one of the youths said 'he appreciates getting free condoms,' while Cedrick Nkiwane enjoys counselling and therapy from social workers but wishes there were swings and a proper football ground for young children.

With Grade 7 pupils now idle after exams, many believe upgrading the Luveve Youth Centre is vital to keeping youth safe, active, and inspired. everyone, and awareness starts with a click.

# #PinkToks: How CITE Youth Network Is turning TikTok into a space for awareness



By  
Patricia Moyo

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and as members of the CITE Youth Network, we wanted to do something that connects with young people like us. We decided to take the conversation to TikTok, the platform where most of us spend our time, and use

short, engaging videos to raise awareness about breast cancer.

Our videos share simple messages about self-checks, early detection, and supporting those affected by cancer. We keep them short, clear, and easy to understand so that anyone can learn something new in just a few seconds of scrolling.

We know that talking about

health can sometimes feel uncomfortable or too serious, but we believe it doesn't have to be. By using TikTok, we're finding fun and creative ways to start meaningful conversations about our bodies and our health.

For us, it's not just about awareness, it's about hope. We want young people to know that early detection saves lives and that it's okay to talk openly

about these issues. Every view, share, or comment helps spread that message a little further.

This campaign means a lot to us because it shows how young people can use social media to make a real difference. Health, hope, and awareness can begin with something as simple as a one-minute video, and that's exactly what we're doing, one post at a time.



# Red flags in relationships : Protecting your heart



By  
Nombulelo Khumalo

In today's dating world, it's easy to overlook signs of trouble. However recognising red flags early can save your heart. By knowing what to watch out for, you'll be better equipped to build healthy relationships and avoid toxic ones.

## What Are Red Flags?

Red flags are signs or behaviours that indicate potential problems, toxicity, or abuse.

Are you dating someone special or just settling? Here are signs to watch out for.

### 1.Trust problems

they check your phone, e-mails and messages without

permission. accuse you of cheating without any evidence.

### 2.Dishonesty

frequent lying, withholding information or breaking promises.

### 3.Control Issues

they get angry when you say no. dictate what you wear. decide who you hang out with. limit your freedom.

### 4.Lack Of Communication

they rarely call or text. don't ask your day. ignore your message.

### 5.Gaslighting

manipulating you into doubting your own perceptions.

### 6.Abuse

hitting, pushing or physical harm, threaten to hurt you or loved ones, verbally insult

you.

### 7.Selfishness

only care about their needs. never compromise. expect gifts.

### 8.Possessiveness

get angry when you talk to others. isolate you from friends or family.

### 9.Disrespect

Ignore boundaries, call you names and yell at you.

### 10.Waste your time

no future plans, they string you along and they disappear and re appear.

## Why Do Red Flags Happen?

- 1.Difficulty with trust.
- 2.Fear of rejection.
- 3.Past relationship trauma.
- 4.lack of emotional intelligence.
- 5.Different values or goals.

## What To Do If You See Red Flags?

### 1.Leave the relationship

It's okay to walk away. Your safety is priority, don't wait for things to get worse.

### 2.Express concerns

Share your feelings with your partner.

### 3.Recognize Your Value

you deserve respect, trust and care in a relationship.

### 4. Trust patterns over words.

actions speak louder.

### 5.Seek outside advice

talk to trusted friends or family.

## Remember, your heart and safety matter.

Red flags are signs to protect yourself don't ignore them. You deserve a healthy relationship, prioritize your well-being.

# Myths about breast cancer among Zimbabwe's youth



By  
Tafadzwa Gumunyu

**E**very October, the world turns pink for breast cancer awareness. There are walks, ribbons, and campaigns everywhere but behind all that colour, there's a quiet problem many don't talk about. Among Zimbabwe's youth, myths and wrong beliefs about breast cancer are still causing fear, silence, and late treatment.

I first came across this issue in *The Herald* (October 8, 2024) in a story titled "Young women and breast cancer: A growing concern." It said more young women in Zimbabwe are now being diagnosed with breast cancer, even those between 15 and 39 years old. For a long time, people thought only older women could get the disease but that's not true.

A 2024 research study done

in Zimbabwe found that many young people still believe things like witchcraft, dark bras, or tight bras can cause breast cancer. Some even think a breast injury can cause it. Others believe if cancer doesn't run in your family, then you're safe. These are the kinds of myths that stop people from getting checked early.

In another story from *The Herald* (October 11, 2024), titled "They fought and lived to tell their stories," survivors shared their painful but inspiring experiences. One woman, Chipso Mambo (46), said that she ignored a lump because she thought it was a muscle problem. By the time she got checked, it had already spread but she still fought and survived. Now she encourages other women not to wait.

*NewsDay* (October 6, 2021) also wrote about the most common myths in Zimbabwe, like the idea that wired bras

cause cancer or that young women can't get it. The article explained that none of those beliefs are true and that misinformation can cost lives.

Many people still think breast cancer only affects women, but that's not true. Men can also get it, even though it's rare. Because of this myth, most men don't check themselves or take early signs seriously. Doctors say this can lead to late diagnosis, which makes treatment harder. Health workers are now encouraging men to also pay attention to any unusual lumps or changes in their chest and to get checked early because breast cancer doesn't choose gender.

Health experts say trauma or a bump to the breast doesn't cause cancer. What it might do is make you notice a lump that was already there. The Cancer Association of Zimbabwe has warned that

many women still come to the hospital too late because they believe in myths or can't afford to go earlier. According to THET (a UK-based health partnership) in 2021, delays often happen because of cost, lack of information, and fear of hospitals.

But there's also hope. Across Zimbabwe, young people are standing up and spreading the truth. In 2022, *The Herald* reported that youths took part in awareness walks and online campaigns to teach others about early detection and self-exams. Some survivors now go to schools and churches to tell their stories, helping to remove the shame around talking about breast health.

The truth is simple: breast cancer can happen to anyone, young or old. It's not caused by bras, injuries, or curses. And even if someone in your family had it, that doesn't mean you definitely will. What matters most is checking yourself, knowing your body, and visiting a clinic when something feels wrong.

One young woman I spoke to told me she once kept quiet about a lump because she feared being judged. She now goes for check-ups and tells her friends not to wait. "It's better to be safe than sorry," she said.

So as Zimbabwe turns pink this month, the message is clear, don't let myths take your life. Talk about it. Get checked. Share the truth. Because awareness isn't just about ribbons, it's about saving lives.



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