

# Why June 16 is such an important day

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When you hear “National Youth Day” is coming up, you may be happy for the day off from school or work but do you know why June 16 is such an important day?

Youth Day commemorates June 16 1976, when thousands of students gathered at Orlando West Secondary School, in protest against the Bantu Education Act, established by the Apartheid Government which forced black pupils to learn Afrikaans. The intention was for a peaceful march but as they took to the streets of Soweto the police tried to stop the march with force with a number of people hurt and killed by the police.

What happened shocked the world – with Hector Pieterse (a 13 year old pupil killed by the police on June 16, 1976) becoming the poster child of the uprising that would indirectly and ultimately lead to South Africa’s first, free and fair elections in 1994.

Why June 16: Change last sentence to: For more information on Youth Day, you can read our article, “What Youth Day means to YOU?” <https://bwisehealth.com/article/what-youth-day-means-to-you>

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