

Teaching & Learning

ESSENTIALS OF EDUCATION

FROM THE EDITOR



Technology can curb malpractices

Every year when the Uganda National Examinations Board releases examination results, some are held due to malpractices. There are many cases of malpractices including leakages and hiring mercenaries which have been going on for years. Of course we have to credit Uneb for putting up a spirited fight against the vice but the fact that it still persists means that either they need to do more or they should change the strategy.

Kenya, for example, uses fingerprints to identify the candidates. The argument is, whereas one can pay to have a mercenary sit an exam for them, they would not match the registered fingerprint of the candidate. This is a step in the right direction. Since Uganda is advancing in biometric technology, borrowing a leaf from this Kenya strategy can be helpful. But of course, all forms of malpractice can be kicked out if we take collective responsibility. The examiners who allegedly leak exams must stop as well as the parents and schools who pay them. Have a good week.

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Report's thought...
DEPUTY HEAD TEACHER, CHARITY FM...

"Schools should always engage students in cleaning the... ment themselves not as a punishment, but as a way of teaching them to be responsible about themselves and their environment. They could even award gifts as a motivation, to the cleanest class or block in the school, as a way of appreciating their effort and motivating others to follow their example."



POLICY/PRACTICE

ESSENTIALS AND ALTERNATIVE IDEAS

Pupils promote hygiene in rural Oyam schools

Rural pupils in Oyam District are becoming change agents through transferring sanitation skills acquired at school to their homes to reduce spread of diseases and stigma around menstruation.

BY DAN WANDERA

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At 15, Felister Achieng, a Primary Seven pupil at Anyeke Primary School in Oyam Town Council, boasts of being a leader of her school's Health Club. But most importantly, Achieng boasts of exemplary leadership. "As a prefect, my first duty when I arrive at school is to ensure that all the litter is properly disposed of at the rubbish pit before the teachers instruct me to do so. I do not have to wait for the other pupils to pick the rubbish. I also ensure that all the hand washing facilities placed at the school latrines are filled with water," she says.

Achieng, in coordination with other members of the school Health Club, clean the school and ensure the young children get firsthand information on how to properly use the latrine and wash hands after visiting it. She also helps fellow girls by tipping them on keeping clean during menstruation.

"With the help of our senior woman teacher, we have a washroom and changing room where the girls who are menstruating are helped," Achieng says.

But Achieng's role extends to her home where she has helped with the construction of a kitchen rack for the family to dry and keep utensils clean as well as a hand washing facility at the pit latrine. "I also make sure my siblings keep our compound clean and they cover the latrine after use to stop disease-spreading flies from contaminating our food," Achieng sates.

Reduced medical costs

Similarly, Moris Akejo, 14, also a Primary Seven pupil, says he actively participates in clearing the bush around their home to ensure mosquitoes which spread malaria are kept away from their home. "My parents are proud when I engage my siblings in conversations regarding hygiene and sanitation," he says.

And members of the community have come to appreciate the role these pupils have taken on to help their families avoid illnesses.

For instance Lillian Akello, a resident of Amukungu village in Kamdini Sub-county in Oyam District, says there is positive health living behaviour in her



Sarah Kwansara Konge, a member of the health club at Amaji Primary School in Oyam District demonstrates how to wash hands.

PHOTO BY DAN WANDERA

MAKING SANITARY PADS

Evaline Akwero, the senior woman teacher at Anyeke Primary School says girls can now make reusable sanitary pads by themselves. "The girls, who are members of the school health club such as Felister Achieng, get practical lessons which have made them responsible. They got training from the Wash project and can make reusable sanitary pads by themselves now. The only challenge has been lack of access to the right material used in making the pads. We believe once the material is available the girls can make the pads at school."

ful to the school authorities for instilling good habits in their children.

Akello says her daughter Sarah Kwansara Konge, a Primary Seven pupil at Amaji Primary School, has trained her siblings to maintain good health habits including washing hands with soap and water after visiting the latrine.

According to Sam Ogwang Alunyu, the Kamdini Sub-county chairperson, the pupils from Amaji Primary School, Acet Primary School, Anyeke Primary School are among schools under the World Vision Uganda Wash project as change agents for good sanitation and hygiene practices.

Joining the drive

At Acet Primary School, Lucky Akello, 16, says she teamed up with her siblings to

construct a (tip-tap) hand washing facility at home to the surprise of their parents. "Other children from the neighbourhood have taken up the idea and are making tip-taps at their respective homes," she says.

At school, Akello together with the members of the school health club fetch water and fill the hand washing containers placed at the school latrines. "I also talk about menstrual hygiene management with fellow girls at school. I cannot feel ashamed because our senior woman teacher has sensitised us," Akello reveals.

Training school-going children in basic hygiene and sanitation is a step in the right direction of fighting infections and disease-causing agents in schools and homes.

Do it yourself

1. Cut two branches of wood of two metre length, which have a Y-shape at the end.
2. Cut two thinner branches, each one metre.
3. Attach a piece of string of one metre length to one of the sticks.
4. Mark the location for the hole on the container, around 12cm below the cap.
5. Heat the nail and make



6. Put the rope, which is attached to the stick, through the hole in the cap.
7. Screw the cap back on the container. The stick is now connected to the container with the rope.
8. Fill the container with water, up to the level of the hole.
9. Put the stick through