

Parenting

# Do not be harsh while disciplining your child



**Bob Kisiki**

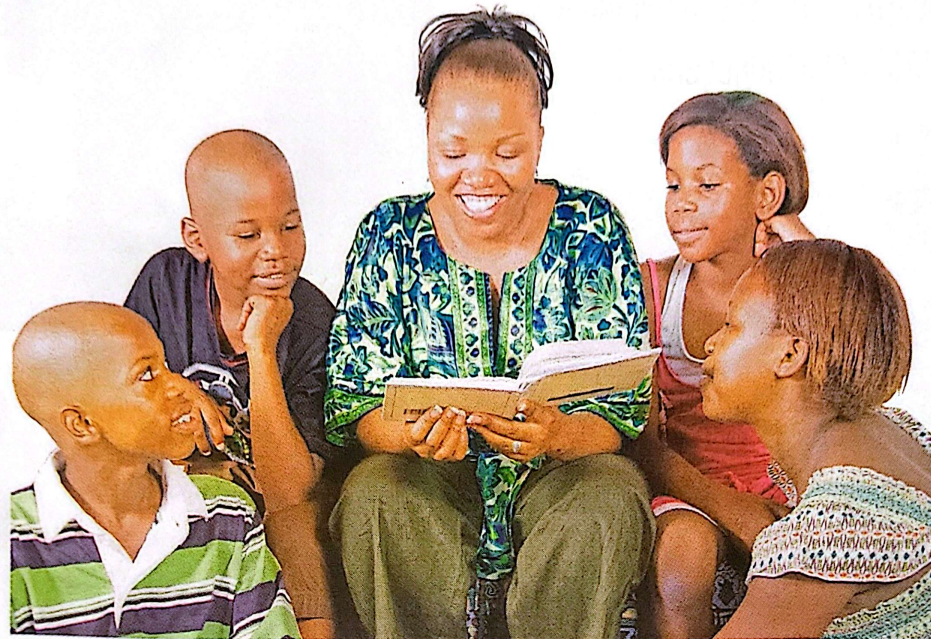
Let us face it, children can sometimes be a notorious itch in a sensitive place. If there ever was one category that one can take for God's way of teaching parents patience, it is children.

They will try you until you feel like, if you could kill them and still have them alive, you would do just that. Now that feeling is okay? And it's human. What is not okay is when you follow that urge and go right ahead and abuse your child. Whether it is verbal, physical or emotional abuse, it is wrong and you should desist from it.

I have seen babies look their mothers in the eye with this truly adorable look in their glorious eyes, before taking the nipple from which they are feeding and giving it the most vicious bite.

Toddlers are known for asking to be dressed in this or that outfit, then they go right out the door and in three minutes, return to the living room looking like deep swamp divers.

Children in lower primary school will ask for a pen and/or pencil each day, because the ones they took the previous day are lost; and this goes on every day of every week of every month of every year. We shall say nothing of teenagers and their hypertension-inducing ways. No matter the stage and whatever the misconduct, nothing should lead you to abuse your child.



When children are treated with love and respect, even when you punish them, they accept the punishment with grace

**Forms of abuse**

Sometimes the abuse comes in the form of shouting at them. Let us have a scenario. You wake up in the morning and tell your little girl to take a bath, have breakfast and complete her homework, because term opens in a week.

You then proceed to the kitchen to do your own work. When you

next see her, she is snuggled in bed, her teddy in her hands, her homework untouched. Next thing, you are shouting at her, calling her names. If it is not shouting, it is making the dictum "spare the rod and spoil the child" your daily mantra.

Yes, Biblical Solomon said that, but what did Solomon

know about your children? That Solomon could have had children he never even met for all we know, seeing as he had an entire municipality of women.

So yes, do not let children go to waste because you will not spank them, but when beating them becomes your default language of communication, those

**TOP TIP ✓**

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children are going to become hardened and whenever you do not beat them, they will not do anything.

**Who loses**

The killer, though, is when you pronounce negative things upon your children in anger. Calling them things such as *kisiraani* (abominable thing); a pain, *muzimu* (demon) and so on. All we can say here is, words create.

If ultimately you have a demon of a child, don't wonder where it came from — it came from your heart, through your mouth.

Abused children end up being timid and never reach out to make profitable relationships or grab opportunities that could benefit them.

They are wary of getting into people's lives, because if daddy could call me a demon, why would a total stranger call me something better? But when children are treated with love and respect, even when you punish them, they accept the punishment with grace, because they know that you don't do it as a hobby; you do it in their interest.

They will then be free with you; turning into assertive children, who can stand up for what they want, without being offensive.

The writer is a parenting counsellor

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