

GOOD SCHOOL Newsletter

Introductory Issue

The Good School Newsletter is a termly publication for schools using the Good School Toolkit. It is an entertaining, informative and interactive platform for Good Schools who are part of the Peer Learning Network to connect, share and learn!

What is Peer Learning Network?

It is a network of schools and the individuals within them who are using the Good School Toolkit and want to share their ideas and experiences.

Who can join?

You and your school can join. Simply write to us about your interest in learning about the Good School Toolkit. Tell us about your school and your experiences at goodschools@raisingvoices.org.

The newsletter will come to you every term to ensure that you get to know what is happening in other schools that are part of the Good Schools Peer Learning Network.

How to create a Good School

The Good School Toolkit contains a set of ideas and tools that will help teachers, administrators and students explore what a good school is and guide them through a process that will help them create one. It was developed with the help of schools in Uganda and focuses on ideas and activities that do not require financial resources – just commitment to create something unique.

The Toolkit comes in 3 packages.



Introductory Package

This package introduces you to the key ideas in the Toolkit. It helps you create interest at your school and decide together if you want to use the Toolkit to create a Good School.

Package 2

This package helps you learn about and prepare the school for the process of creating a Good School. It also explores what it means to be a good teacher, and introduces new skills and methods that create motivated teachers who excel as educators and take pride in their work.

Package 3

This package helps you learn about alternatives to corporal punishment and how to create positive discipline in your students. It also introduces you to the importance of creating a Good Learning Environment, in which students feel a sense of dignity, security, value and voice. Finally, you will be guided through a series of steps to think about the future, plan for the way forward, and measure and celebrate your success!

What is a Good School?
The Formula is simple!

Good Teachers
+
Good Learning Environment
+
Good Administration

=



A Good School includes students in the learning process.



Good Schools

Share their Experiences

Mulago Secondary School and St. Peter's Primary School Kanyanya, in Kampala, have been using the Good School Toolkit for over four years.

Along the way, they have learned some very important lessons which can help you on your journey to creating a better school. Here are some of the lessons learned:

Creating a Good School takes time and involves everyone in the school and broader community. When everyone is included and feels ownership, from the security guard, to the students, to the head master, to the parents, everyone will feel accountable and work hard to strengthen their school. You can read more about how to prepare your team and network for change in Steps 1-3 of the Good School Toolkit.

When we abandon corporal punishment and begin using alternatives such as positive discipline, students not only feel safer and more confident at school, their learning outcomes also improve. Furthermore, they feel free to speak up in class and even develop friendly relationships with their teachers. Some alternatives to corporal punishment are: taking time out to think about what has happened, withdrawing privileges, or writing an apology letter. For more information, read the book *Positive Discipline: Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*, which comes in the Good School Toolkit.

A conducive learning environment is crucial to creating a Good School. A conducive learning environment is more than just a smart compound and clean latrines. It also includes creating a psychological sense of safety and inclusion, inspiring visual aids such as a Notice Board or Wall of Fame, and promoting students' dignity and voice. To learn more about how to create a conducive learning environment at your school, check out Step 4 in the Good School Toolkit.

Students' Stories

Spotlight on Violence against Children

TODAY'S LESSON

Violence against children happens so often that it has become a normal practice and nobody finds a problem with it.

-DIPAK NAKER

One day my mother denied me 500 shillings to pay for Saturday class and refused me to go to school yet we had an exam coming up. I had to borrow the money so as to go to school. When I returned, she punished me for disobeying her by making me sleep outside. I called my grandmother and she came home in the morning to talk to my parents that it was bad to make me sleep outside. As a result, my mother made me sleep outside again, this made me feel like committing suicide because sleeping outside did not teach me anything.

I call upon all parents that before making children sleep outside they should put themselves in the child's position to find out how it feels for someone to sleep outside.

-Wazil 14 years

Our Good School Judge

This is what 'His Lordship' Mwogeza Collins, a judge with St. Peter's P/S Kanyanya Students' Court has to say about the Newsletter...

"I am so excited about the newsletter because it will help the Good School ideas go further to reach other schools. If the newsletter goes far it will help individuals in Africa and the whole world to unite against the use of corporal punishment."

-Collins

Fact File!
More than **60%** of children say that they experience violence at school on a regular basis.

-Positive Discipline: Alternatives to Corporal Punishment, 2009

Wall of Fame



Nuwagaba Keith, from Namirembe Infants P/S, turns his thoughts into action!

"Corporal punishment makes us lose focus in class because of the pain that it causes. I hate it, so I decided to write a book called *Child Abuse* to talk about it. I urge our parents, teachers and my fellow students to read it."

-Nuwagaba Keith



Voices from Good Schools

"Children are like wet cement, whatever falls on them makes an impression."

Violence against children is deeply rooted in our culture and it is considered a private affair. However, with this Newsletter as a platform, we will share our views and experiences and we will make a difference.

-Mutoni Julian

Peer Learning Network Coordinator



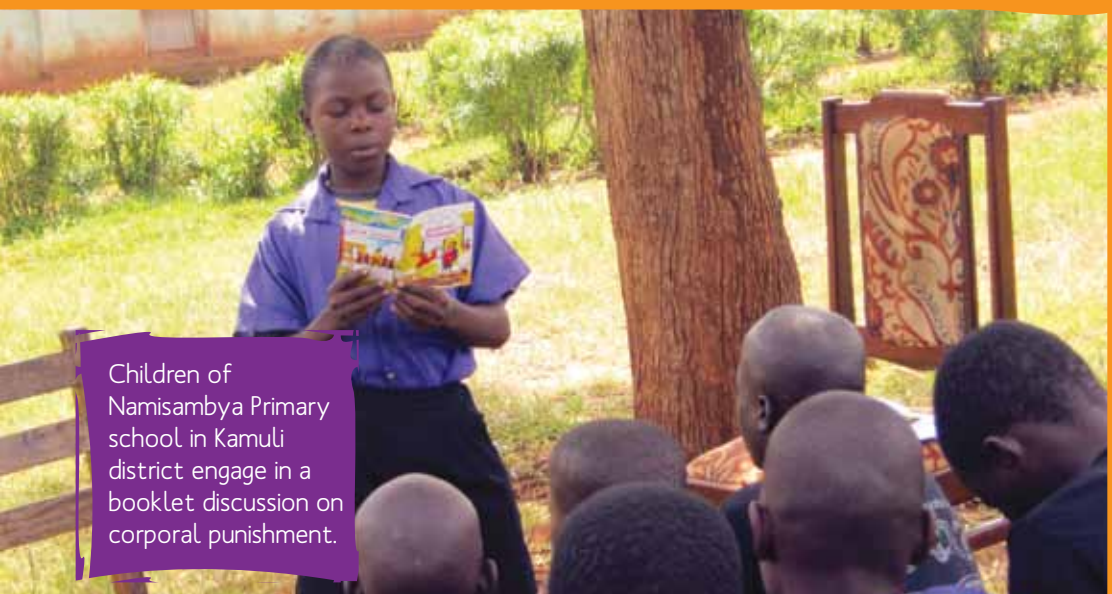
Students participate in the Good Schools launch in Kampala by performing, reading booklets, sharing stickers and speaking out.



NEWS IN PICTURES



Teachers put their learning into action at a Good Schools training in Mbarara.



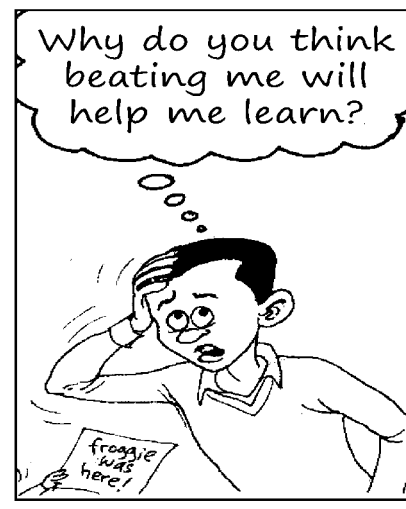
Children of Namisambya Primary school in Kamuli district engage in a booklet discussion on corporal punishment.

DO YOU WANT TO BE FEATURED IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER? WRITE TO US AT THE ADDRESS BELOW!

NEXT ISSUE'S THEME

Corporal Punishment...

Questions Children Ask...



9 of 10
 Children have questions... Do you have the answers?
 Because...
 A violence-free childhood is everyone's right!
 Raising Voices
 www.raisingvoices.org

To participate in the Newsletter, send your views, stories and experiences to:
goodschools@raisingvoices.org or P.O. Box 6770, Kampala, Uganda

