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# **Policies Made Simple with a Focus on Whole Child Development, Education and Rights in Kenya.**

A **Jaslika** and **JET Education Services** Collaborative under the Learning Hub, Building Education Back Better Initiative.

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**Disclaimer:** The interpretation of the Kenyan policies and guidelines presented in this document represents the views of the writers and Jaslika and is not necessarily representative of JET Education Services or Porticus.

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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| <b>AIDS</b>   | Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome                                |
| <b>CBC</b>    | Competency Based Curriculum  |
| <b>GBV</b>    | Gender Based Violence  |
| <b>HIV</b>    | Human Immunodeficiency Virus                                       |
| <b>KIPPRA</b> | Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis            |
| <b>KYDP</b>   | Kenya Youth Development Policy                                     |
| <b>NAC</b>    | National Assessment Center   |
| <b>NACADA</b> | National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse |
| <b>NASMLA</b> | National Assessment System for Monitoring Learner Achievement      |
| <b>KNEC</b>   | Kenya National Examinations Council                                |
| <b>PE</b>     | Physical Education   |
| <b>SADC</b>   | Southern African Development Community                             |
| <b>UNESCO</b> | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization   |
| <b>WCD</b>    | Whole Child Development  |

## About This Publication

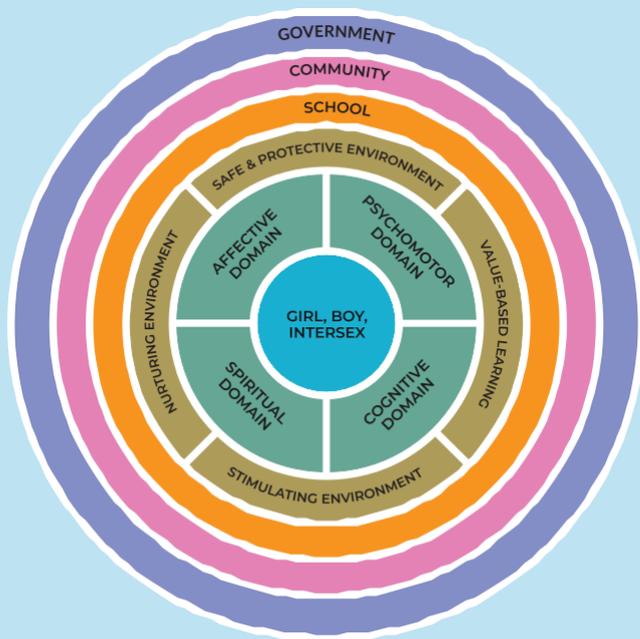
The Building Education Back Better Learning Hub is a virtual workspace created with the purpose of

- Developing a community of practice
- Building evidence to influence the ecosystem to build education back better
- Capturing insights on WCD in the Kenyan education sector

The JET Education Services facilitated the Learning Hub, building on the [bootcamp methodology](#), which they first successfully implemented in March 2020 within the context of SADC. The Learning Hub is organised around five thematic areas, co-created by members drawn from the Akili Television Network, Jaslika and the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops. This publication is the result of collaborative efforts of an intergenerational team from Jaslika under one of the thematic areas, “Strengthening continued learning for the most vulnerable children through stakeholder engagement”. Working online for over 10 weeks in plenaries and smaller groups, team consensus was developed on what form the product should take and what it should focus on. One barrier to the meaningful engagement of stakeholders was identified as the lack of implementation of government policies in support of WCD, which in turn was fueled by widespread lack of awareness about them. The decision to focus on simplifying policies supporting WCD was thus informed by the need to address this awareness gap.

In this first edition of the Policies Made Simple, we present four policies that speak to the 7-Point Youth Agenda presented by young people from Nyeri, Nairobi and Jaslika Youth to policy makers from the Education, Child Protection and Child Justice sectors at the Intergenerational Policy Dialogue hosted by Jaslika in September 2021 under phase one of the Intergenerational Perspectives on Building Education Better project. Three of the policies included in this edition were published by the Ministry of Education (that is, Re-Entry and Drug Prevention guidelines, and the Sports policy) while a fourth (Mental Health policy) by the Ministry of Health.

## WHAT IS WHOLE CHILD DEVELOPMENT (WCD)?



Whole Child Development (WCD) means addressing the needs of the child holistically, that is, taking care of their physical, mental, emotional and spiritual needs, so they may grow up to be healthy, happy and develop to their whole potential.

In order to do so, they must be:

- Nurtured
- Curious, creative and critical thinkers and
- Enabled to live, play and learn in a friendly environment that is nurturing, safe and protective, value-based, and stimulating.

Everyone – the school, community (including parents and guardians) and the government – must work together to make sure that this happens.

But, many children do not find the school a friendly place, so they drop out before completion of their schooling.

## WHY ARE YOUNG PEOPLE DROPPING OUT?

The Young People's 7-Point Agenda Capture the Main Factors as:



Teaching methodologies that are not inclusive



Prevalence of drug and alcohol abuse



Harsh punishments by teachers and harassment by peers



Sexual and gender-based violence and early pregnancies



Lack of mental health awareness in schools



De-prioritization of sports and recreational facilities



De-prioritization of life skills education and values teaching

**Consequence of exclusion from the education system for children living in adversity is the intergenerational transmission of poverty.**

## POLICIES ADDRESSING THESE ISSUES



Re-Entry Guidelines



Drug, Alcohol and Substance Abuse Guidelines



Mental Health Policy



Physical Education and Sports Policy

# NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL RE-ENTRY<sup>1</sup>

The right of all children to education is protected by the Constitution of Kenya 2010. This is given effect by the Education Act 2013 and the Children Act 2022. The Re-entry Guidelines provide a policy framework to operationalise children's right to education with a focus on learners who drop out of school for various reasons. They address 4 of the 7-Point Youth Agenda: Drug and Alcohol Abuse, Punishment and Harassment, Sexual and Gender-based Violence and Teenage Pregnancy, and Mental Health.

## THE PROBLEM



Early Pregnancy



HIV / AIDS

**GBV**

Gender Based Violence



Child Labour



Trafficking



Drug and Substance Abuse



Mental Health



Conflict and Disasters

## THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAS AGGRAVATED THE PROBLEM

**270,350**

270,350 girls and 137,113 boys who were in school in March 2020 when schools closed had not returned by February 2021.



The major reason among 47% of girls and 21% of boys<sup>1</sup> for not returning to school was the lack of school fees.



The second most frequently mentioned cause for not returning to schools by girls was pregnancies while boys cited work opportunities.<sup>2</sup>

## GOALS OF THE RE-ENTRY POLICY

The Guidelines aim at promoting learner retention, transition and completion by formalising the re-entry process.

## WHAT CAN STAKEHOLDERS DO?

### What can young people do?

Sensitise learners, parents/guardians and the school community on children's rights and protection.

### What can schools do?

Re-admit any child who has dropped out of the same school, or wants to transfer from another.

### What can teachers do?

Ensure that they maintain strict confidentiality in matters affecting learners.

### What can parents or guardians do?

Support re-entry of their children to school.

### What can education offices and local authorities do?

Support the readmission of a child regardless of the reason for dropping out.

# NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION 2021<sup>1</sup>

Alcohol and substance abuse by learners and teachers is a barrier to children's rights to education and health, and their holistic development. It leads to attention deficit, lack of impulse control, problems with peers and diseases which then leads to low school performance, violence, delinquency and mental health issues.

## THE PROBLEM

In the 7-Point Youth Agenda, young people observed that drug and alcohol abuse in schools affect both the children and young people as they may be users as well as sellers. According to NACADA (2016<sup>2</sup>; 2018<sup>3</sup>):

### 11

Average age of onset of at least one drug or substance use in Kenya is 11 years, 4 years for lowest age of onset.

### 3.8%

Alcohol use in Secondary Schools is at 3.8%, prescription drugs at 3.6%, miraa at 2.6% and cocaine at 0.2%.

### 28.6%

28.6% of narcotic substances come from kiosks, 28.6% bars near school, 19.3% friends, 13.7% students and 13.6% school workers.

**Prevalent social challenges linked to this policy include violence, delinquency, mental health issues, school drop outs, unwanted pregnancies, HIV/AIDS and poverty.**

## KEY OBJECTIVES

To promote a safe and healthy environment free from alcohol and substance use to enable learners to realize their full potential.



Eradicate alcohol and substance abuse within the school environment.



Establish prevention education and support mechanisms for the school community.



Respond appropriately to learners with substance use challenges.

## WHAT CAN STAKEHOLDERS DO?

### Young People Shall

Create awareness on the issue; support each other to refuse drug and alcohol use.

### Schools Shall

Implement school-based prevention programs that are corrective and not punitive.

### Teachers Shall

Maintain confidentiality to avoid stigmatization of users and be positive role models.

### Counties Shall

Enforce laws and regulations restricting advertising and selling alcohol near schools.

### Ministry of Health Shall

Ensure child and adolescent friendly services in medical facilities.

### Ministry of Education Shall

Promote whole school approach to drug use prevention and positive environment in schools.

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORT POLICY FOR BASIC EDUCATION 2021<sup>1</sup>

## BACKGROUND

The Bill of Rights in the Kenyan Constitution 2010 and the Education Act 2013 safeguards children's right to play and recreation. Consistent with the Whole Child Development approach, it:



Improves mental, social and physical well-being of children in and out of school.



Is an important part of our culture



Contributes to social and economic development of the country



May help to reduce conflict and promote peace



Empowers and is a channel for teaching life skills and values



Helps children to socialise and make friends

## THE PROBLEM

PE and sports is mandatory in the basic education curriculum but it is not examinable. Most schools exclude learners with disabilities from participating in any form of sports. Girls, as compared to boys, have fewer opportunities to engage in sports activities in schools. At the national level, only 1 in 3 athletes are women.<sup>2</sup>

Young people, in their 7-Point Agenda, note that in schools facilities, instructional materials, equipment and trained teachers are lacking to deliver the PE and sports curriculum effectively.

### 47.9%

Nearly half of learners in **class 7** are not offered PE lessons.<sup>3</sup>

### 18.8%

Nealy one fifth of learners in **class 3** are not offered PE lessons.<sup>4</sup>

### 69.2%

7 out of 10 primary school teachers don't have technical skills to teach and conduct PE lessons.<sup>5</sup>

### 62.1%

3 out of 5 primary school teachers had not undergone necessary training to teach PE.<sup>6</sup>

### 60.8%

3 out of 5 primary school teachers use the PE period to teach examinable subjects.<sup>7</sup>

## WHAT CAN STAKEHOLDERS DO?

### What can young people do?

Educate parents, teachers and learners on the importance of PE and sports for the development of their children.

### What can learners do in school?

Encourage peers to take sports and PE positively and actively engage in sports activities

### What can teachers do?

Prioritize physical education and sports activities in schools and teach learners on the health benefits of engaging in physical education programs.

### What can parents do?

Plan for sports activities for the whole family that will keep them active and limit their children's screen time on computers and televisions

### What can counties do?

Channel resources to schools, develop facilities for sports and buy equipment that can last for a long time.

### What can the Ministry of Education do?

Increase school based programs focusing on physical education and sports activities.

# MENTAL HEALTH POLICY<sup>1</sup>

Mental health, a critical component of the holistic development of a child, is one of the 7-Point Youth Agendas. Without adequate attention to care, affection, love, stimulation for cognitive abilities or other emotional and social support, the mental health of learners may be affected which can negatively affect their performance and active participation in school. Behavioral challenges and exposure to risky behavior, like drug and substance abuse, may make adolescents vulnerable to mental disorders.

## BACKGROUND

1

Adversity at an early age is an established risk factor for mental disorders.

2

Globally, 1 in 7 adolescents aged between 10 and 19 are estimated to live with a diagnosed mental disorder.

3

In Kenya, the prevalence of mental health problems in children and adolescents varies between 10% and 50.5%.

4

In low income countries like Kenya only 1 out of 5 people with mental illness receive healthcare services.

5

It is estimated that 50% of all mental health disorders manifest by the age of 14 years.

## CHILDREN WITH MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES OFTEN EXPERIENCE

1

Stigma and discrimination.

2

Physical, emotional and sexual abuse.

3

Lack of social support.

## KEY OBJECTIVES

The main goal is to attain the highest standard of mental health



To strengthen effective leadership and governance for mental health.



To ensure access to mental health care services.



To implement strategies to promote mental health and prevent disorders.



To strengthen mental healthcare systems.

## WHAT CAN STAKEHOLDERS DO?

### SCHOOLS

Make space for life skills education.

### TEACHERS

Reach out to learners, parents and the community.

### PARENTS

Get involved; take interest in children's school work.

### YOUNG PEOPLE

Create awareness to reduce stigma and discrimination.

## About Jaslika

A Nairobi-based firm, [Jaslika Consulting](#) became operational in December 2016. It operates under Jaslika Holdings Limited, which aims at providing holistic, multi-sectoral services to tackle developmental challenges that affect communities. Also operating under Jaslika Holdings is Modus Design Lab which focuses on web design and development. Jaslika Foundation is an associated organisation.

The Jaslika group of organisations combine passion and professionalism to deliver quality and timely services to inspire change. Founded on the principles of ethical business practices, its emblem reflects its world-view and the values and principles that guide its practice. The Jaslika emblem is inspired by African cosmology. It is designed as concentric circles, signifying the interconnectedness of life and humanity and expresses the idea of perpetuity, continuity and infinity. The dotted lines radiating from the core draw attention to connecting the dots, seeing life as an interconnected whole and not as disconnected silos.

Jaslika conducts innovative research and training across the Education, Child Rights and Youth Participation sectors. Gender, human rights, values and intersectionality are cross-cutting areas of interest. Since late 2020, it has been implementing an action research project titled, 'Intergenerational perspectives on building education better'. While phase 1 focused on documenting intergenerational perspectives, in the second phase it is exploring how the school and community gap may be bridged by involving young people as mediators. The Learning Hub is one of the components of this project. For samples of our work, click on <https://jaslika.com/reports>.

## About JET Education Services

For over three decades, [JET](#) has worked in South Africa, Africa and beyond with government and the public sector, civil society organisations, local and international development agencies and educational institutions to improve the quality of education and the overall relationship between education, skills development and the world of work.

The services JET offers form an integrated value chain, which represents the kinds of services that we provide. We do research which informs implementation, and we monitor and evaluate implementation, which feeds back into the knowledge base. This synergy between research, implementation and evaluation which JET strives to achieve advances the development of knowledge, which in turn may lead to the modification of existing intervention models and building new ones.

The [bootcamp methodology](#) was first successfully implemented by JET in March 2020, and brought

together researchers of varying experience from all over South Africa to look at practical solutions to the crisis faced by the education sector during lockdown. There were another two iterations of this - the SADC Researchers Challenge and the Commonwealth Researchers in Pursuit. The Building Education Back Better Learning Hub adopted the bootcamp methodology and was underscored by a design thinking approach.

## Credits

### **Policies summarized by Jaslika**

Sheila Wamahiu and Zainab Mboga - Whole Child Development and The Youth Agenda

Ernest Onguko and Hamisi Mboga - School Re-Entry Guidelines

Esther Wangui and Joy Gacheru - Alcohol and Substance Use Prevention and Management Guidelines

Sheila Wamahiu, Faithbeth Wangui and Zainab Mboga - Physical Education and Sports Policy

Mutiga Macharia and Elizabeth Njuguna - Mental Health Policy

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Zaahedah Vally, assisted by Lesedi Matlala

### **Supported by**

Porticus

## Endnotes

### Re-Entry Guidelines

<sup>1</sup>Ministry of Education (2020) National Guidelines for the Re-Entry in Early Learning and Basic Education. Nairobi. Funded by: UNESCO, UNFPA, Sexual and Reproductive Health Alliance, Population Council.

### Alcohol and Substance Use Prevention and Management Guidelines for Education

<sup>1</sup>Ministry of Education (2021) National Guidelines for Alcohol and Substance Use Prevention and Management in Basic Education Institutions. State Department of Early Learning and Basic Education.

<sup>2</sup>NACADA (2016). National Survey on Alcohol and Drug Abuse Among Secondary School Students in Kenya. Survey Report. Nairobi.

<sup>3</sup>NACADA and KIPPRA (2018). Status of Drugs and Substance Abuse among Primary School Pupils in Kenya. Special Paper No. 20. Nairobi.

### Physical Education and Sports Policy for Basic Education

<sup>1</sup>Ministry of Education (2021). Physical Education and Sports Policy. State Department of Early Learning and Basic Education. Nairobi.

<sup>2</sup>Ministry of ICT, Innovation and Youth Affairs (2019). Kenya Youth Development Policy. State Department of Youth Affairs. Government Printers: Nairobi

<sup>3</sup>National Assessment Center (2019). Monitoring Learning Achievement at Class Seven Level of Primary Education in Kenya. Nairobi: KNEC.

<sup>4</sup>National Assessment Center (2018). Monitoring Learner Achievement at Class 3 Level of Primary School Education in Kenya. Nairobi: KNEC

<sup>7</sup>Ministry of Education (2021). Physical Education and Sports Policy for Basic Education. State Department for Early Learning and Basic Education. Government Printers: Nairobi.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

### Mental Health Policy

<sup>1</sup>Ministry of Health (2015). Kenya Mental Health Policy 2015 - 2023. Nairobi.





**This project is a collaborative effort between Jaslika (Kenya) and JET Education Services (South Africa) with support from Porticus.**

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