

The family is the foot of the nation. When it fails to stand, the nation falls. A TV drama series about the struggles of raising children, sustaining relationships while pursuing wealth and success.

October 2022



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# **1** Introduction

In a quest to build insights that could help education systems prioritise, promote and integrate Whole Child Development approaches to the needs of children, JET Education Services brought on board participants from organisations including the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops (KCCB), Jaslika Consulting and Akili network who were guided to find and explore solutions to common challenges facing education in Kenya. Participants tackled the challenges in thematic groups, and one of the themes (Theme 2) was: *Role modelling as a way to inculcate values*. Through extensive sharing of experiences, conducting surveys and observing the status of morals displayed in Kenyan society, this group came up with **a pitch for a TV drama**, intended to present a solution to the problem identified as a 'lack of good role models to inculcate desired values in the Kenyan child'. It is important to note that this product can be repackaged to suit different types communications media, for example, radio, social media, books, etc, so as to reach an even wider consumer base.

# 2 Purpose of creating this programme and the expected impact

The TV programme is intended to:

- Support parents and parents to-be in their basic role as the primary source of values for their children;
- Encourage parents, through their own behaviour and practices, to be the primary educators of their children in socially acceptable values;
- Empower families by promoting environments where firm foundations of acceptable moral values are upheld and respected through visible role-modelling.

The expected primary impact includes:

- Increased number of parents intentionally and purposefully being directly involved in their children's
  everyday experiences and struggles instead of passing this role to other influences in the lives of the
  children such as teachers, house helps, social media, mass media and peers;
- Increased number of role models of good values for children in communities;
- A better society where people practice and uphold good values which will translate into better communities, integrity of institutions, both governmental and non-governmental, and a nation where integrity is the norm across all levels of interaction.

The potential secondary impact includes:

- Most children clearly able to differentiate right from wrong;
- Children who challenge their peers to uphold good values;
- Teachers who are less burdened with parental responsibilities.

## 3 Target audience

This TV drama primarily targets parents who are educated and involved in highly technical professional fields and are mostly between the ages of 25 and 35 years. Traditionally, this is the group that struggles with having to juggle successful careers with good parenting. Sadly, most of the time, they succeed in their careers but their parenting suffers and they may not be the best role models for their children.

A secondary audience would be other parents who may not be involved in technical fields but have their own struggles that get in the way of good parenting or being role models to their children.

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# 4 Outline of the story

Some parents in Kenya have little or no time to have quality time with their children, whether during the school term or during the holidays. Some children interact very little with their parents during the week as parents may get home when their children are already asleep or be too tired to engage with their children. The most accessible adult in the life of an average child is often the house help. Other accessible social contacts may be siblings or neighbourhood peers.

All over the world there are unprecedented socio-economic demands being made on parents to put food on the table and meet all the expenses related to the basic needs of their immediate and extended families. Many parents, whether in urban or rural environments, supplement their income through "side hustles" in both the formal and informal sectors of the economy. The situation is worse for single-parent households, the majority of which are headed by women, and whose numbers are increasing due to factors such as high levels of teenage pregnancy, irresponsible fathers who are lost to alcoholism and young female professionals who choose to have children out of wedlock.

Motherhood and fatherhood do not come with a manual on child bearing and responsible parenthood, and this programme is designed to fill that gap. Perspectives drawn after analysing the responses from the survey we had sent out to children and parents were that most parents survive parenting by the grace of God. These days it's rare to encounter intentional parents who purposefully plan to be present and available in the lives of their children. The worst case scenario is where children are abandoned by parents to be raised by the TV, the mobile phone and the teacher. It's not unusual these days to visit friends and family and find that the children in the home do not as much as lift their eyes from the mobile phone or a TV programme to greet an aunt or acknowledge a visitor. Most shocking is when this behaviour is meted out to visiting grandparents from the village while the parents make excuses for the children.

The modern parent is too busy looking for money to raise responsible children for society. The modern parent is too busy enjoying themselves with peers in social gatherings over weekends and public holidays. The modern parent is simply absent in the lives of their children to meaningfully engage and model desirable values.

# 5 The world/context of the story

The urban middle-class family enjoys an income that is neither low nor high. The source of this income is the salary from a reliable permanent job, which is supplemented by income from other entrepreneurial ventures or projects. The family initially lives in the urban area, but later chooses to relocate, preferably to a house of their own, located on the outskirts of the city.

Away from the city and overlooking the beautiful green hills in the distance, Green Hills Estate offers a serene, peaceful and secure environment in which to live and raise a family. It is located just 35 kilometres from the Nairobi CBD and its popularity is rising owing to its decent, affordable and accessible housing and being close to Nairobi but far enough away from the noise and congestion of the city. The Green Hills living experience is supported by a shopping mall, a school, medical facilities, recreation parks, and a 6.8-kilometre jogging track. Everything the residents need is within a fifteen-minute walk or bicycle ride.

With the sizeable houses, the family enjoys their own personal space. Their house is furnished with luxurious furniture. The family owns two cars that the parents use to drive to work in Nairobi. Their children attend private schools and enjoy premium paid TV channels. The family occasionally dines in expensive restaurants

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together with their friends and family and the children visit the Maasai Mara National park over the holidays. In the midst of the parents strive to keep working hours that allow for family time and weekend outings with picnic baskets and their pet dogs in tow. The parents schedule dates to attend sporting events and Anime Con events. They have a stay-at-home nanny who takes care of the children when the parents are at work and who does not work on the weekends, allowing the parents to have quality family time with their children.

Here are some images of the setting and context:



# **6** Characters

Everyone wants to live in Green Hills – close to Nairobi but far enough to be free from the noise and hustle of town.

Driving home on the Northern Bypass, Green Hills residents feel the hustle and bustle of town ebb away as they get closer to the lush green fields surrounding the estate. The newly rich live here. While the streets and paved walkways seem quiet and peaceful, inside the modern solar-roofed-houses, life is a struggle.

But one family, central to Green Hills, provides light and energy. The Mwangis act like a power generator for other families, providing energy, strength and light. *The family is the foot of the nation. When it fails to stand, the nation falls.* With this, their parents' mantra, the Mwangis are determined to share their experience and insights on parenting and make a lasting impact on the development of the nation.

Cast	Role	Description	Values
Mrs Mwangi	Mom (Maria Mwangi)	University Professor, Accounting and Tax Law	Street savvy, understanding, personal friend, available

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Mr Mwangi	Dad (Matano Mwangi)	Renewable Energy Engineer	Compassionate, kind, responsible, encouraging, teaches	
D1	1st daughter (Tamara Mwangi)	Young adult, (26-ish), works in finance, successful, admired, still lives at home	Teaches, nurtures, responsible, resourceful	
D2	2nd daughter (Murugi Mwangi)	Young adult, (24-ish) just started her first job, works with NGO, lives far away (Refugee Camp?)	Has heart for people, through her we meet people with disabilities, disadvantaged, hardworking, generous	
S1	1st son (Kanja Mwangi)	Just finished uni, (22- ish), professional basketball player or scout, coach?	Available, responsible, nurtures	
D3	3rd daughter (Kingwa Mwangi)	14 years old, lives with parents, plays basketball too	Athletic, competitive, determined, confident, respect learnt from respecting her team players	
Nc1	Niece (Betty Makena )	11 years old, lives with Mr+Mrs G	Quiet, polite, patient, neat/orderly, honest, courageous, stands up for her own beliefs	
Nf1	Nephew (Gavin Makena)	9 years old, lives with Mr+Mrs G	Inquisitive, funny, comic relief, competitive	
Nf2	Nephew (Harris Makena)	7 years old, lives with Mr+Mrs G	Curious, imaginative, creative as he likes drawing	
Mr Gituku	Neighbour (John Gituku)	TV anchor, journalist, Too Busy(TB).	Too busy, unavailable	
Mrs Gituku	Neighbour's wife (Kaburo Gituku)	Works with Telco.	Talkative, but does not listen	
TB1	Mr. Gituku daughter (Dan Gituku)	12 years old, Nc1 best friend	Independent, responsible as she takes care of her brother, confident, playful, popular with her peers	
TB2	Mr. Gituku' son (Fiona Gituku)	8 years old, Nf1 best friend	Playful, funny, curious, talkative, cheerful	

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Nanny (in Gitukus' home)	(Nancy)	40 years old	Respect, kind, great cook, generous
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The following pictures demonstrate the type of characters we envisage in this family TV drama:





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## 7 Backstory

Mr and Mrs Mwangi are among the very first residents of Green Hills Estate, a gated community on the outskirts of Nairobi off the Northern Bypass. They have three grown children and a teenage daughter.

Mr and Mrs Mwangi married young, while in their final year at university, and their eldest daughter was born before Mrs Mwangi graduated. A tough start for them, they hustled and worked hard to advance their careers as they raised three children. A decade later, a crisis nearly divided the family and they almost got divorced. But intervention from their church, family and friends saw them rebuild their marriage and redefine their personal values. Newly in love, their fourth child was conceived. Determined to be more present for each other and their family, the Mwangis moved out of the city to Green Hills.

## 8 Episodes

Theme	Description	Values Proposition	
Traffic Jam	Mrs Mwangi and the kids are off to grandma's farm with TB's kids.	Teaches tolerance, sharing, giving, concern, caring, respect, forgiving and trusting	
Sleep Over	TB2 is spending the night at the Mwangi's. Nc1 and TB2 talk about fashion.	Modesty, respect, self- pride and self-worth, firmness in conviction, integrity	
After You (Car Door)	S1 is taking D3's basketball team to an away match. Everyone is impressed by S1's manners.	Respect for women, caring, love, honour,	
The Other Side	D2 is visiting from remote Kenya with a friend who uses a wheelchair.	Caring, respect, tolerance	

# 9 The format

The programme will be a Kenyan real-life drama series with a premier season of 13 episodes. Each episode will run for 25 minutes: 2 minutes introduction with the recurring theme songs and display of the main character names, 23 minutes for the plot, then at the end of the episode, credit display containing the names of the entire cast, supporting team and production team.

# 10 The music

The choice of music will bring out the homely feel of the storyline and will punctuate the experiences the characters have over the course of the programme. The music is family friendly and stirs the emotions of the viewer.

#### Na Bado by Hart the Band

This song is about a son convincing his parents that the struggles and the work they are putting into their growth and progress will pay off eventually. <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHm6cNmIM5U</u>

### Niombee by Bensoul

This song is about a young man leaving home to fend for himself, and so he is asking for prayers from his parents that whatever he gets to do will be fruitful in the long run. The song encourages hard work and prayers for success and no shortcuts. <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PN9QEk6xTa0</u>

#### Brighter days by Sauti Sol

This song encourages patience, enduring hardship and being consistent and intentional about one's journey while hoping for things to improve. <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OQEByF4dtY0</u>

## Penzi sumu by Victoria Gachora

Love interest song. <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yPrHUq0BFg</u>

### Growing process by Jason Kalinga

This is a rap song containing messages like "honesty is better, you can teach me how to grow" which is directed at adults and parents for them to become better role models for young people. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kDG-c7fvyB0

# **11 Production team**

Name and Surname	Organization Name	Email address
Kaburo Kobia	Akili Network	kaburo.kobia@akilinetwork.com
Mary Muito	Jaslika Consulting	marymuito@gmail.com
Mary Njeri Nginya	Jaslika Consulting	mn.jaslika@gmail.com
Neil Aming'a	Jaslika Consulting	aminganeil@gmail.com
Morline Olala	КССВ	morlineo@gmail.com
Martin Muchiri Wamai	КССВ	wamech@gmail.com

## **12** Acknowledgements/references

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A design thinking solution to inculcate values through role modelling on TV

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We would like to acknowledge the following people for their hard work in the creation of this Content Bible: Kaburo Kobia (Akili Network), for her wisdom and guidance. You made writing this series so much fun and so intuitive that it almost didn't seem like work. And the rest of the team: Neil Aminga (Jaslika), Morline Olala (KCCB), Martin Muchiri (KCCB), Mary Nginya (Jaslika), and Mary Muito (Jaslika) for their enthusiasm, wisdom, and insightful contributions. Thank you very much for making this Content Bible the success that it is. What you have accomplished is quite mind-blowing.

Also, a special thank you to the super talented young student from Green Hills Academy in Kenya who wrote the inspiring poem which we used as an impetus for our TV programme.

We would like to thank Charlene Deacon and the entire team at JET Education Services. Thank you for going beyond your duties, reaching out to us at every turn and keeping us super organised and up-to-date with your excellent facilitation skills.

## **13 Appendices**

## 13.1 Poem on Parenting Challenged by A Child-Victim

## 'A special message for the parents & parents-to-be.'

Parents, children are a photocopy of their parents' character

You are the hydro power dams from which they

Can tap the power of living light.

But if the dams are empty of values, and the water levels are too low,

What will they tap? Only darkness.

Many parents are suffering from T.B, Too Busy!

Yes, the cost of living is high, but the cost of loving is affordable.

There's God to help you.

Each child is a goldmine and it's the parents to mine the gold out of them

Sarcastically, there are parents who see their children as a form of tax;

Tax on their time, tax on their comfort and tax on their freedom

And immediately send them to boarding school even in nursery,

So as to evade these taxes.

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Remember, children are like the Global Fund, a gift and a donor fund from God, You will have to provide full accountability for their use or mismanagement, You shall be audited

The home is the first classroom in which a child sits. But unfortunately, the teachers i.e. the parents, have absconded from duty And if you ask them, they will tell you, To them, TV is their daddy, they see him everyday The radio is their mummy; she talks to them whenever they want Parents, these are your children and, have boarded the wrong taxis,

to the Northern bypass of destruction

Physically, they maybe in University, but mentally, they are in kindergarten

With their minds still wrapped up in nappies.

Don't just be the head of the home but head the home

Forget not, PARENT means;

- P Personal Friend,
- A Available,
- R Responsible,
- E Encourages
- N Nurtures and
- T Teaches.

Now is the time for IDPs (Internally Displaced Parents) to return home,

So that the reconstruction of the family can begin.

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There are parents who are living in camps of bondage called bars; Extramarital affairs, cross generational rapports..... They need to come home for the family is under attack Many homes used to be like Celtel, Making Life Better, But now, they have become like Baghdad , daily explosions of verbal artillery, All this detonated by marital conflicts! You the parents, have become suicide bombers, blowing up our future When we see daddy approaching, 'black mamba is about to strike' We take cover as he comes heavily armed with words of mass destruction. Other parents are like UMEME, they load shed their time for their children, Even up to one week and the kids end up in a black out of values. The lucky ones survive if they have friends, who act as generators, providing insufficient power The parliament and cabinet are the brain of the government But the family is the foot of the nation. When it fails to stand, the nation falls Parents, have time for your children.

Say, 'NEVER AGAIN'

## 13.2 Six of 13 detailed episode stories

## 13.2.1 Traffic jam episode

Traveling by car on Kenyan roads often presents opportunities to role model values such as respect, caring, sharing, forgiving and trusting. One Saturday morning in February 2019, just before Covid-19 came calling in March and changed our life patterns and norms forever, my sister, her two boys aged 9 and 11 years respectively and myself were driving on Thika road. We were on our way to Muranga to visit our parents in our rural home. Hardly 10 kilometres into our 65 kilometre journey, we found ourselves in a major traffic snarl up, which finally ground to a halt just before Ruiru town. The four lane Thika road superhighway suddenly turned into a sea of vehicles. It did not take long before we enquired from passers-by and were informed about what had caused the traffic jam. Apparently, a motorcycle rider had been fatally hit by a car, and his colleagues at a nearby "shade" had blocked the entire road with their motorcycles and were

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threatening to burn the car that was involved in the accident with the passengers inside. Within no time, a major riot was unfolding before our eyes. Drivers were hooting while others had got out of their cars and were shouting and cursing at the tops of their voices, asking why the police were nowhere in sight. My sister and I were really scared, while the two boys were dead silent. Soon, we started praying out loud, asking God for protection and divine intervention as the situation was getting worse. The mob had gotten bigger and were now banging cars, threatening people in the cars and shouting that "dynasties wanted to finish hustlers" – this had now turned into a class conflict, the rich versus the poor. Before the worst could happen, traffic police arrived and were able to establish sanity by clearing the road so that calm was restored and we were able to proceed with our journey. Once we were safely on our way, the two boys had many questions: "Mummy, why did the riders want to hurt innocent people and why were adult men shouting, cursing and screaming?" For the rest of our journey, we analysed the situation with the boys and finally agreed that exercising care on the road and protecting others is a major responsibility of any driver. The unbecoming behaviour of the drivers who opted to shout and curse clearly demonstrated a lack of respect and integrity on their part. By the time we arrived at our destination, we all felt like we had been in an outdoor classroom and had learnt much.

## 13.2.2 Sleepover episode

I have a 14-year-old niece (Elizabeth) who lives with us. Recently, as schools were briefly closed for elections, we hosted a 16-year-old girl (Dorcas), not a relative. One day, the two girls were having a 'girly' conversation as they folded clothes. From my room, I could hear them without their knowledge. Dorcas seemed surprised that Liz did not have short (above the knee in length) and very tight fitting clothes in her wardrobe. According to her, those are the kind of trendy clothes a modern girl should have to be in fashion. Liz proudly responded that she likes her clothes, the she does not dress to please anyone else and is happy as long as she is comfortable in what she wears. What surprised me most was when she said that she got her sense of fashion from her aunt who – *according to her* – always dressed modestly, even during her years in high school and all through university.

### 13.2.3 After you (car door)

The other day, one of our sons came to visit us with his wife, and I noted, to my pleasant surprise, that he opened the car door for his wife and closed the door after asking whether she was okay inside. I asked him where he had learnt the good behaviour I had just observed, and to my surprise, he proudly stated "from my dad, of course". He then went on to state that a few people in his office and some of his peers and their wives had noted that good practice and had also asked him where he had learnt to do that. Apart from congratulating him, some of his colleagues, who are young parents, expressed the desire to meet me and my husband to learn some tips on role modelling in parenting from us. We are in the process of organising an afternoon session with them to share some tips on this.

### Siblings as Role Models

I was raised in a family of five, but for most of my childhood we had been just three, my two sisters and me. When we were born, our parents had a lot of help in raising us, especially from aunties and housemaids. Things really changed when our younger siblings, who are teenagers now, were born. My sisters and I were the ones who raised them, with no outside help. We had to learn how to feed babies, bathe and take care of them. When they started school, we were the ones who prepared them and helped them to learn – most of what they knew, they had learnt courtesy of us. Our parents have, over the years, involved us in all decisions pertaining to our younger siblings, from what they should eat, which hospital they should go to, which schools they should attend to which faculty they should enrol in. We have noticed how, over the years, our youngest

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A design thinking solution to inculcate values through role modelling on TV

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brother and sister have modelled their characters and mannerisms after us, including our dressing styles, demeanours and even hobbies. I remember how my little brother started watching the NBA and playing basketball because I did; he used to join me whenever I was practicing and slowly developed a liking for the game without me verbally influencing him. My little sister fell in love with playing the piano because I did. I used to play just for fun; I did not have much real interest in musical instruments, but when I saw that she was getting interested, I obtained more training materials for her and asked a friend who was good at music to train her. My older sisters, who work in finance now, also influenced our younger siblings in a very big way, from developing skills in art to baking, among others. What is exceptionally encouraging is how they look to us for counsel, especially now as they navigate puberty. They have an advantage over us: while we unable to talk to our parents when we were their age because we feared them, we have created an environment where our younger siblings can turn to us for any form of support.

### 13.2.4 The other side

I was raised in a large family. I have six sisters and three brothers. We are all adults now, living on our own. My oldest sister is 75 years old, while the last born is 47 years old. Each one of us can remember by name a differently challenged person in the community who came to our home to have breakfast or lunch without fail in our childhood years. Our parents always had an open door policy for needy people who were, and still are, fairly treated in our home. This practice of caring for the less fortunate members of our community has been a "take-home" for me and my siblings, and has now been passed on to a number of our children too. My parents may have modelled this practice unintentionally, but the community noted how we lived the special values of respect and caring. At one of our family gathering, a member of the community observed that in our home, "the Bible is read right side up unlike most other homes where it's read upside down". When the man said this, we all looked at each other and then to our parents. None of us said anything, but from the facial expressions, one could tell what our hearts felt towards our parents and the challenge we undertook to pass these values on to our children so that this legacy live on through generations.

#### 13.2.5 Parents become less strict as you grow up

I was raised by very strict parents. Everything to them had to be done in a particular way, and there was no room for negotiations. They modelled our behaviour, from what we were to eat, where we were supposed to go, who we were allowed to talk to, to what time we were supposed to go to sleep and wake up, and, to some extent, what we were supposed to become after school. Their influence was ever-lingering, it was either their way or the highway, but, over the years, we have seen them change and become more gentle parents. Our young siblings have been lucky to experience their gentleness. Nowadays, they consult, ask for counsel and give us room to make decisions and even mistakes without judgment. Their growth into gentleness has really influenced our confidence as adults.

### 13.2.6 Negative role models

About one year ago, I relocated to a new residential area. For months I have been noticing a lady coming to visit one of my neighbours. She has an 8-year-old son who she brings with every time she comes. The visits are very frequent, at least twice in a month, and each visit lasts for at least five days, even during the school term. I became concerned and asked whether the boy goes to school with all that disruption. My neighbour told me that her visitor is not very interested in matters of education. Apparently, she has another child, a 14-year-old girl, who lives with her sister. It was once reported to the visitor that her daughter had started seeing boys while in primary school, but instead of talking to the girl, the mother said that she herself had fallen pregnant at around that age, so she did not see a problem. The visitor's sister, who is a primary school teacher, saw that the mother wasn't a good role model for the girl and took the girl to live with her. About a

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week ago, the visitor arrived again with her son. I decided to have a talk with her and tell her that what she was doing to the boy was not right and that he might never appreciate the importance of education. The mother felt offended and said that she had no problem with her son dropping out of school to help her herd cattle.

## 13.2.7 Draft script for traffic jam episode

The weather is calm and warm. Highway. Green sign showing directions to Murang'a.

Mrs Mwangi: As promised, I am taking you to see grandma on Saturday.

Kingwa: Yes mom. You are the best.

Harris: I am so excited to see the newborn calf at grandmas.

Kingwa (Whispers): It's a good thing our mum is honest and always keeps promises.

Mrs Mwangi: (chuckles) Have you thought of the name to give to the calf?

Nancy: You taught your kids good values. Amazing

Mrs Mwangi: I always want them to learn good values from me so they can be good people too.

Kids continue debating on the name they will give the calf

### Drives into Traffic on Highway. Many cars. Noisy hooting music.

The car gets in tight traffic. Outside noisy, cars are hooting. Rolling the car window down, the mum asks what is going on and learns that a bike caused an accident up ahead.

Inside: Kids stop their chats, just as people start banging cars, shouting threatening to burn the other car involved in the accident.

All scared and worried as mum reassures the kids it will be okay.

#### A police siren and traffic police arrive.

Mrs Mwangi: Do not worry, these people in blue uniforms are the police.

Kingwa: Will they listen to them?

Mrs Mwangi: Of course. Explains - police officers are diligent and it's their obligation to resolve the case and keep them safe.

Start seeing people get back in their vehicles. Traffic jams becomes lighter and get back on their journey safely.

Harris: While looking out the window. This is so cool. It is true the police officers kept us safe. I want to keep people safe when I grow up as well. [Inner thoughts] I could be a police officer.

Nancy: That's excellent.

### Queries and teaching on values of respect for the law and people, humanity, and responsibility.

The unbecoming behaviour of the other drivers who opted to shout and curse was clearly a lack of respect and integrity on their part.

Accidents caused by: No one to blame, take responsibility for your mistakes. Most importantly, I agreed that

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exercising care on the road and protecting others is a major responsibility for any driver. Nancy: It feels like we have been in an outdoor classroom and learned a lot of things. Mrs Mwangi: Sure thing. No limits to where and how you can teach our kids good values.

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