



# Thriving Schools Newsletter

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## INSIDE:



Collaborative learning inspires creativity in grade 7 leavers.... p.1-2



A virtue that saved siblings' love.... p.2



Optimal educators leading school's transformation.....p.2



A powerful tool to for children to manage stress and anxiety.... p.3



Thriving academically, socially and emotionally - all together....p.4

## Collaborative Learning Inspires Creativity in Grade 7 Leavers

*How learning collaboratively inspired creativity and unity in 2022 grade 7 leavers*

In December 2022, 12 children who just completed their grade 7 studies attended Bright Jamii Initiative's Mind-Gen (Mindful Generation) training on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) as necessary skills during their transformation to secondary school education.

In particular, discussions and exercises that shifted their understanding were on "perspective taking" as a social awareness skill. The learning process included games and tasks that were given in groups and to be successful, a group had to ensure that they work meaningful together, listening and taking regard of each participant's contribution.

*Continued on p.2*

After the games, the children had a time to reflect on how they experienced working in teams.

"I felt happier knowing that, I am not going to do it alone, I will share what I know with my friends, and when I don't know what to do, my friends will help me so that we can win together"

From this experience, the grade 7 leavers realised that, the tasks given in the games were a lot more easier when they practiced UNITY and COLLABORATION.

They also gained the skills to seek to understand others, and taking their perspectives in the learning situation.

The children also realised that, when learning in collaboration, they were more creative to come up with

**"I felt happier knowing that, I am not going to do it alone, I will share what I know with my friends, and when I don't know what to do, my friends will help me so that we can win together."**     ~ A participant

tactful means to solve problems as a team which enhanced their interaction and stimulated the feeling of a sense of belonging amongst the group members.

With the new skills they gained, the grade 7 leavers were more inspired to work collaboratively as a sure means to spark creativity, unity and excellence at school and in other aspects of their lives.



Happy holding her inspiring story that she wrote by herself.

## A Virtue That Saved Siblings' Love!

Happy (9 years) is a member of BJI's Bright Club (clubs for primary school where children meet to learn social and emotional skills while inspiring each other to practice virtues) in Mbagala Primary school. She learned on the virtue of *peacefulness* during a club session and decided to be mindful of the practice in her life.

One day Happy found her sister and brother (siblings) fighting at home. She felt bad. She recalled on the virtue of *peacefulness* "*choosing justice instead of anger*" that she learned during the Bright Club session. She looked at her sibling who were angrily fighting, took a deep breath and courageously spoke out loud "*What happened to our peacefulness?*" she got in between, separated them to stop the fight, and together they reached a peaceful resolution.

Because of Happy's transformation, born out of the learning from Bright Club sessions, she was able to practice virtues in the CLASSROOM, inspire peacefulness and save the love between her siblings at HOME.

## Optimal Educators Leading School's Transformation

*How character development training transformed Bright Hope School's staff-students relationship*

30 teaching and non teaching staff from Bright Hope School (Dar es Salaam) attended "*Character Development Training*" that was facilitated by Bright Jamii Initiative. In one of the learning exercise, they reflected on their school values by examining incidents in the school that influenced their form of relationship with students.

Through learning exercises, Bright Hope staff described how their interactions with students were highly influenced by their individual beliefs that together, formulated unconscious set of values regarding teaching and power dynamics in the learning situation.

*continued p.3*



The training enabled teachers to question their practices, and generate awareness that shifted their perspectives regarding teacher-student relationship. "Now, we value the relationship that we have with student, we care for them. We have banned the use of harmful means of punishing, we have established "teachers-students" parenting system, where every teacher guides several students, by being supportive and become more of a coach on the students' academic and non academic matters that relate to their development. With this value, students are more inclined to put more efforts knowing that, the school system is there to support them to excel in their studies.

## A Powerful Tool for Children to Manage Stress and Anxiety

*Dina discovers a technique to enhance her focus and attention!*

Dina (14 years) attended a Mind-Gen training by BJI in December 2022, where she experienced a shift on how she listens and learns in a classroom or any learning situation.

**"A lot happens in my mind when I am in the class. While the teacher is providing instructions, my mind wanders, I worry about a number of things - I keep asking myself if my friends like me, and what will happen if I fail my exams" ~ Dina**



Dina (Not her real name) during the Mind-Gen mindfulness exercise.



At the end of the training, Dina said that she was happy to learn on the practice of mindfulness through an exercise of "putting an anchor" to her mind to stop it wandering, and bringing it back to listen to the facilitator.

She noted that, when she *puts an anchor* into her wandering mind, she was able to understand and remember the instructions and actively participate in activities that were taking place during the learning sessions

**"Putting an anchor" to your mind is one of the Mindfulness practice where children learn a breathing technique, that helps them to be more present attentive and focus in the tasks they are doing?**

**Mind-Gen participants experience transformation in how they learn just by mindfully practicing the breathing technique (see the picture on the right side).**

### Deep Breath technique

1. Breathe in through your nose (count to 4 in your heads as you breathe in)
2. Hold your breath as you count to 4 again in your heads.
3. Release the air, through your nose - while you count to 8 in your head (silently repeating "I feel calm, I feel relaxed")
4. Repeat no 1-3 again



**DID YOU KNOW?**



Looking for a way to make your private primary school stand out? Our organisation specialises in helping schools like yours develop a culture that promotes academic success alongside moral and social-emotional growth.

By becoming our partner, you'll be taking the first step towards transforming your school into a recognised leader in fostering academic, moral, and social-emotional skills in your students, while maintaining your school's credibility.

**CONTACT US NOW:** call us at 0672 151 921 or email [bjinitiative@gmail.com](mailto:bjinitiative@gmail.com)



## Thriving Academically, Socially and Emotionally - "All Together"

*Bright Club students celebrate their new skills that transformed their attitude towards learning*

Children (age 8-13) who graduated from a Bright Club (run by BJI) in Bright Hope Primary school in Dar es Salaam celebrate their new skills and transformation that has positively impacted them individually, in the classroom and family relations.

### Growth beyond academic achievement

During the final club session for the term, children shared their gratitude and expressed how character development sessions (the practice of virtues) has enabled them to practice responsibility and self discipline in their studies; develop skills that help them to be more

friendly to each other and manage hard situations more calmly and responsibly. *"Now I see myself more courageous to speak to my parents about my challenges, even the ones that I was afraid to talk about, especially when it was about bullying and threats to sexual abuse"*, said one of the participants.

Bright Club students in Bright Hope primary school showing the sign of "V" to represent "Virtues"

## Does your school have younger learners, under 8?

*"The future educational success of children depends on how your school system supports them from inception age!"*

Successful schools invest well in early childhood development. Between day care, pre school and early primary levels (grade 1 & 2), they ensure that, children access the 5 Early Childhood Development domains: **"Responsive care"**, **"Adequate nutrition"**, **"Good health"**, **"Safety and security"**, and **"Opportunities for early learning"**.

Wondering how your school will be able to attain all the 5 domains? **We got you covered.**

Bright Jamii Initiative partners with schools and centres like yours to create a climate where your early learners can attain all 5 domains, the impact is beyond measure!

Call us NOW at: 0672 151 921 or drop an email: [bjinitiative@gmail.com](mailto:bjinitiative@gmail.com) to learn about ECD.

*Bright Jamii Initiative is a certified ECD facilitator and a proud member of Tanzania Early Childhood Development (TECDEN)*



## Do you want to learn more about Social Emotional Learning and Character Development for your school?

**CONTACT US** today to schedule an awareness session for your school managements, teachers, and parents where your entire team will have an opportunity to be introduced to Social - Emotional Learning and Character Development (SELCD).

### WHY your school needs this session?

With an awareness session, your school will have an opportunity to work with our team in conducting school survey that will inform your school on potential areas that you may need to work on to maximize your potential and setting up a plan to distinguish yourself for the quality of education services you are providing.

Afterwards, our facilitators will guide and support you throughout the process of attaining your goals.

The good news is, both, the school awareness session and survey are **FREE**.

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