



## Article 2 - *"Wonder why your Teenager is more stressed than you?"*

We come across articles reported in Daily Nation such as *"Suicide rates in Kenya are highest in its teens caused by depression. Can we take the blues off this generation?"*.

We hear heart-wrenching stories in news and social circles about teens committing suicide, "a pupil hangs himself over exam pressure" and yet these are in hushed tones. Why the stigma?

May is celebrated as a Mental Health awareness month; let's ponder on a few reasons why our teens are so stressed and perhaps depressed.

### **Freedom To Choose**

One of the biggest causes of stress is lack of control over important life choices. A big part of teenager's life is predetermined for them. The school they go to, the uniform they wear, the subjects they study, and their schedules. . . Sometimes their choice of friends, academics or career is met with prejudice. They have no control over aspects that actually shape a major part of their day. This lack of control leads to stress. As adults we have the liberty to do as we please, nevertheless when our teenagers want the same we label them as rebellious!

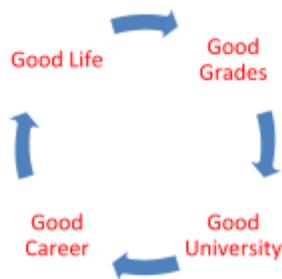
### **Bells & Cells**



meme credit: Syon Sharma

The traditional school system is comparable to a prison, students in uniform moving from class to class at the ring of a bell. As adults we get stressed with just one boss at our workplace, imagine our teens dealing with different bosses known as teachers and all having contrasting teaching styles, expectations and attitudes. Making any one of them unhappy can result in unfavorable consequences. Overloaded with deadlines for homework, assessments and exam pressures can most definitely push any teen towards toxic stress.

**Getting into a good University** - "Biggest yet most necessary evil for teens and parents".



It's a vicious cycle where teachers & parents pressurize the teens to do better. These expectations overwhelm our teens leading to toxic stress. How sure are we that a good career guarantees a good or a happy life?

Some may argue that the above stressors were existent even in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. True! But we didn't have to deal with the added pressure of social media, the access to knowledge through the Internet that is available nor the identity crisis issues that the Gen Z faces. A few may label this generation of teens as

lazy although, perhaps they are simply overwhelmed with a lot to deal with and no one who understands that.

The question then arises...

**"How do we build stress resilience in our Teens?"**

Stay Tuned ...