



# Tupepee 2 High School







For many of us, high school represents the happiest time of our life. It's the point at which we've lost our primary school infant skins and are settling into our adult bodies. We are now young adults. Our bodies are going through a sequence of transformations. Boys are maturing into young men, while girls are blossoming into lovely young women. We've gotten taller or gained some weight and we're really excited to show it off to the rest of the world. We are grown enough to recognize our interests, passions, and everything else we need to know about ourselves at this age..

The most exhilarating thing about this time is that our parents also loosen their grips a bit on the rules and we therefore experiment a lot during this period. In a bid to be more 'experienced' before we join high school so we can fit well into to our 'high schooler' titles. When we find ourselves in hot water, everyone always comes to our aid with

proclamations of, "But, they are just teenagers. Don't worry, everyone goes through this phase. They will soon grow up." So, we get away with a lot during this period.

In Kenya, many students transition to high school between the ages of 12 and 14. This time while transitioning to high school while being fun also is encompassed in another crucial stage of life. The famous P word that causes fear in teenagers... Puberty... a time that every adolescent must endure to progress into physical and mental adulthood. This time consists of many awkward moments, struggles with identity, and a desire to test the boundaries. Technically, puberty is defined as the period during which the body has developed the ability to reproduce sexually. Puberty strikes most people during their secondary school years, and it can infiltrate the classroom through pupils' habits and behaviors, which can be harmful to a teenager's well-being if managed incorrectly.

Pathways noticed a gap in information about various challenges among students joining high school after interacting with many young people through our Youth Champions Initiative, which led to the Tupepee2highschool project.





This would provide a safe environment for teenagers to discuss their expectations for high school while also receiving assistance on their worries and the changes to come. They'd also discuss the tactics they'd use to make the most of their high school years while working towards their objectives.

This was the project's second phase. PPI and The Leo Project came together to have sessions take place at Kagondo secondary school in Nyahururu and the Leo project center in Jua Kali-Nanyuki. The two sessions reached a total of 120 adolescent boys and girls who were eager to start high school.

The sessions began with unease. The boys and girls were extremely aware of one another, and they would exchange glances and whispers in their friend groups. The purpose of the first session was to break the ice, so the teens were encouraged to mix up while introducing themselves and discussing their future plans. To set the tone, the first question was posed, 'who was excited to enter high school and why?'

Many expressed their delight at the prospect of continuing their studies, but one brave young man stated that he was most looking forward to having a girlfriend in high school. This comment was met with applause and nods. This prompted a conversation that included testimony from high school teachers Teacher Sylvia and Teacher Maina, who explained what is expected of pupils once they enter high school. This discussion covered topics such as high school content and how it compares to primary school



content, talent identification in high school and its value in career choice, self-esteem, and good study habits.

All of the facilitators then discussed a bit about their high school experiences, which appeared to alleviate some of the students' anxieties and doubts. Following this session, there was a music break during which the group's singers and dancers were encouraged to perform for the group. The second session, a break out session, started. Boys and girls sat separately in this session.

This allowed individuals to open up about their experiences with boy-girl relationships and ask questions that they might otherwise be afraid to ask. This lesson focused on menstrual health and hygiene, as well as the hygiene products used and how to utilize them. The issue of gender-based violence was also discussed with pointers on what to do in the case that one would fall victim. The young men were also allowed to discuss concerns such as hazing in boys' schools and how to deal with it, as well as the watching of pornographic films which was pointed out to be a big issue among teenage boys. They were able to acquire answers from the male teacher in attendance.



All of the girls received a dignity bag containing two packs of sanitary towels at the end of the sessions, which included a group photo. Sodas and bread soon followed, and as the teenagers chanted *tupeee2highschool*, it was clear on their faces that their anxiety had vanished, replaced with confidence in their ability to face high school.

As a result, it goes without saying that high school is the most formative time in a person's life. Here, the concept of life is clarified, and pupils receive a taste of how the real world operates thus it is important for teenagers to receive support that will ensure they are ready to experience the independence that comes with high school life.



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