

Why dropping out of school is not an option

Introduction

A large number of learners drop out of schools after Grade 9 for various reasons. In this section we critically discuss the reasons and offer some tips to help learners to remain in the school system. You may face difficult circumstances but do not know how to deal with them. Please study the following tips carefully. This should give you a good reason to persist and continue your studies.

Some of the reasons why Grade 9 learners drop out of school and possible solutions:

1. Inappropriate subject choices in Grade 10.

- How can you make sure that you choose the appropriate subjects?
- A teacher should take you through a career self-exploration exercise, involving the completion of a questionnaire.
- You will explore your interests in various fields of study by completing such a questionnaire.
- The results of the self-exploration questionnaire should guide you towards a career field suited to you.
- You will then be able to select your Grade 10 subjects based on your interests and your ability in Grade 9 subjects and your preferred career field.

2. Learners not able to adapt to a high school's demands.

- High schools are not the same as primary schools. At high schools, teachers work as subject specialists. You may have eight or more different teachers teaching you the eight different subjects.
- The work is much more difficult, therefore you have to work harder.
- Each subject has its own set of tasks and pass requirements.
- You have to hand in tasks almost every week.
- You have to prepare for weekly tests.

3. Learners cannot afford to go to high schools.

- This is not true. You should know the following:
- You ought to receive a free textbook for each subject.
- You ought to receive the basic stationery for written tasks.
- Although schools demand that you wear a uniform, learners who cannot afford a

uniform should note that schools will not be unreasonable. Speak to a teacher if you have a problem in this regard. The school will assist you.

- The state provides transport to learners who stay more than 5 kilometers from the nearest school.
- If you want to attend a high school away from home, you may apply for hostel accommodation. Speak to your teachers about this option.
- Some schools are no-fee schools. At other schools learners who cannot afford fees may be exempted from paying the full fee. Ask your parent or guardian to speak to the principal about this.

4. Learners are sometimes bullied and suffer peer pressure

You may sometimes be intimidated and tormented by friends or other learners at schools. They force you to do things that you are uncomfortable with and put pressure on you to join them in all their activities. Peer pressure means that you are influenced by your friends to follow them. They will bully you if you don't want to join in.

To avoid this you should develop a strong character:

- Be determined and say "No" to bad peer pressure.
- Behave in a way that earns you the respect of other people.
- Do things that will have a positive effect on your life.
- Develop healthy habits and stick to them, such as abstinence from smoking.
- Involve yourself in sport and other recreational activities with your friends.
- Help each other to complete school-related tasks and to take on responsibilities.
- Take part in healthy academic competition in the class.
- Participate in constructive leisure activities, such as youth clubs, hobbies and interest groups.
- Stay well by taking regular exercise like dancing, gym, walking or running.

Are you a Bully?

Don't force others to do what they don't want to do. That is being a bully. To change this, you should reconsider your attitude and respect others in the way you want to be respected.