

# Address rising moral decay among youth

**T**he third term school holiday is well underway for many learners from various schools around the country. They will now spend their time at home with their parents and guardians until the next school term opens next year in February. While it is good to have the holiday makers back home, it also comes with increased pressure for parents to keep them safe and out of harm's way.

A story published in the *Daily Monitor* of December 3 titled "Concern over moral decline among Bukedi Region youth" echoes many parents' worries countrywide, especially during the school holiday. The story highlights how there seems to be a broken bond between generations, which is fuelling the moral decay. Some of the main enablers of moral decay that are highlighted in

the story include, among others, economic challenges. With many parents struggling to earn a living, children grow up with inconsistent guidance. In other cases, because of unemployment, poor access to education, and limited opportunities, young people are left desperate and vulnerable to negative practices such as gambling, substance abuse, or petty theft, and sometimes even prostitution. Some of the elders in the story pointed out the lack of good and grounded role models, and moral lessons once emphasised by elders, now having to compete with loud, seductive voices of social media influencers and pop culture icons. And Mr Eriya Poli, the head teacher at Budaka Family Project, said despite producing brilliant students, schools today are not necessarily producing good citizens.

The list of probable causes of moral decay among young people is quite long. Needless

to say, this problem is not specific to Bukedi Region alone. It is a global problem that must not be trivialised. As we deal with this issue, we must be honest enough to admit that moral decay cannot be blamed on the young people alone. Parents, guardians, schools, religious institutions, and all the faucets of society have a role to play in raising wholesome citizens or causing them to grow up into dysfunctional adults.

So rather than pointing fingers at how indecently dressed the young people are, how they no longer respect elders, how they are too lazy to keep a job and stick to doing an honest day's work or how they no longer fear God or esteem the values that we cherish and hold in high regard, let us ask ourselves where the gaps are, where we have fallen short and then start to rebuild and reparent our young people.

Plan this holiday's activities with the cognizance of what a young person with a lot of free time can be tempted to do. Moral decay is a challenge, but it can be effectively dealt with if we all put in the work.

## **The issue:**

Moral decay

## **Our view:**

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