

Last week, our country went to the polls. The process concluded peacefully, results were declared and now we move forward. For parents and teachers, however, this moment goes far beyond ballots and results; the lessons children draw from adult post-election behaviours last a lifetime.

Much of civic education happens outside formal classrooms. It happens at home, in hostels, in staff rooms and on social media feeds. After elections, our children listen carefully to how adults speak about leaders, institutions and the future of Uganda. They notice whether parents choose calm reflection or inflammatory language, whether teachers emphasise unity or deepen divisions.

These informal lessons shape how young people understand authority, disagreement, citizenship and national belonging. When adults model restraint and responsibility, children learn that democracy requires maturity, not chaos.

BEYOND POLITICS

One foundational lesson everyone must learn is that a nation is bigger than any political contest. Elections are competitive by nature; they produce winners and losers. But citizenship does not change

Teach children to lose with honour

ATTENTION...

When parents speak as though the country belongs only to those who won, children internalise exclusion and resentment.

with election outcomes and the country should not be divided along political lines. When adults affirm shared national identity beyond politics, children learn cohesion and mutual respect.

We must help young people understand that disagreement does not cancel belonging. A healthy nation survives on political competition because it is rooted in shared values, institutions and a commitment to co-existence.

DEMOCRACY IS NOT AN EVENT

Voting day is not the climax of democracy; it is one stage in a long process. Democracy includes institutions, laws, courts, electoral bodies and time. Teaching children this broader understanding helps them appreciate patience and procedural order.

Accepting results declared by the constitutionally mandated authority is part of civic



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maturity. It does not mean abandoning critical thinking or accountability. Rather, it means respecting lawful processes, while continuing to engage constructively within them. This is a vital educational lesson in a society governed by rules rather than impulses.

POST-ELECTION EMOTIONS

Elections evoke joy, excitement, disappointment, anger, or anxiety. These feelings are natural, especially among young people who are politically aware and socially connected. Education should not suppress emotions, but it must guide how they are expressed.

This moment is an opportunity to teach emotional intelligence.

LIFE AFTER ELECTIONS

One of the most reassuring lessons our children need after elections is continuity. School timetables resume, businesses open and families plan for the future. When adults dramatise election outcomes, children absorb fear and instability. When adults remain steady and forward-looking, children learn resilience and confidence. Politics matters, but it must not eclipse learning, work and personal development. Life must go on and education plays a central role in restoring normalcy.

Children must learn that frustration does not justify violence, insults, or destruction of property. Calm dialogue, reflection and lawful expression are signs of personal and civic growth. These skills are essential not only for politics, but for life, leadership and relationships.

CONSTRUCTIVE CITIZENSHIP

Gen Z occupies a unique position in Uganda. They are informed, vocal, digitally active, and passionate about change. Their passion is an asset, but only when channelled constructively. They must be helped to understand that not every moment of dissatisfaction requires protest and not every disagreement demands confrontation.

There are times when young

people feel there is 'nothing they can change' immediately. Let us teach our youth that meaningful change often takes time and discipline. Violence, riots and post-election unrest do not create opportunities; they destroy them, interrupt learning in schools, destabilise communities and place young lives at unnecessary risk.

Young people must be encouraged to redirect their energy toward education, innovation, entrepreneurship, community service and lawful civic engagement. These are the paths through which nations are built and futures secured. Calmness and peace are not signs of apathy; they are expressions of wisdom.

Co-operating with leaders who have been chosen is

not weakness; it is civic responsibility. Therefore, children need to understand that co-operation and accountability are not opposites. One can respect leadership while still advocating for improvement through peaceful and lawful means. This balanced understanding prepares young people to be responsible citizens rather than perpetual agitators.

CURBING POLITICAL CASUALTIES

The ultimate task of post-election education is nation-building. Our children must be taught that unity is a daily choice, not a slogan reserved for political speeches. Elections will come and go, but character, peace and commitment to shared progress must endure.

What we model now will shape the citizens of tomorrow. By choosing calm over chaos, togetherness over conflict, and education over emotion, we raise a generation capable of building a strong, peaceful and united nation.

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