



MAMA TENDO

MORE EMPHASIS ON READING IN OUR HOMES

Today, we continue with last week's subject on reading in our homes, the role of parents, and the need for parents to stop making excuses. Reading does not begin at school; it begins at home. Parents are a child's first teachers, and the reading culture of a home is shaped by the choices parents make every day, not by wealth or level of education.

Pictures play a very important role in children's books. Children are happy and excited when they see images they recognise and can relate to – their homes, clothing, food, environment, and daily activities. Such reflection in books makes reading more meaningful, enjoyable, and personal. This connection builds confidence, strengthens identity, and nurtures a lifelong love for reading.

In Africa, there is a common belief that only rich parents can afford to buy books for their children, while poor families cannot. This belief is questionable. Many children's books cost as little as sh2,000 or sh3,000, yet many working parents still choose to spend that money on sweets, toys, or temporary pleasures. Buying a book is not a waste of money; it is an investment. Even one book can change a child's thinking, therefore, parents should intentionally budget for books just as they budget for snacks and entertainment.

Reading also strengthens moral and cultural foundations. Through stories, children learn honesty, courage, respect, hard work, and the importance of community that reflect African life. Reading is a seed which, when planted early and nurtured well, produces fruit for generations.