

What to Do When Your Child Fails to Make it Past O Level

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Parents invest a lot of money and other resources in educating their children. When a child fails to make it past O or A level after such any investment parents have every reason to be disappointed. In the majority of cases, parents have never been able to recover to sustain their own lives. This tragedy can be avoided with proper career guidance planning. Here is what I think you need to do as a parent.

What to do when a Child fails O level?

The pass rates for O level are not very impressive. This means many students fail to make 5 O levels. What happens to these students? The problem is that most students do not get career guidance profiling/testing to enable them to choose subject options using evidence of their true capability. Teachers and parents using school grades performance in form 3 do their best to assist. Remember a symbol that a student will get at O level is a result of their true ability, effort, quality of teachers, teaching and home environment. If you base subject choices on the effort it means when the effort is not there the child will not make the right grades. If you base it on the quality of the teacher, it also means the child will not make the right grades the moment the teacher is changed. The school and home environment are all very dynamic; when they change negatively again the child is affected and grade quality is affected. The best way to advise a child on what subject options to peruse early should predominantly be their performance aptitude tests that cover all facets. These are verbal, numerical, abstract, spatial, and mechanical reasoning. Over and above this the child is assessed on spelling, language usage and perceptual speed and accuracy.

The anchor for science subject's route is above average performance in numerical, mechanical, abstract and spatial ability tests. For the child who does not have a science inclination we would expect strong performance in the following tests; verbal reasoning, critical thinking, language usage, and perceptual speed and accuracy. Once this foundation is established early, the child can then be guided on what subjects to take at O level so that they get at least a C and above.

My experience doing career guidance testing and counseling shows that every child has strength areas in cognitive. Parents should capitalize on these. It is a better investment to allow your child to pursue subjects in which they have a natural ability and get the best grades rather than force them to pursue what you want as a parent.

In every family, we do have people who not make it past 5 O levels. What do we do with them? The first inclination for parents is to make them rewrite. Some pass and some fail completely. Some will make it after 5 years of trying. By then they are already into adulthood. Look at the years lost. Getting career guidance assessments done in form 3 gives you the scope to redirect your child in the right direction.

For those who fail to make it past five O levels get them assessed so that you can identify their areas of

natural ability and invest in that. It is a better investment for any parent than 6 sittings to get 5 O Levels.

Parents must understand that going to University is not the only career option available. There are vocational colleges where your child can pursue a very rewarding career but only after tapping into their areas of strength. For those who get five O Levels but may lack the confidence to pursue A level, the school of mines and polytechnics are producing some of the professionals in high demand in the region. Artisans are in high demand in Southern Africa and some developed countries. Do not aimlessly take the journey to A level when you are not sure you will make it. Even after attending polytechnic and the School of mines, for example, there are various avenues that you can take to get to University after a few years of work experience.

Every child has potential, but you need to know where that potential is early so that you can invest in them wisely as a parent. Besides the assessments to check for their aptitude, we also test them on their career interests and personality. These need to be aligned to their aptitude. In cases of misalignment, we counsel the child and the parents and share with them the best options available. In such a discussion parents input is very crucial.

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