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Mental Health session at Namitete Sec School



Books donated by Jacaranda Foundation



Drone pilot demonstrates to student

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5. **Mental Health Ambassadors' Training**

## A GENEROUS DONATION FROM JACARANDA FOUNDATION

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The Jacaranda Foundation fulfills its pledge made by Executive Director Luc Deschamps. The pledge was made during MATCH Foundation's learning visit to Jacaranda's offices in Blantyre earlier this year. The foundation through its subsidiary Luc's Libraries donated 2000 books and transformed one of the classrooms into a temporary library. This gesture solidifies MATCH foundation's dedication to fostering a love of reading and promoting literacy among students.

Jacaranda Foundation recognized the importance of partnership for goals by creating an inspiring and enabling environment to entice a passion for reading. The redesigned library serves as a stimulating space, encouraging students to explore the world of literature and develop a lifelong appreciation for books.

Marcus Tullius Cicero famously stated, "If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need." With the Jacaranda Foundation's generous support, Tadala abc Primary School's library is on its way to becoming just that – a haven for intellectual growth, exploration, and the joy of reading. This initiative will not only expand access to knowledge but also cultivates a creative mindset for the younger students. The next generation of William Kamkwambas are about to explode from the walls of Tadala abc Primary School.

A big word of gratitude goes out to Luc Descamps and Marie Da Silva of Jacaranda Foundation.

## CREATING A PATH OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

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MATCH Foundation ended its successful 20 weeks of mentorship sessions with a momentous Career Day on 26th June, 2024. This event assembled an admired panel of professionals from various industries, with the goal of igniting the students' aspirations and widening their horizons regarding potential future careers.

The day featured captivating presentations by renowned figures like international chef, Chef Gift Zybion, who captivated the audience attention with tales from his worldwide cooking experiences as he has served late President Robert Mugabe from Zimbabwe.



Physiotherapist Paul Kwengwere provided insights into the rewarding field of physical therapy. Additionally, Rachael Kaunda, a specialist in both ICT and drone piloting, shed light on the exciting potential at the connection of technology and innovation. Each speaker's unique journey and invaluable perspective sparked curiosity and a desire for exploration among the students.

The Career Day served as a platform for students to gain exposure to a diverse range of professionals and career paths. Equipped with knowledge and inspiration, they were encouraged to dream big and envision their futures with ambition. This initiative not only fostered a deeper understanding of the professional background but also planted the seeds of passion and purpose that students can carry throughout their academic journeys and beyond.





The weight of academic pressures, societal expectations, and poverty were among the most listed as contributing factors of stress and anxiety for youths in Lilongwe Schools. Recognizing this growing concern, MATCH Foundation through Achinyamata Ojaka Mental Health Outreach Program is making a positive impact in such schools.

Since its launch in February, the program has achieved a significant milestone by delivering psycho-social mental resilience training to students in Lilongwe District. This month the foundation wrapped up the sessions at Namitete Secondary School, Chitedze Community Day Secondary School, and Chimutu Community Day Secondary School. Building on the previous sessions, this outreach program has now empowered a remarkable 3,711 students across Lilongwe with essential mental health resources. The approach to the program included a facilitation on what mental health is and causes of mental illness. Role plays on potential life scenarios followed by an understanding of wheel of life. The session ends by challenging gender expectations that may hinder one's mental stability to manage emotions.

The program's effectiveness is further amplified by the feedback received from students. This highlights the critical need for such outreach efforts. By equipping young people with the knowledge and tools to navigate mental health challenges, the Achinyamata Ojaka program is paving the way for a future generation that prioritizes mental well-being. The major highlight of the program is how students opened up to seek help after every session. Students needing more one on one sessions proved that they are ready to build resilience in difficult times by their increased ability to call for help, something which is a contributing factor to suicide cases.

The ministry of education recommends MATCH Foundation to replicate this mental health program to schools in other regions in the north and southern districts as well.