

Reducing Domestic Violence: Public education outreach with form 4 students.

Consolidated Report of sessions in 30 Schools

Coordinator: Abbas Mancey



September 2007 –
July 2008

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- Mr. Malcolm Kirk, Deputy Commissioner

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- Ms. Danuta Radzik
- Mr. Vidyaratha Kissoon
- Ms. Hamala Sharma

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- Ms. Geneveive Whyte-Nedd, Chief Education Officer
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- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
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2. Acronyms

BHC	British High Commission
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
GD	Guyana Dollars
HMs	Head Masters and/or Head Mistresses
MoE	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non Government Organisation
REDOs	Regional Education Officers
PTA	Parents and Teachers Association

3. Executive Summary

This report examines the response by Help and Shelter, who in collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the British High Commission (BHC) implemented a 12 month awareness building project for form 4 students in selected schools throughout Guyana, April 2007 – March 2008. This initiative responded to the growing concerns facing Guyanese youth in the areas of Domestic Violence, Teenage Pregnancy, Drug and Alcohol Abuse and Suicide. The project, titled: ‘Reducing Domestic Violence: Public Education outreach with form 4 students’, focused on in-school youth with the aim that early interventions may help reduce future cases of Domestic Violence. Of the three hundred and forty nine (349) secondary level institutions nation wide, possessing fourth forms, thirty one (31) schools were selected. An initial target group of fifteen hundred (1,500) was set for students whom the project felt most needed these sessions. The schools were chosen mainly because of their lack of inclusion in similar interventions from past projects, the fact that they were in outlying areas and that students in these schools were experiencing or involved in some or all of the issues mentioned (Domestic Violence, Teenage Pregnancy, Drug and Alcohol Abuse etc.).

In preparation for our visits to selected schools and implementation of awareness sessions, a facilitator's manual and supplemental materials (flyers, worksheets and pamphlets) had to be developed in order to train facilitators and to conduct sessions with students. Using some existing material developed by Help and Shelter along with other resource materials, the project was able to put together a comprehensive facilitator's manual and suitable supporting materials. These materials were then used for the training of facilitators and sessions in selected schools. The modules are available on Help & Shelter's website: <http://www.sdn.org.gy/hands>. Training of facilitators was completed within the period July – August 2007 in Regions 4, 6 and 9. Prior to this, permission and approval had to have been obtained from both the MoE and the Regional Education Offices (REDOs) before the project could have made contact with schools. On making contact with schools to arrange suitable times and dates for visits to conduct sessions, facilitators were notified as to which schools they would be visiting. Competent facilitators, now trained, equipped and mobilized were able to visit all the schools selected (with the exception of three, due to logistical problems) from September 2007 to January 2008.

Once the project gained momentum and sessions were proceeding as planned, the life of the project became self-sustaining. However, it was necessary to continually assess the pulse of the project through contact with the facilitators, monitoring the reports of sessions at the schools and

organising an end-point evaluation for the project. Frequent trips by the project coordinator were made to facilitators in Regions 2, 4, 6 and 10 to ensure the smooth flow of the project. This included replenishing supplies to facilitators, paying fees and collecting reports. During all trips discussions were always held on the progress of the work in schools and any challenges that had arisen.

Having thus completed the awareness sessions with students in the selected schools and the final evaluation of the project concluded, it became clear that more work should be done with the students visited. Due to the high level of positive response and receptivity by students and school authorities alike (with new schools asking for sessions to be done with their students), suggestions and recommendations were put forward at the project evaluation meeting for a second phase of the project to commence. The second phase, an extension of the project, was implemented during the April – July 2008 school term. As a result, additional funding from the BHC for this extension was requested and funding was later received for phase 2 to begin.

Activities of the second phase:

- Revisit schools in some of the regions to further determine how students could share knowledge from sessions with the rest of their school (for example poster making, competitions, art, drama etc.).
- Conduct sessions in 3 new schools that have asked for sessions with their students (regions 6 and 10).
- Conduct sessions with students in forms 3 and/or 5, in schools which have requested sessions.
- Conduct sessions with parents and teachers in selected schools through out the regions.

In spite of a few minor setbacks, such as the communication gaps which caused some delays to the work in Region 9, transportation issues with facilitators and the inability to visit three schools on the initial list of selected schools, the project did manage to surpass its expected goal of engaging over fifteen hundred (1,500+) students. In total, with the hard work of the facilitators and the project team, the project managed to engage two thousand and seventy one (2, 071) form 4 students from twenty nine (29) schools in the first phase of the project. In the second phase the project engaged another three hundred and eleven (311) forms 3 and 4 students from five (5) schools, three being new schools. In addition, over two hundred (200) parents and teachers were also engaged in sessions with PTAs.

Through raising the awareness of these students on the issues mentioned above and giving them the tools and confidence to face everyday challenges, this project began a process of equipping them to make better decisions in future years. In the words of one student from Region 6, who said “I learnt a lot bout my teenage life and how to take care of my life from now on”.

4. Project Description

4.1. Background

According to one Study, (*World Bank Country Study. Caribbean Youth Development: Issues and Policy Directions*), the Caribbean – in which Guyana is included – has observed worrying upward trends in youth associated issues like Drug Trafficking, Substance Abuse, Adolescent Pregnancies, early Sexual Initiation, Sexual and Physical Abuse, and other risky behaviors. In another study (*World Youth Report 2007*) it comments “...of all the regions for which data are available, the Caribbean has been identified as the area in which residents have sex at the earliest age. Research in nine Caribbean Communities (CARICOM) revealed that one third of school-age youth were sexually active.”¹ In Guyana the number of reported and unreported incidents of Domestic Violence, Substance (drug and alcohol) Abuse and Teenage Pregnancy involving in-school youth have not decreased and in many cases, because of lack of adequate education and support systems, many such incidents are left unchecked. Thus any intervention that engages young people in an effort to address these issues is especially useful. Guyana, approximately 214,970 sq km with an estimated population of 750,000, is divided into three counties: Demerara, Berbice and Essequibo and ten administrative Regions. 55% of its population are young people between the ages of 0 – 29 (25.9%, ages 0 – 14 and 27%, ages 15 – 29)². Nation-wide, there are 82 general Secondary Schools (3,303 students), 24 Community High (9,202 students) and 243 Secondary Department of Primary Schools (10,133 students)³. With the increasing daily reports of incidents, such as those mentioned above and the large numbers of in-school and out-of-school youth exposed to such issues, Help & Shelter in collaboration with the MoE thought it necessary to implement an awareness project (funded by the BHC) to address these very urgent issues with a selected number of in-school youth across the country.

Help and Shelter, a local Non Government Organization (NGO) which has been working in the area of Domestic Violence for a number of years, recognizes that Domestic Violence is both a manifestation and result of systemic and structural gender discrimination. This type of violence is prevalent in the Guyanese society and with the increase in emigration, family support is decreasing. Although little data on the costs of Domestic Violence is available in Guyana, international research has demonstrated that it has a high cost for the recipient and that this in turn has high social and economic costs for families, orphans and vulnerable children, communities and workplaces and ultimately the state. Responding to reduce the increases of Domestic Violence in our society has been a challenge, not only is a cross sectorial response needed to effectively reduce Domestic Violence but initiatives aimed at specific sections of our population are needed as part of a more focused approach. Thus focusing on in-school youth, form 4 students, is an early intervention approach to help reduce future occurrences of domestic violence.

Thirty one (31) Secondary School across Guyana, in Regions 1 – 10 excluding Region 8, were initially selected for the project with another three (3) schools included in the extension of the project. Much emphasis was placed on including schools where there was a high probability that students were experiencing some or all of the issues covered in sessions. In some regions (Regions 1, 7 and 9) because of the small number of schools the choice of schools was limited by accessibility and population. In the other Regions (Regions 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6) where there are more schools the selection process was more on the basis of need for sessions.

¹ (World Youth Report 2007, pg 157, internet)

² (CIA – World Factbook – Guyana and UNPAN Guyana Report: Youth Employment and Enterprise, internet)

³ (2004 – 2005 Education Digest)

In addition to conducting sessions in schools, PTAs were also engaged and students were revisited and encouraged to put into practice what they learned in the sessions. Third form students were included into sessions as requested by some schools.

5. Scope of Work

From past experiences getting the main beneficiaries and stakeholders (MoE, REDOs, regional and local authorities, students, Head Masters and/or Head Mistresses (HMs) etc.) involved from the beginning was key for the project's success and sustainability. Thus early contact and partnership building with key stakeholders to ensure the successful out-rolling of the project had to take place. Strategic information on the various schools was gathered in order to guide the project on the best methods of approaching selected schools. Help and Shelter, in collaboration with the MoE, agreed and decided upon:

1. The number of students and schools which were most in need of attention:

Over fifteen hundred (1,500+) students in thirty one (31) schools from Regions 1 to 10, excluding Region 8, were chosen. See below for list of schools selected and corresponding Regions:

Region 1

- Santa Rosa Secondary School

Region 2

- Anna Regina Multilateral School
- Cotton Field Secondary School
- Charity Secondary School

Region 3

- West Demerara Secondary
- Stewartville Secondary School
- Leguan Secondary School
- Patentia Secondary School
- Zeeburg Secondary School

Region 4

- Presidents' College
- Dora Secondary School
- Bladen Hall Secondary School
- Annandale Secondary School

Region 5

- Bygeval Secondary School
- Belladrum Community High

- Fort Wellington Secondary School

- Bush Lot Secondary School

Region 6

- Black Bush Secondary School
- New Amsterdam Multilateral School
- Skeldon Line Path School
- Tagore Memorial High School
- JC Chandisingh Secondary School
- Manchester Secondary School
- Winifred Gaskin Secondary School

Region 7

- Bartica Secondary School

Region 9

- St Ignatius Secondary School
- Annai Secondary School
- Aishalton Secondary School

Region 10

- McKenzie High School
- Christian/Wismar Secondary School
- Linden Foundation High School

2. The topic areas in which sessions were to be done:

Help and Shelter's initial plan was to base the intervention with the form 4 students on Domestic Violence and Healthy Relationships. In collaborating with the MoE, the areas of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention, Suicide Prevention and Parenting were included.

To cover the topic areas agreed upon, training modules and supplemental materials had to be developed and tested to ensure their effectiveness. As discussed, the materials developed would need to be tested with a sizable group of form 4 students actually going through the sessions. The sessions were designed to engage the students for three two-hour sessions over three days. Once tested and the necessary amendments made, the next step is to recruit and train twelve (12)

facilitators who would conduct the awareness sessions with the form 4 students in selected schools. Before facilitators could visit selected schools, guided by the MoE and REDOs in the Regions, times and dates had to be arranged based on the school's availability.

To track the success of the sessions, facilitators were asked to complete and submit reports on how the sessions went generally, new learning, content, participation, receptivity to sessions, student's reaction and application. An evaluation of the project was planned during October/November 2007 where facilitators and project team could reflect on lessons learnt, successes and challenges, and discuss ways of addressing them. Students' evaluation of the session would be collected separately and the combined reports would be used to assess the effects of sessions and the possible need for sustaining such an initiative. See **Appendix 3 & 4** for facilitators' and students' evaluation forms.

A final evaluation of the project with facilitators and project team on the overall performance and efficacy of project would then be organized and a report compiled. The outcome of the evaluation was then to be used to inform any possible extensions of the project. That is, if there is need for an extension of the project.

Budget for the project

The total amount of money requested for the project was three million seven hundred and ninety five thousand dollars (GD 3,795,000). The project received two separate payments of seven hundred and forty thousand dollars (GD 740,000) and two million and seventy nine thousand dollars (GD 2,079,000), totaling two million eight hundred and nineteen thousand dollars (GD 2,819,000). See **Appendix 5** for detailed breakdown of budget (12 months).

6. Project Implementation

6.1. Activities

Development of project materials:

The development of the training modules and supplemental materials, beginning in May 2007, took approximately two months to be developed and tested. From June 25th – 27th, 2007, sessions with a sample of form 4 students from the Bishops High School in Georgetown and students from the Saraswati Vidya Niketan in Cornelia Ida were organized to test the modules and supplemental materials. The training modules were then compiled into a facilitator's manual with each section containing activities, handouts and flyers to support the topic areas covered.

Training & mobilizing facilitators:

After considering the number of schools and the times available to visit the selected schools, twenty one (21) facilitators were agreed upon as the number needed to conduct sessions in all the schools. A special two-day facilitator's training session was organized for facilitators in the various regions within the months of July – August, 2007. Facilitators chosen had some experience facilitating sessions on social issues. After training some thirty five (35) potential facilitators, twenty one (21) facilitators were chosen to further participate in implementing the awareness sessions. Three (3) facilitators were chosen from Region 2, five (5) from Region 4, five (5) from Region 6, six (6) from Region 9 and two (2) from Region 10. Training of facilitators from Regions 2, 3, 4 and 10 was conducted at Help & Shelter in Georgetown.

Region 6 facilitators' training was done at Road Side Baptist Church in Corentyne and training for region 9 facilitators was done at the Rupertee Center in North Rupununi. However of the 21 trained facilitators chosen, only 18[†] stayed on to actually conduct the sessions with students in selected schools. These facilitators, equipped with the necessary skills and materials, were then mobilized to the various regions to conduct sessions with the form 4 students in the selected schools. In the sessions, facilitators engaged students in discussion and took them through various participatory activities for each subject areas. In spite of the decreased number of facilitators conducting sessions, the project proceeded as planned.

Sessions in schools:

The project can be divided into two phases, phase 1 and 2.

Phase 1: Initial visits to schools selected (April 2007 – January 2008)

- Working with form 4 students in selected schools through out the regions.

Phase 1 focused on visiting the selected schools and conduction sessions with form 4 students on Domestic Violence, Parenting, Drug and Alcohol Abuse and Suicide. Though sessions were planned for the period September – December 2007, all the schools were not completed until February 2008. Twenty nine (29) schools, instead of thirty one (31) schools, were visited. Three (3) schools were unable to be visited (Bush Lot Secondary - Region 5, Tagore Secondary - Region 6 and Aishalton Secondary - Region 9) due to funding and time constraints. The target of fifteen hundred plus (1,500)+ fourth form students was surpassed at the end of the initial visits into schools. Two thousand and seventy one (2,071) students were visited by the end of the first phase of the project.

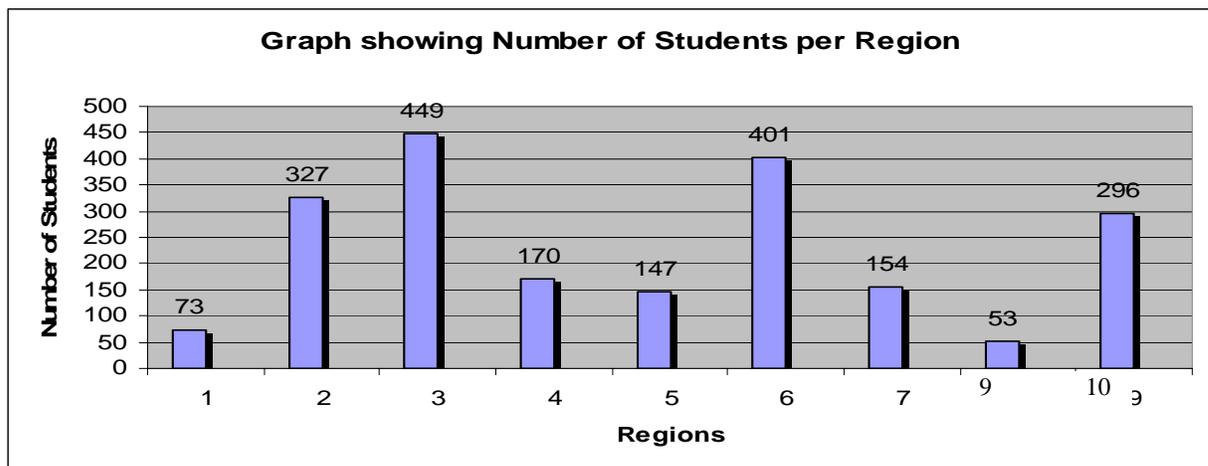


Figure 1.

[†] Some of the facilitators on this project were also involved with another project Help & Shelter was implementing in Health Centers in Regions 3 and 4.

Phase 2: Follow up activities with schools visited (March – July 2008)

A. Working with students:

- Revisit schools in some of the regions to further determine how students could share knowledge from sessions with the rest of their school (for example poster making, competitions, art, drama etc.).
- Conduct sessions in 3 new schools that have asked for sessions with their students (regions 6 and 10).
- Conduct sessions with students in forms 3 and/or 5, in schools which have requested sessions.

B. Working with parents and teachers (PTAs):

- Conduct sessions with parents and teachers in selected schools.

After the visits to schools agreed upon and sessions with form 4 students were completed, an evaluation of the project was done to assess the success of visits thus far. Based on the success so far and the requests by schools an extension of the project agreed upon (phase 2). The second phase started at the beginning of the April 2008 school term, ending in July 2008. During this phase four new schools were visited (Bygeval Secondary – Region 4, Tagore Secondary – Region 6, Skeldon High – Region 6 and New Silver City – Region 10) as well as the third forms of one other school (New Amsterdam Multilateral – Region 6). Bringing the number of students the project has engaged to two thousand three hundred and eighty two (2,382). PTA sessions were done in three schools (Stewartville Secondary – Region 3, Belladrum Secondary – Region 5 and Christinaburg Wismar Secondary – Region 10). Over two hundred (200) parents and teachers were engaged in sessions on Domestic Violence, Gender, Teenage Pregnancy and Suicide.

Monitoring and evaluating of project activities:

Monthly reports and progress report meetings were planned and held with Help & Shelter's management board and quarterly reports were sent to BHC. These monthly meeting were of course informed by reports from facilitators and students. Facilitators and students, on completion of the sessions in the selected schools, were asked to fill out evaluation forms (**Appendix 3 & 4**) on the sessions based on: new learning, content, participation, receptivity to sessions and application. Midway through the project, when sessions in schools were most intense, the project coordinator increased visits to facilitators in the various regions (Regions 2, 4, 6 and 10). Regions were visited on a monthly basis, to evaluate the progress of the project regionally. After visits to schools were completed an endpoint evaluation workshop with facilitators, project coordinator, management team and BHC representative (Mrs. Sarah Wheeler) was organized (1st & 2nd February 2008). The evaluation assessed: impact of the awareness sessions conducted with the students, the work delivered by the facilitators, the overall execution and sustainability of the project. It was generally agreed that the project did accomplish its goals and thus can be rated a success, all were in favor for a second phase of the project to be initiated. The second phase of the project was monitored the same way until its completion in July, 2008.

6.2. Constraints

Phase 1

Initial contact with schools:

After initial contact with the MoE and being granted permission to begin, we could not readily make contact with selected schools to arrange suitable times and dates for sessions as we had hoped. The REOs had to first, after getting a confirmatory letter from the MoE, make contact with the schools informing them of the initiative before the project could contact the school directly. Because this step was taking some time, the project took on the task of fast-tracking the process by forwarding the appropriate correspondence (confirmatory letters from the MoE) to REOs and selected schools to ensure they were aware of the initiative. The project was then able to make direct contact with the schools to arrange suitable times and dates for visits to schools

Retaining trained facilitators:

To complete the sessions in schools, twelve (12) facilitators were initially agreed upon to conduct sessions in selected schools. However, taking into account the number of schools and the time frame allotted to visiting schools, this number proved inadequate. After consultations among the project team, twenty one (21) facilitators were then agreed upon as the number necessary to complete sessions in the selected schools. After recruiting the twenty one (21) facilitators from Regions 2, 3, 4, 6, 9 and 10, 3 persons dropped out for one reason or another. This left the project with eighteen (18) committed facilitators out of the initial trained twenty one (21); this meant that the sessions had to be completed with less facilitators in the same time frame agreed upon. In spite of this short fall the project was able to visit all the schools, far surpassing the number of students the project has set out to engage.

Communication with schools & facilitators in Region 9:

The lack of telephone communication and the high cost of good and services in that region posed some challenges for the project and tested the coordination skills of the project coordinator. Fortunately there was email contact with two of the facilitators but this too was not always reliable and did not always suffice. Conducting the training session for facilitators in Region 9 was the first challenge. Arrangements had to be done long in advance and creative and safe ways to disburse monies had to be found. Quite a few times, because of miscommunication and misunderstanding, matters had to be resolved for the proper accountability of the project. Fortunately the project had the kind assistance of persons who had an appreciable understanding of the region – having worked in the area for some. They gave valuable advice and assisted in the smooth resolution of some challenges. They were Danuta Radzik and Collin Edwards.

Organization of sessions in some schools:

Bush Lot Secondary, because no definite time and date could be agreed and the demands of the HM could not be met, was not visited. Also, because of the challenge of arranging suitable dates and times, Bartica Secondary School (Region 7) was not visited until January 2008. Due to various other problems three other schools (President's College, Bigeval Secondary and Christianburg Secondary) could not be completed in the September to December 2007 term and had to be visited during the first two months of 2008.

Sessions in schools:

Sessions generally went well with most schools but facilitators expressed some challenges when conducting sessions in a few of schools:

- Low literacy, comprehension and communication skills in some schools:
Facilitators had some difficulty completing exercises with some classes and some students fear presenting, writing and/or acting in front of class. Facilitators included more drawing and role playing to accommodate the lack in literacy and comprehension skills.
- Poorly organized sessions in some schools:
In some schools the administration were involved in preparing classes for sessions while others schools prepared very little and facilitators found themselves gathering students themselves and trying to get things in place.
- A packed school curriculum:
Some schools complained that their curriculum was packed and hence would not allow the full time requested for sessions, even mentioning that parents would call in to complain if regular classes are missed. Facilitators then had to be innovative with choosing lessons, sometimes on the spot, deciding which lessons were most critical to the students.
- Transportation in Region 9:
Transportation is generally very expensive in Region 9. Schools are very far apart and students travel great distances to attend school. Like the other regions, the head of the school (H.M) asked about the frequency of sessions. Facilitators worked through two successive days to complete sessions. Refreshments had to be provided for the students since they were engaged for the entire day.
- Other minor interruptions:
Sports sometimes prevented full attendance of sessions, students went away with evaluation forms, and in a few schools the time allotted for sessions was after school and students complained about this.

Though sessions in most schools were successfully completed, facilitators recommend extra work be done with all the schools – especially the schools where literacy and comprehension skills were low.

Funding:

The project after requesting three million seven hundred and ninety five thousand dollars (GD 3,795,000) only managed to receive two million eight hundred and nineteen thousand dollars (GD 2,819,000) to implement the project.

Phase 2

Presentations by students

- Not all the students and groups who promised to prepare work actually presented. In a number of schools only some of the students presented work, giving a variety of reasons for not being able to present.
- Revisits and presentations were sometimes hampered by exams and other in-school activities which caused delays or in a few cases caused the facilitator to revisit the school.

PTA sessions

- PTA sessions could not be arranged with all the schools that requested sessions. Three of the seven schools who indicated interest were engaged. Though the target suggested in the beginning of the second phase was 2 – 3 PTAs, the project tried to respond to the requests of as many schools as was possible.
- The number of parents and teachers that attended sessions was very large. At Stewartville Secondary, over one hundred parents and teachers attended the sessions and facilitator had to be innovative and creative in delivering the sessions.
- The time allotted for these sessions by the schools was too short, here again facilitators had to be very creative in delivering the sessions. For the PTA sessions facilitators selected from the manual sessions such as Domestic Violence, Child Abuse and Teenage Pregnancy.

6.3. Management

The project was managed by a board of three (3) volunteers from Help & Shelter:

1. Vidyaratha Kissoon
2. Danuta Radzik and
3. Hamala Sharma.

Monthly progress report meetings were organized where the process, results and general progress of the sessions in schools were assessed. Feedback and discussions from these meetings helped to further shape and guide the project. Monthly reports by the project coordinator were prepared for these meetings by liaising with all active facilitators and visiting facilitators in Regions 2, 6, 7 and 10 on a monthly or bi-monthly basis based on the intensity of the project activities.

Quarterly reports were also shared with Mrs. Sarah Wheeler, Project Officer from the British High Commission's Office. Any subsequent requests for clarification, queries or press releases would be communicated through the project coordinator. Depending on the nature of the correspondence or request the coordinator would consult with the management board. It should be noted that the use of emails played an important role in the management practice of the board and communication among the project team.

6.4. Materials & Products

As mentioned previously, as part of preparing for the training of facilitators and conducting of sessions in schools, a number of materials for both facilitators and students were prepared. These included:

- Facilitator's training materials (Modules are available on Help & Shelter's website: <http://www.sdn.org.gy/hands>).
- Facilitator's manual (for sessions with form 4 students in selected schools).
- Supplemental materials: Flyers, pamphlets and worksheets for students (containing information on drugs and alcohol, teenage pregnancy etc.). Flyers with information on other topic areas (domestic violence, anger management and child abuse) were taken from existing flyers at Help & Shelter.
- Evaluation forms for both facilitators and students.

7. Findings

Phase 1

A number of conclusions could be made for this phase from the analysis of the facilitators' and students' evaluation forms, the evaluation of the project and the continuous monitoring of its activities.

Gender disparity

Of the two thousand and seventy one (2,071) students visited, 57.6% were female students and 42.4% were male (**Appendix 2**). In all of the regions there were more female students compared to male students except in Regions 4 (Dora Secondary), 5 (Belladrum and Forth Wellington Secondary) and 7 (Bartica Secondary). See graphs below:

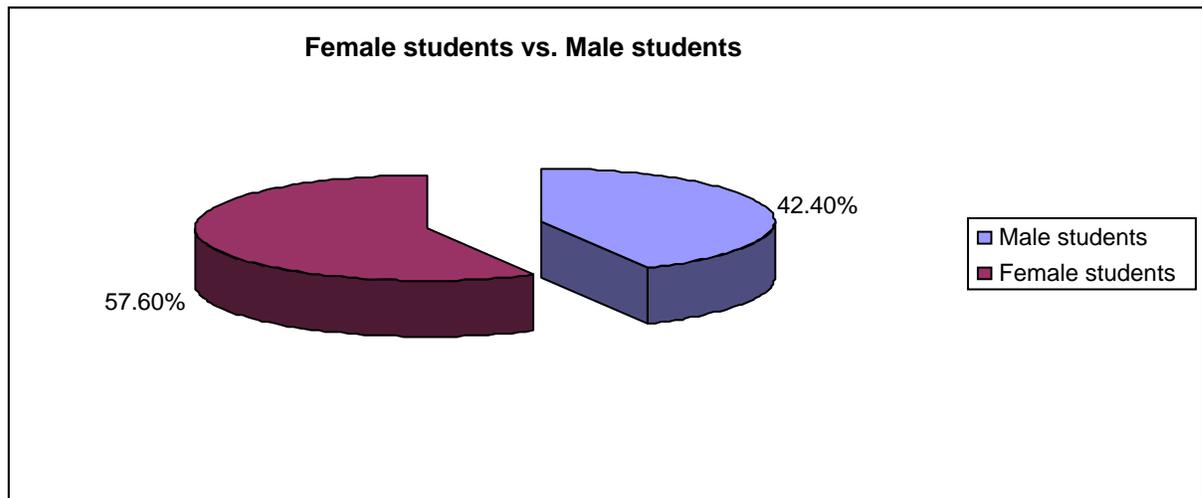


Figure 2. Though this reflects the national statistics on schools, it was clear that there were more female students attending school than there were male students. The reasons for this were not clear to this project and should be analysed further.

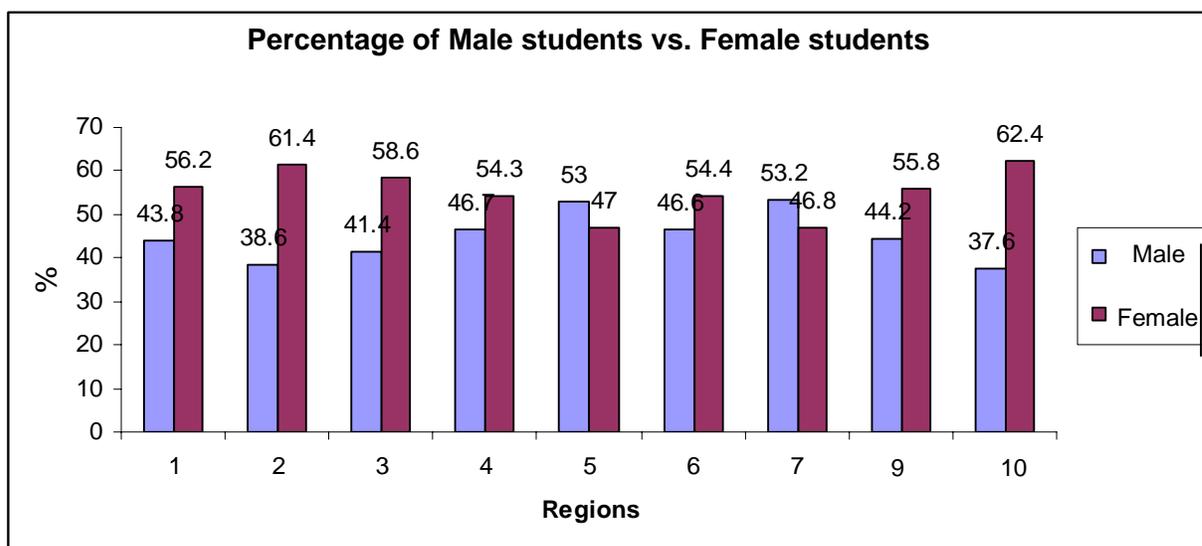


Figure 3. Schools where there were more male students than females were: Regions 4 (Dora Secondary), 5 (Belladrum and Forth Wellington Secondary) and 7 (Bartica Secondary). The reasons for this were not clear and would require further investigation.

Success of sessions

Sessions were generally well received and appreciated by both students and schools. In many cases when sessions were completed students and teachers requested more of such sessions to be done.

Comments from facilitators: Though comments varied from school to school, in most cases the facilitator were very positive about sessions in schools. In a few schools facilitators had to work with teachers to mobilize students to attend sessions and some sessions were poorly attended. General comments from facilitators were centered on the follows:

- Students were very cooperative, expressive and enjoyed the sessions.
- Students thought the sessions were too short and wanted sessions on a regular basis.
- Students as well as teachers (in most schools) are asking for more sessions.
- Due to time constraints and the arrangements in some schools facilitators had to improvise during sessions. For example, shortening sessions, visiting school more times than agreed to finish sessions, conducting sessions after school hours etc.
- Facilitators were often approached by students, teachers and even HMs for more information on sessions.

A few quotes from facilitators...

“The students responded well to sessions and were very happy that we (facilitators) came. They look forward to more sessions being done with them, they were very sorry we had to leave.”
(*Region 1*)

“The students loved to act in the skits and improvised well. They were very cooperative and more or less manageable. More sessions should be done with them on a regular basis. It was perfect.”
(*Region 2*)

“Most students indicated their reluctance to discuss sex and teenage pregnancy with parents and/or organizations. Some met with the facilitator after session to ask questions they did not want to ask openly.” (*Region 4*)

“Am amazed at the level of knowledge of students on the topics, many times their answers were the same as was written in the modules. More shy students are participating as sessions go on. However students were a bit reluctant to talk about suicide since most of them knew someone who had committed suicide or attempted.” (*Region 6*)

“The forth form students total 90 in number, only 30 turned up. We worked with them and the students were very polite and interested in learning but were slow to respond to questions. However things went well and most of the students asked for a follow up session.” (*Region 9*)

Comments from students:

- Majority of students liked sessions with about 75% – 80% identifying particular topics like domestic violence, child abuse, alcohol etc.
- Some criticized classmates for being too noisy; some thought sessions were too short.
- 80% - 90% said their views had changed for the better. Some identifying specific topics that had an impact on them.
- Majority said they would use this new knowledge to better themselves and share with others. Some will use their knowledge for classes, projects and exams.

- Quite a few students said they wanted more of such sessions, facilitators and/or Help & Shelter to return.
- The majority of students, if not all, had very high regard for the facilitators.

A few quotes from students...

“I like everything about the sessions... I gained something which I did not know in my past.” *(female student, Region 1)*

“...The gender (session) was one of the best of all, with male and female.” *(male student, Region 4)*

“My views on the topics (have) changed for the better especially on the topic of teenage pregnancy.” *(female student, Region 3)*

“I like every thing about the session especially when we talk about the topic of abuse.” *(female student, Region 10)*

“The thing I like about the session is it develop my understanding and self esteem.” *(male student, Region 9)*

Phase 2

Revisits to schools:

- Students were very happy to see the facilitators return to do follow up sessions with them. For the most part facilitators were very impressed by the presentations of some students who were very creative with the skits, posters, poems and songs they did. For examples of work **see Appendix 7**.
- One school in Region 2 (Anna Regina) has arranged for students to present talks and skits on a monthly basis as part of their assembly meetings. Another school in Region 5, Belladrum Secondary, had asked students for copies of their work to publish in the school’s newsletter.

PTA sessions:

- Parents and teachers were very happy for the sessions and requested that more of such sessions be done in the future, possible in the upcoming terms. The majority said they learnt something new and would try to apply some of the things they learned.
- Both parents and teachers approached the facilitators independently for more information on the issues discussed and on the possibility of follow up sessions. Facilitators were even asked to conduct sessions with church groups and other social networks.

A few quotes from parents and teachers...

“I would have sessions with my children; find out what’s affecting them. I will play games with them.”

“... I will listen more carefully to my children and other children and adults in my community.”

“... a team should come into the Belladrum community and have more session with out adult and young adults. Because of the lack of knowledge our people are suffering.”

“... things I did not know about Sexual Abuse and the other things that I heard, it is clear to me now.”

“... the subject area was useful... I now see Child Abuse in a different way.”

Literacy and stereotypes

This is an area of great concern for facilitators and the project alike. A number of facilitators observed that the literacy and comprehension skills were low in some schools and students were nervous when expressing themselves (orally and/or in writing) in front of other class mates. This was very evident when students had to respond to questions posed in the evaluation forms. A few students were unable to respond to questions posed, in some cases students had some difficulty responding in complete sentences. Schools where this was most evident were: Cotton Field and Charity Secondary – Region 2, Belladrum – Region 5, Manchester Secondary – Region 6, St. Ignatius – Region 9.

Stereotypical beliefs of men and women came out quite clearly in the gender activity with students. That is, that men should make the money and decisions and women should be subdued and loyal to men. In addition, among some students it was believed that the status of manhood is having a child and that of womanhood is mothering a child, and further more that it's not necessary to have a father around. In a number of schools these beliefs were quite pronounced.

8. Lessons Learned/ Recommendations

8.1. Lessons Learned

The following is a summary of discussions points collected from the continued assessment of the project (meetings with facilitators throughout the project from Regions 2, 4, 6, 7 and 10) and the endpoint evaluation of the project (February 2008) where facilitators, project coordinator, management team and a representative of the funding agency (BHC) attended. Discussions were centered on the elements that worked well and did not work well for the project, challenges and successes, the learning that took place, recommendations for improvements and follow up activities.

What worked best:

It was reported by facilitators, Regions 1 and 2 in particular, that skits and role plays in sessions worked well in allowing students to express them selves better. In Regions 3, 4 and 5, students came up with impressive skits for Teenage Pregnancy, Domestic Violence and Alcohol & Drug Abuse. Facilitators in Region 9 indicated that skits helped to reinforce theory done in group discussions. Further in Region 9, large-group discussions were more successful than small-group sessions in most cases, reason being that everyone heard and understood each other. In other regions group sessions on the whole were useful as it allowed student to talk among themselves.

Other learnings:

- There is great need for such sessions to be done on a regular basis with both students and PTAs of secondary schools. There were many requests by students, parents and teachers for such sessions to be done on a regular basis. Responding to these requests was one of the main reasons for implementing phase 2 of the project.
- The literacy and comprehension levels of some students weren't as high as expected by the project. It was noted that in some schools students drop out at age 13 and 14 because of examinations. Much work still needs to be done in this area.
- As indicated by facilitators, a good facilitator needs to be flexible, creative and humble. They should also stick to the time allotted for sessions, spend enough time planning for sessions and read more than what is in the manual. Arriving on time was critical for a successful session.

8.2. Recommendations

The following points were noted by facilitators at the evaluation meeting who came together to share their experiences in conducting sessions in schools.

- Facilitators recommend that forms 2 to 4 should be engaged and 3 sessions are not enough. Even though there is a Life Skills Programme in schools for students up to form 3, the effects of this programme were not seen.
- Schools should be visited twice a month to conduct sessions with students and more role plays should be included into the different modules.
- Sessions, on Domestic Violence, Parenting, Child Abuse etc., should be included in the school's curriculum so sessions could be conducted during school hours. This should be lobbied for in a variety of ways, via radio, written letters to authorities and other creative ways.
- Students and/or teachers should be adopted as volunteers to do sessions with students and follow up activities like poster making, plays/drama, competition etc should be pursued. If a similar project should be implemented the budget for more follow up visits and contact time with students should be higher.
- More work with the PTAs of schools needs to be done, especially the schools that have asked for sessions to be done with parents and teachers. Facilitators of Region 9 have volunteered to work with communities and PTAs.
- Sessions of this nature should also be done with other groups: out-of-school youth, church groups and other social networks. Facilitators (Tessa Greene and Abeka Dupan) will volunteer their time and services in their communities, collaborating with relevant authorities e.g. REO, H.Ms etc., to work with community groups, youth groups, schools etc. Facilitators have indicated that if limited funding were available then transportation would be the priority – Region 9 however would need transportation and meals.
- Special attention needs to be paid to the schools/children that were not easy to work with (low literacy and comprehension levels) and working with small groups of students would be more effective.

Efforts to eradicate domestic violence need to be reinforced by wider action to eliminate inequality between men and women/ boys and girls to ensure equal participation in the developmental process within the family and society at large. It has been recognized that working with young people to understand the dynamics of healthy relationships is a critical factor in preventing abusive relationships. There is a great need for such sessions to be done on a continuous basis with students in all forms, especially forms 3 and 4. See **Appendix 6** for comments by some students in relation to the sessions done.

Appendix 1

Work plan (April 2007 – March 2008):

RESPONSIBILITIES/ ACTIVITIES	PLANNING & PREPARATION ACTIVITIES	EXPECTED RESULTS	TIMELINE													
			Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
1. Detailed work plan on different phases of project from coordinator... <i>April 2007</i>	1.1 Draft submitted by coordinator to be perused by board.	(A): Tested training modules and materials														
	1.2 Final copy submitted after being approved.															
2. Contact with Ministry of Education, regional offices and schools to gather strategic information on schools to be targeted... <i>April 2007</i>	2.1 Contact key persons in Ministry via phone or in person.															
	2.2 Information gathered should inform best approach to contact schools															
3. Support Help & Shelter on choice of schools and modules/ materials developed for project... <i>May 2007</i>	3.1 Help & Shelter to choose schools															
	3.2 Help & Shelter to develop modules/ materials for project															
	3.3 Contact printery and print required number of modules/ materials															
4. Arrange procurement of materials for the project... <i>May 2007</i>	4.1 Consult with staff at Help & Shelter on procurement procedures.															
	4.2 Purchase materials listed for project															
5. Support Help & Shelter in arranging pre-testing of modules/ materials developed with	5.1 Make contact and arrange venue (a secondary school in G/town) for pretesting of modules															

RESPONSIBILITIES/ ACTIVIIES	PLANNING & PREPARTION ACTIVITIES	EXPECTED RESULTS	TIMELINE															
			Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar				
	5.2 Help & Shelter to conduct pretesting exercise with sample of forth form students																	
	5.3 Support assessment of pretesting exercise to determine efficacy of approach and modules/ materials developed																	
6. Arrange partnerships with facilitators in Regions 2, 6 and 9... <i>June 2007</i>	6.1 Contact and recruit potential facilitators to be trained	(B): Training of facilitators																
7. Arrange and support training of 20 facilitators from selected regions... <i>July - August 2007</i>	7.1 Arrange venues for four, 2-day training workshops for facilitators; in G/town, Berbice, Essequibo and region 9																	
	7.2 Organise the necessary logistical support for training (transportation, materials, refreshments, accommodations when necessary etc)																	
8. Arrange and agree on evaluation forms and methods... <i>August 2007</i>	8.1 Consult with Help & Shelter and facilitators on this																	
9. Coordinate the organisation of sessions in each school... <i>August 2007</i>	9.1 Ensure facilitators know which schools they will be targeting and when	(C): Sessions held in schools as planned																

RESPONSIBILITIES/ ACTIVITIES	PLANNING & PREPARATION ACTIVITIES	EXPECTED RESULTS	TIMELINE														
			Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
	9.2 Arrange materials, mobilisation etc for facilitators																
10. Arrange sessions with forth form students in selected schools for the Sept - Dec 2007 school term... <i>June - September 2007</i>	10.1 Contact schools to arrange time and date of sessions with students.																
11. Midpoint feedback meeting with facilitators on progress of sessions in schools... <i>October/ November 2007</i>	11.1 Contact facilitators and arrange venue for meeting																
12. Coordinate facilitators' and evaluation reports... <i>September – January 2008</i>	12.1 Consult and agree with facilitators on how and when reports will be done and collected.	(D): Monitoring and evaluating of project activities															
	12.2 Decide on forms for evaluation purposes.																
13. Conduct evaluation/ feedback meeting with facilitators on overall performance and efficacy of project... <i>January 2008</i>	13.1 Contact facilitators and arrange venue for meeting. Considerations for facilitators in outlying regions will be made.																
	13.2 Agree on a suitable agenda for meeting																
14. Final report... <i>February 2008</i>	14.1 Gather and compile all relevant information on different stages of project and sustaining the initiative.																

RESPONSIBILITIES/ ACTIVIIES	PLANNING & PREPARTION ACTIVITIES	EXPECTED RESULTS	TIMELINE													
			Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
15. Coordinate monthly meetings with the Project Management Committee... <i>Monthly</i>	15.1 Contact Project Management Committee, agree on time and venue.	(E): Monthly progress reports on activities and expenditure against the agreed work plan within 5 days of the end of each month.														
16. Submit written monthly progress reports to the Project Management Committee prior to monthly meetings	16.1 Circulate report via email 1 or 2 days prior to meeting.															

Appendix 2

Table comparing male students vs. female students:

Name of schools		Gender			General Totals				
		Total/ school	Male students	Female Students	Male student/ region	Female student/ region	Male students overall	Female students overall	# of students overall
Regional 2	Santa Rosa Secondary	73	32 (43.8%)	41 (56.2%)	32 (43.8%)	41 (56.2%)	879 (42.4%)	1192 (57.6%)	2,071
	Anna Regina Multilateral	54	15 (27.7%)	39 (72.3%)	126 (38.6%)	201 (61.4%)			
	Charity Secondary	94	28 (29.7%)	66 (70.3%)					
	Cotton Field Secondary	92	43 (46.7%)	49 (53.3%)					
Aurora Secondary	87	40 (51.2%)	47 (48.8%)						
Regional 3	Leguan Secondary	45	15 (33.3%)	30 (66.7%)	186 (41.4%)	263 (58.6%)			
	West Demerara Secondary	117	55 (47%)	62 (53%)					
	Stewartville Secondary	97	39 (40.2%)	58 (59.8%)					
	Patentia Secondary	75	29 (38.6%)	46 (61.4%)					
	Zeeburg Secondary	115	48 (41.7%)	67 (58.3%)					
Regional 4	Annandale Secondary	81	29 (35.8%)	52 (64.1%)	50 (46.7%)	120 (54.3%)			
	Bladenhall Secondary	52	12 (23%)	40 (77%)					

Name of schools		Gender			General Totals					
		Total/ school	Male students	Female Students	Male student/ region	Female student/ region	Male students overall	Female students overall	# of students overall	
	President's College Secondary	23	2 (8.7%)	21 (91.3%)						
	Dora Secondary	15	8 (53.3%)	7 (46.7%)						
R e g i o n 5	Belladrum Secondary	65	36 (55.3%)	29 (44.7%)	78 (53%)	69 (47%)				
	Fort Wellington Secondary	83	42 (50.6%)	41 (49.4%)						
R e g i o n 6	J.C. Chandisingh Secondary	116	53 45.6%	63 54.4%	187 (46.6%)	214 (54.4%)				
	Manchester Secondary	47	21 44.6%	26 55.4%						
	Winifred Gaskin Secondary	53	25 47.1%	28 52.9%						
	Black Bush Secondary	23	9 39.1%	14 60.9%						
	Skeldon Linepath Secondary	62	30 48.3%	32 51.7%						
	New Amsterdam Secondary	100	49 49%	51 51%						
R e g i o n	Bartica Secondary	154	82 53.2%	72 46.8%	82 (53.2%)	72 (46.8%)				
R e g i o n	Annai Secondary	22	7 31.8%	15 68.1%	23 (44.2%)	30 (55.8%)				
	St. Ignatius Secondary	30	15 50%	15 50%						
R e g i o n	Linden Foundation Secondary	104	41 39.4%	63 60.6%	108 (37.6%)	188 (62.4%)				
	Mackenzie High School	86	33 38.3%	53 61.7%						

Name of schools		Gender			General Totals				
		Total/ school	Male students	Female Students	Male student/ region	Female student/ region	Male students overall	Female students overall	# of students overall
	Christinaburg Wismar Secondary	24	6 25%	18 75%					
	Wisburg Secondary	82	28 34.1%	54 65.9%					

Appendix 3

FACILITATOR'S CHECKLIST

- 1 *Excellent / Yes*
- 2 *Satisfactory (good)*
- 3 *Needs further work*
- 4 *Poor performance / No*

Name of Facilitator (s): _____ Date: _____

Name of School: _____ Number of students: _____

Module: _____ Boys: _____ Girls: _____

Duration of session: _____

Overall Programme	1	2	3	4	unsure
How would you rate the students' response to sessions?	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Did students grasp the concepts from the sessions?	<input type="checkbox"/>				
How would you rate students' discussions on the issues?	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Were students animated?	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Did students gain new knowledge?	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Did students like sessions?	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Any other comments:

Submitted by: _____

Appendix 4

STUDENT'S CHECKLIST

(Note Well: Only to be shared out and completed after students have done all four sessions)

Gender: Male Female

School: _____

Form: _____

a) What did you like about the sessions?

b) What are the things which you did not like about the sessions?

c) Have your views on any of the topics changed for the better?

d) How do you think you can use this information and knowledge which you have gained?

Please →
turn over

e) Any other comments?

f) What do you think about the facilitator?

Appendix 5

Table showing budget proposed for project:

Description (Program Implementation)	Total Cost GD (12 months)
1. Project Coordination	
Fees	840,000
Stationary, flip chart, markers, CDs, video copies, printing of materials	350,000
Development of modules for Domestic Violence Prevention, Alcohol abuse prevention, suicide awareness, parenting education (4 modules)	200,000
Training of facilitators Georgetown, Regions 6, 2 & 9	300,000
2. Project Delivery	
Region 1 (1 school) Santa Rosa Transportation/Accommodation 150,000 Facilitator fees (1 x 20,000)	170,000
Region 2 (3 schools) Facilitators fees (3x 60,000) + local transportation (20,000) (assumes that all facilitators are resident in Region 2)	200,000
Region 3 (5 schools) (5 x 60,000) + local transportation 20,000	320,000
Region 4 (4 x schools) (4 x 60,000) + local transportation (15,000)	255,000
Region 5 (6 schools) (6 x 60,000) transportation(30,000)	390,000
Region 6 (7 schools) (7x 60,000) local transportation for local facilitators (35,000)	455,000
Region 7 (1 school) (1 x 40,000) Bartica + transportation/accommodation (\$40,000)	80,000
Region 9 (3 schools) (3 x 60,000) around Region 9 Transportation/accommodation is about \$300,000	480,000
Region 10 (3 schools) (3 x 60,000) +transportation (30,000)	210,000
Total GD	3,795,000

Appendix 6

Pictures of students in sessions:



“I like everything about the sessions... I gained something which I did not know in my past”

...female student, region 1

“I now know how to manage a healthy relationship and also about child abuse”

...male student, region 3

“...The gender (session) was one of the best of all, with male and female”

...male student, region 4

“I like the topic for this session because I learn different things about alcohol, about how it is dangerous to you health”

...male student, region 1

“My views on the topics (have) changed for the better especially on the topic of teenage pregnancy”

...female student, region 3

“I like every thing about the session especially when we talk about the topic of abuse”

...female student, region 10



“The points on suicide lightened my life a little bit”

...female student, region 2

“The thing I like about the session is it develop my understanding and self esteem”

...male student, region 9

“The thing I like about the sessions is how alcohol can damage your nature and body”

...female student, region 3





“...I learnt how to deal with my problems and not try to kill myself over stress and to love and care for myself and to be a better person”

...female student, region 3

“I learnt a lot about my teenage life and how to take care of my life from now on”

...male student, region 6

“I will like people to come and talk us about the topics over and over again”

...male student, region 5



“Learnt that I can find myself and don’t be depressed”

...female student, region 3

“...I learn how to abstain from sex until I reach the right age”

...male student, region 5

“The thing I like about this session is that it learn me to stop drinking”

...male student, region 10



“I think I could use the information and knowledge by sharing it with my friends”

...female student, region 10

“Yes my views did change... the topic on suicide, because I was thinking of doing it at one time.”

...female student, region 3

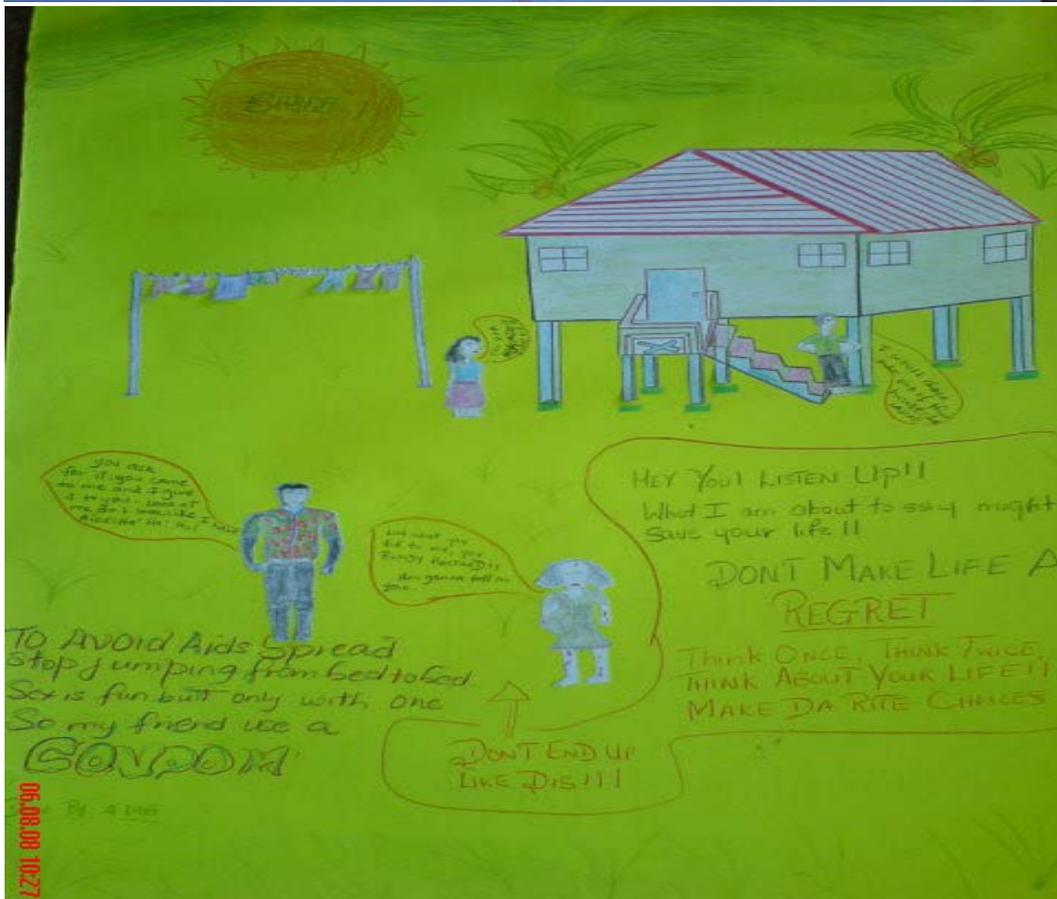
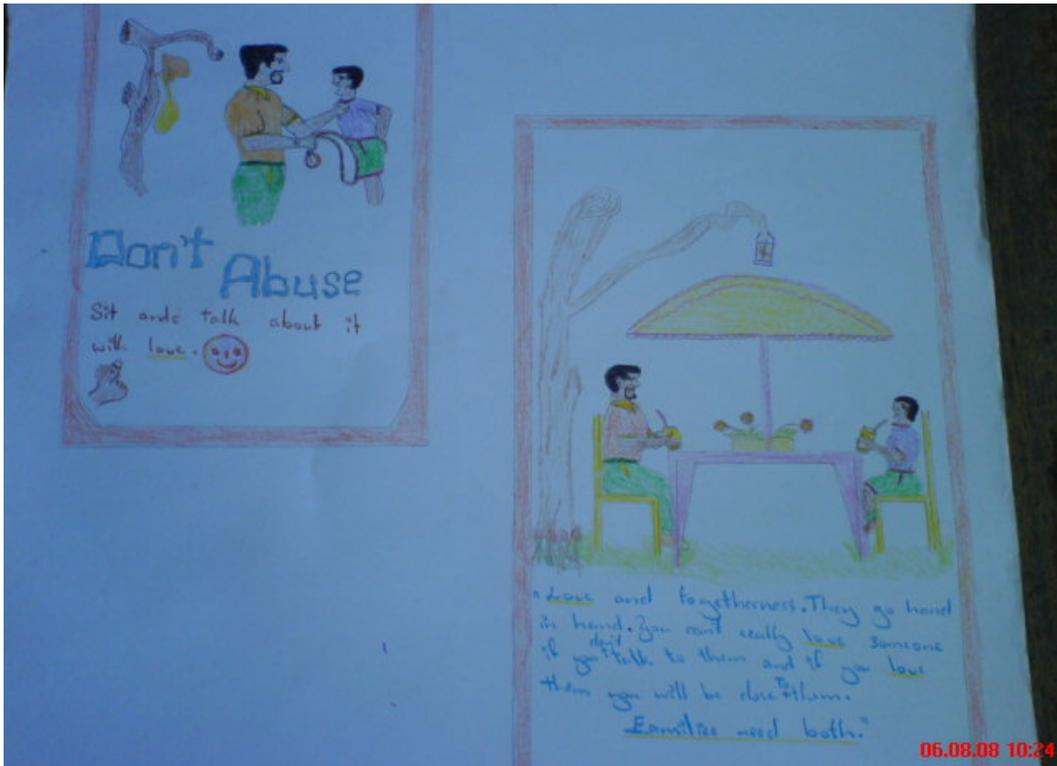
“I did not know that alcohol and drugs can damage your body internally”

...female student, region 5

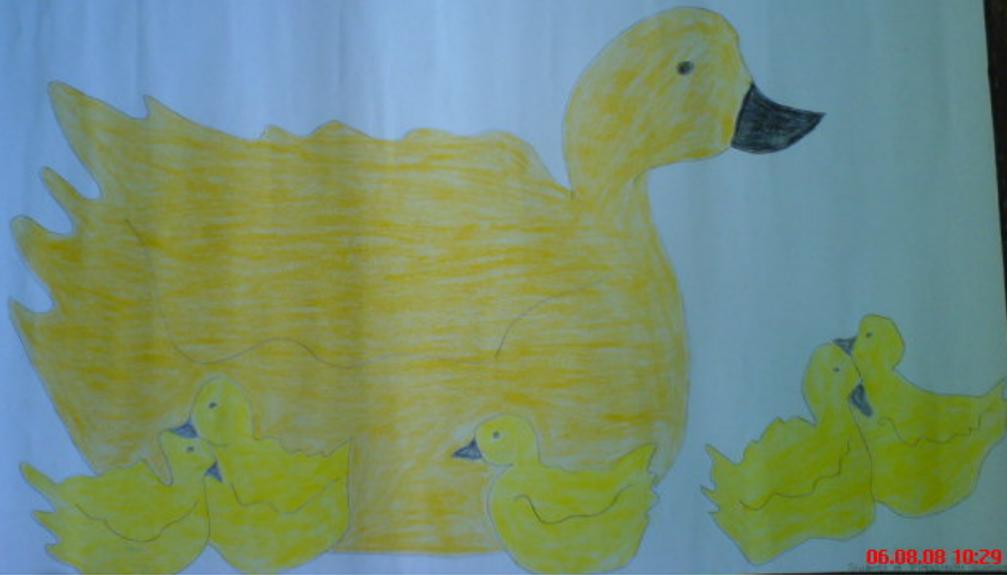


Appendix 7

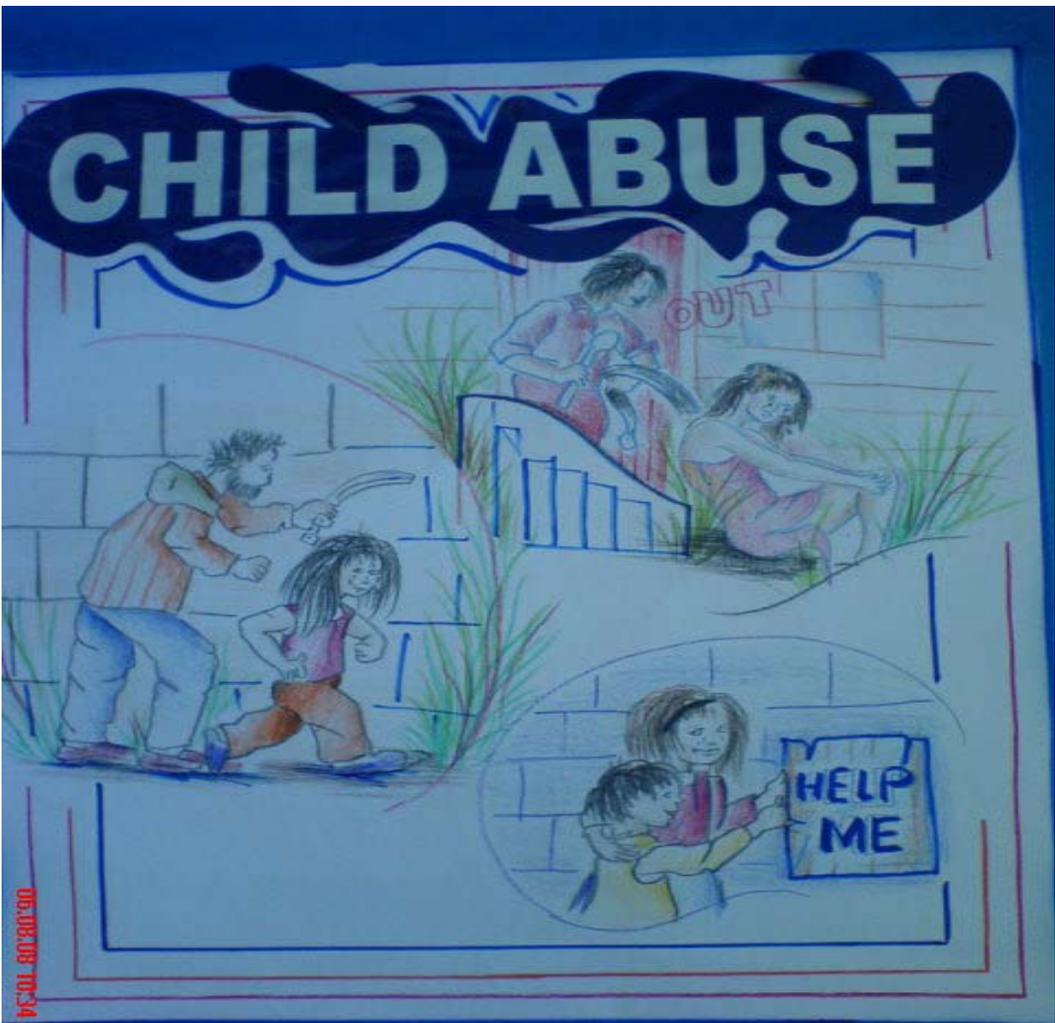
Examples of work done by students:



CHILDREN NEED LOVE
TOO



06.08.08 10:29



06.08.08 10:34

Appendix 8

FINAL ACTIVITIES FOR BHC PROJECT (November, 08 – February, 09)

Visits to selected schools to conduct sessions with form 4 students and PTAs during the period February to July 2008, particularly sessions with PTAs, could not be concluded as planned. Hence an extension was agreed upon to conclude planned visits. See report below of activities for the project during the period of extension, November 2008 – February 2009.

Activities:

A. Sessions with students in selected schools (*November 08 - February 09*)

1. Revisit selected schools in some of the regions to conduct sessions with forms 3 and/or 4 students
2. Conduct sessions with new schools that have requested sessions with their students (Regions 3 & 9)

B. Sessions with teacher and parents (PTAs) in selected schools as requested by schools (*November 08 – February 09*)

3. Conduct pilot sessions with parents and teachers in selected schools in regions 2, 3, 6, 7 & 10.

Table below shows planned sessions conducted during the period November 2008 – February 2009.

Regions	Schools	Type of sessions	Status/ dates of visits		Facilitators assigned
			PTA	Session with students	
1	Santa Rosa school	Sessions with students, parents & teachers	26 th Nov, 08	27 th Nov, 08	Cuffy & Karen
2	Charity Secondary	PTA	9 th Dec, 08 – 9:30am		Abeka
	Cotton Field Secondary*	PTA	————		Abeka
	Pomoroon	PTA	4 th Dec, 08 – 10am		Abeka
	Better Hope	PTA	5 th Dec, 08 – 10am		Abeka
3	Stewartville Secondary*	PTA	2 nd week. Jan, 09		Ebeth & Tessa
	Lenora Secondary	PTA, Sessions with 4 th forms	3 rd Dec, 08	26 th , 27 th & 28 th , Nov, 08	Ebeth & Tessa
4	Sophia Special Secondary	Sessions with 4 th forms		17 th , 19 th & 20 th Nov (9:30 am)	Ebeth & Tessa
6*	Skeldon Line Path	PTA	2 nd week. Jan, 09		Deserene
	Winfred Gaskin Secondary	PTA	6 th Jan, 09		Debbie
9	Annai Secondary	Sessions with 4 th forms		25 th , 26 th & 27 th Nov	Paulette, Oren & Viola
	Annai Primary (Tops)	Sessions with 4 th forms		27 th , 29 th & 30 th Nov	Paulette, Oren & Viola
	Bina Hill Institute	Sessions with 4 th forms		27 th , 29 th & 30 th Nov	Paulette, Oren & Viola
10	Wisburg Secondary	PTA	2 nd week. Jan, 09		Wendy
	Wisburg Annex	PTA	2 nd week. Jan, 09		Ernestene

* Though planned, these sessions could not be completed as scheduled. This was due to schools not having time to organize and host sessions.

Breakdown of activities:

In cases where facilitators were invited to PTA meetings to facilitate a session with parents and teachers, completing the regular 2 hour sessions was not always possible. Not enough time was given for sessions. In some cases only 45 minutes was available to complete sessions at PTA meetings, thus facilitators had to use their experience and skills to design meaningful lessons for participants. Collectively, sessions with PTAs were based on Domestic Violence, Parenting, Child Abuse, Suicide and Health Relationships – depending on the schools preference and the facilitator’s previous contact with the schools. As a strategy, the project arranged special workshops with most schools, outside of the regular PTA meetings, to be organized for parents and teachers to attend. The format for sessions with form 4 students remained unchanged.

An opportunity for further collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MoE), in Region 2, was taken by the project to work with parent and teachers. The MoE through the Regional Education Officer (REDO) of Region 2 organized two workshop sessions for parents living on the Essequibo Coast (Better Hope) and in Pomeroon. Building upon the work the project had begun in schools, working with students, parents and teachers, the project was asked by the REDO to help facilitate sessions in the two workshop sessions in Better Hope and Pomeroon. The sessions focused on Domestic Violence, Child Abuse, Parenting and HIV/AIDS. Facilitators from this project facilitated all the sessions on Domestic Violence, Child Abuse and Parenting.

By the end of this phase (February 2008 – February 2009) the project engaged another 350 students and over 200 parents & teachers. Thus bringing the total number of students, parents & teachers engaged by the project up to: over 3, 100 students and over 450 parents & teachers. See below, a brief report on the school visited during the months November 2008 – January 2009.

Region 1

Santa Rosa school – At this school the PTA and students were engaged in sessions where they expressed great satisfaction for work done with them. While there facilitators were also approached by authorities to hold counseling sessions with families and students on domestic violence and child abuse issues. The trip was a useful and productive one where persons seem to have felt good that an organization showed such interest in their situation and the well being of their community. Persons also stated the need for more visits to the community on a continuous basis

Region 2

Charity Secondary – Thirty two (32) parents attended this session, six (6) were fathers. Some comments about the session from the parents are as follows:

“I liked how everybody participated in sharing answers and I learn much more about the area on abuse”

– *female parent*

“The reason why I like the sessions is about the topic Domestic Violence. I learnt a lot on the topic”

– *male parent*

“... the thing I learn which I didn’t know that is domestic violence” – *female parent*

Better Hope – Thirty (30) parents attended this workshop; only one (1) father was present. A few teachers were also present from the school. The sessions on Domestic Violence, Child Abuse and Parenting were facilitated by facilitators from the BHC project, while the session on HIV/AIDS was done by another facilitator that was brought in. The workshop went very well, the parents were all asking for more sessions in the future. They said that such sessions are very much needed. The REDO was present through the entire

workshop and noted the comments from the parents at the end of the workshop, during the evaluation. Facilitators from the BHC project mentioned that Help & Shelter could always be contacted to help facilitate such sessions whenever there is a need. Some comments about the sessions from the parents are as follows:

“Many (personal) changes for the better; I can deal with situations in a more mature and professional way” – *female parent*

“(knowledge gained from the sessions) ...to be a better mother, educator and to live a better life. Conscious about my rights, my health and my well being” – *female parent*

“I enjoyed the Parenting session, I learnt a lot and on the parenting subject. I prepare me for the future” – *female parent*

Pomeroon – Thirty five (35) parents attended this session, no fathers were present. During the introduction the parents all expressed their desire for the workshop to just focus on Parenting, Domestic Violence and Child Abuse. This workshop, similar to the one in Better Hope, went really well; the Regional Education Officer was quite pleased. Like the first workshop in Better Hope, many parents asked for more session of this nature. Some comments about the sessions from the parents are as follows:

“The most subject that was useful to me is about caring of the baby” – *female parent*

“We can use this information in our homes, workplaces and in out communities” – *female parent*

“... we would like more parents to come” – *female parent*

Region 3

Lenora Secondary – Seventy (70) students, from three form 4 classes, participated in the planned sessions. Facilitators noted that the sessions on Gender and Abuse (especially sexual) brought out good discussions and interaction from the students. Some of the students expressed that they receive copious amounts of verbal abuse from their parents and wanted their parents to go through the same sessions they were currently going through. The PTA session organized by the school only attracted twelve (12) parents. Participants all expressed their enjoyment of the sessions and the need for more sessions like this to be done with their children in school. They also expressed that they need more sessions (especially on parenting) to help them with the relationship with their children. Some comments about the session from the students and parents are as follows:

“Need more session like this with our children” – *female parent*

“Yes our views have changed for the better” – *female parent*

“I liked about the sessions is that it convince me to know more about the things I need to know especially teenage pregnancy, domestic violence and good relationships...” – *male student*

Region 4

Sophia Special Secondary – Thirty nine (39) students were present at these sessions. Facilitators noted that they were very interactive during discussions and even wanted sessions to go on through the lunch period. Because they are slow learners the facilitators kept most of the activities as practical and non-literate as possible. Students at this school are not very literate or numerate thus an oral evaluation of the sessions was done. Some students openly shared the difficulties they face and have faced in their homes. Substance abuse, domestic violence and other issues covered in the sessions are very prevalent in the lives of a lot of the students attending this school. The students and teachers expressed their sincere appreciation for the sessions and would like more such session in the future.

Region 9

Annai Secondary – One hundred and fifty three (153) students attended these sessions from three classes. Facilitators noted that the female students seemed especially engaged during discussions. Also, a lot of students were familiar with the information discussed in sessions which they learnt from their friends who had attended the same sessions the previous year. Most expressed the need for more sessions and visits from facilitators. Some comments about the sessions from the students are as follows:

“I change my views by not knocking my brother and sister anymore...” – *female student*

“Now that I learn and know. I will try to practice the healthy relationship” – *male student*

“I learned about how alcohol is a drug. I never knew this before” – *male student*

Annai Primary (Tops) – One hundred and nineteen (119) students attended the sessions from three classes. All the students seemed to have liked the discussions that took part in the sessions. The facilitators also use their native language (Makushi) to deliver some of the material; this helped the student to grasp the essence of the topics more. One facilitator noted that the female students seemed to be especially engaged in the sessions. Both groups of students seemed to be in shock when the dangers of child abuse and teenager pregnancy were discussed. Some comments about the sessions from the students are as follows:

“One topic is child abuse. I didn’t imagine things like child can be sexually abused” – *male student*

“... on the topic: teenage pregnancy change my mind a lot. I was planning to get a baby as soon as I was sixteen but now I really change my mind” – *female student*

“I feel much better than how I was before. I think if the facilitator should come back I will do more better” – *male student*

Bina Hill Institute – Though not initially included in earlier plans, the facilitators managed to organize sessions with some the students at this training center for youth. The students all seemed to like the sessions, including the activities where they had a chance to dramatize and present group work. Some comments about the sessions from the students are as follows:

“I think I can use this information and knowledge by putting it to practice in the future” – *male student*

“The part I like about the sessions is when we students take part in the drama” – *female student*

Region 10

Wisburg Annex – Forty (40) parents attended this session, three (3) were fathers. The session lasted for one hour and twenty minutes and covered the topics of Domestic Violence and Suicide. Parents expressed that more sessions like this are needed for both them and their children. An oral evaluation was done at the end of the session. Some comments about the session from the parents are as follows:

“I wish there to have another session this time with parents and children together” – *male parent*

“... will share this information with my son” – *female parent*

“... it (the session) helped me to know a lot on abuse and also domestic violence” – *female parent*

Wisburg Secondary – Fifty three (53) parents attended this session, six (6) were fathers. The session lasted for one hour and twenty minutes and covered the topics of Domestic Violence and Suicide. The facilitators noted that the parents were very involved and complained that the time was too short – they need more sessions on these subject areas. Some comments about the session from the parents are as follows:

“... interesting to us as parents. We most of all learnt many things based on child abuse” – *female parent*

“Abuse in any format is wrong” – *male parent*

“I will share this information with my husband and family members” – *female parent*

Conclusion:

Through out the project the requests for more sessions were overwhelming. Students, parents and teaches were all grateful for sessions, and wanted to know if sessions could be continued. 80% - 90% of students, during the evaluations, said their views had changed for the better, identifying in some cases specific topics that had the greatest impact on them. The project strongly recommends that this initiative of engaging students, parents and teachers on the areas covered in the sessions, be sustained and possibly strengthened.