

TAKE ACTION: Building Students' Self Esteem

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Identify your concern

Building students' self esteem

In a changing world where there is so much negativity it is difficult to gravitate to the needs of the students. They lack the positive role models and are disenchanted with life. It is difficult for us as teachers to meet the multidimensional needs of our students. Nevertheless, however difficult this may be for us, we must try to expose students to positive experiences that will help build their self esteem.

Research your concern

- Suleiman Braimoh, UNICEF Representative in Guyana, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago has been quoted as saying, "UNICEF focuses on programmes that help to empower young persons and develop their self-esteem and confidence," he added, noting that children must be able to claim their rights and participate actively in their communities."¹
- This year the Ministry of Education received approval from Cabinet in launching the national Character, Education and Citizenry programme to be implemented in the early childhood education centres, primary schools and secondary schools. The programme's 'expected outcomes are improved self-esteem and self-confidence among pupils, the ability to embrace core values and character traits to lead a successful life.'²
- Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago: Social Studies for the Primary School Syllabus has many areas that highlight the development of self-esteem as seen in the table below.

¹ http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/trinidad_tobago_53684.html

² <http://www.lifeintrinidad.com/2012/04/06/cabinet-approves-programme-to-boost-pupils-self-esteem/>

² http://www.moe.gov.tt/pri_curriculum.html

SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM MAP – STANDARD I and 3 respectively.³

SUBJECT STRANDS	PERSONAL AND SOCIAL EDUCATION	HISTORY	GEOGRAPHY	CITIZENSHIP	HEALTH
<i>Standard 1</i>	Theme: Our community				
VALUES & ATTITUDES	Care and respect for the environment, others and different cultures.	-Respect for evidence; -Respect for our cultural heritage.	-To have a concern for local issues; -Respect for the environment;	That they belong to various groups and communities, such as family and school.	Responsibility, safety and cleanliness of the environment
<i>Standard 3</i>	Theme: The Story of Trinidad and Tobago				
VALUES & ATTITUDES	- Self-esteem, caring, sharing and empathy.	-Empathy; -Valuing the surrounding s; -Interdependence; -Cooperation	-Valuing their surroundings and environment; -Awareness of the environment.	-A sense of belonging and pride; -Rights and responsibilities	-Empathy and selfesteem; -Co-operation; -Responsibilities

Find out who supports you

It takes a united effort by everyone to ensure the successful development of self-esteem in each child.

Parents/Guardian

The parents are a vital source of getting anything done. It is with their support can we accomplish our goals for their children entrusted in our care. We must always put our focus on knowing that what we do is for the enhancement of everyone.

Teachers

In a large school or small school, it is important to get the support of teachers to ensure the involvement of the school. We do have fund raisers which are important in getting things done since everything costs money and this is done with the support of the school. The school is an

institution for learning. In order for this to be effective, we must be aware of the needs of our students. In so doing, we must try our best to do what we can to bring the world into our class room or take the class out into the world of possibilities.

Principal

We need the directions and approval from our principal before anything leaves our school. It is not easy to put a plan together without the support and guidance of the principal. To ensure this, we must have the interest of the school and the students to maintain our focus on our project and plans.

Ministry of Education

There are different channels of authority that are essential for the proper execution of a plan. It must be noted that we need to acknowledge and follow the proper channels to ensure the success of what we plan to do. There are certain procedures required. It is therefore our responsibility to do what is necessary to get the approval we need to move towards our goal.

4H Council of Trinidad and Tobago

The opportunities must not go unnoticed on what the 4H Clubs are doing for the students in our country and the world at large. We need to provide an environment that facilitates learning and holistic development of students.

Airline

Based on the event planned, it is necessary to get other groups involved who may not be directly linked to Education. With a project like ours whereby transportation by aeroplane was essential, we needed to follow proper procedures. It was essential to get the Caribbean Airline's assistance. I must say it was important for the united effort of all involved and the cooperation we experience from members with regards to deadlines and efficiency.

UNICEF

Interest groups are not only local but they are also international.

Create a plan

Giving students the opportunity to experience life in a different way can help to redirect their focus to a more positive direction. Our group's focus was on reaching out to the local community as well as the wider Caribbean community to help our students to build self esteem.

Two of our group members would organize for the local community where students would visit an elderly home within the schools' vicinity. They would also conduct a series of lessons geared at building students' self-esteem in the classroom. To ensure a successful and smooth transaction, they would communicate and involve principals and parents.

On the other hand the other group would participate in a field trip to Barbados, thereby giving the students hands-on experiences that would last a life time. It would enhance their own critical thinking and develop self-esteem.

Take action

The Local Community

- 1) A Time and date was arranged for students to visit the home for the elderly - Lourde's House. The home was first contacted by phone.
- 2) Meanwhile, students rehearsed a program consisting of songs and prayers.
- 3) Lessons to boost self-esteem were integrated into subject areas such as Reading, Social-Studies, Health and Family Life Education, Drama, Physical Education, Creative-Writing and Art as seen in the picture below.



- 4) A daily collection of money was made to acquire baskets with fruits for a gift offering.
- 5) Permission slips were printed and distributed to each student.
- 6) Students were engaged in a special assignment where they photographed themselves doing one good deed with the elderly.

Collages were then formed with these pictures.



The wider Caribbean Community (Trip to Barbados)

The plan of action was drawn towards directing students' focus to different things which would help to motivate them to think positive as well as to have a different focus in what they choose to do. Such motivation also helps in building positive self-esteem and moulding productive citizens.

Aims of the field trip:

- Appreciate cultural diversity.
- Explore sight seeing places and learn facts about Barbados.
- Interact and share experiences with 4H'ers in another country.

A date for our trip was decided and the process began:

- Contact was made with the 4H'ers and their volunteer leaders.
- The Principal was informed of our plans.
- Contact was made with the Barbados 4H Foundation
- A meeting was held with the parents and 4H Volunteer Leaders.
- A letter was sent to the Ministry of Education for approval.
- Request for airline tickets for the group was sent.
- After all this was done and approval received, it was time for the final step.
- Departure and arrival plans were set.

Itinerary during our stay in Barbados

Every morning our day began with a word of Prayer, Anthem, 4H Pledge and a discussion of the events planned for the day. At the end of each day, we gathered again to discuss our days' activities - we then closed off with prayer. Then it's lights out (time to sleep). You can check on the web where we were staying, it will give you a description of our surrounding. Apart from 4H members, teachers and parents will be accompanying us on this trip. They will assist with supervision and preparation of meals for all.

Wednesday 28th March

We will be departing from Trinidad airport and arriving at Barbados Airport.

Transportation will be provided by the Barbados 4H Foundation to take us to Raven Court Apartment in Marley Vale. We will settle in and take a rest after our early morning flight then unpack and later in the afternoon tour our surrounding of Raven Court Apartment. Finally, meet and greet with the leaders and 4H'ers in Barbados in the evening.

Thursday 29th March Island Tour

Government Transport Bus will take us on a tour around the island of Barbados.

Friday 30th March

10:00am - Visit to Harrison Cave

Movie "Journey" at Olympus in Sheraton Mall

4:30pm - Interaction with Southern Zone 4H Club (Talent Evening)

Saturday 31st March

10:00am - Visit to Bridgetown (Shopping)

Market Day organized by the 4 H Foundation will provide interaction with 4H'ers

Formal Dinner at Casa Grande Hotel

Sunday 1st March

8:00am - Early morning walk to the light house.

10:00am - Sunday School followed by service at New Life Ministry

1:00pm- Picnic at Three House Park

Monday 2nd March

Shopping in Bridgetown

Preparation for our departure

Transportation organized by the 4H Foundation

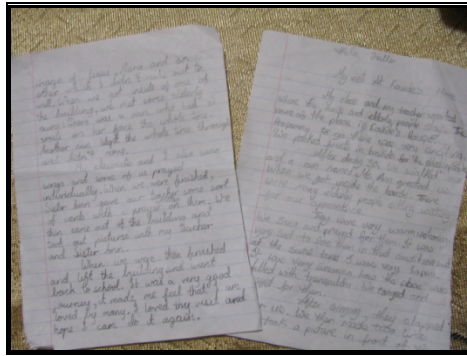
N.B. Parents/Guardian kindly note that all members will call home, to assure you all is well upon arrival.

Evaluate our plans

The action plan involving the **local community** was quite simple to execute.

The students were very moved by their visit to the elderly home. They are all interested in returning for another visit. The nuns who are in charge of the home were also very pleased and so too requested another visit as well. The students wrote reflections about their visit.

Samples of two reflections.



Apply your learning

The students' self-esteem was boosted as they were able to encounter successes throughout the entire experience -:

- Students were able to make personal sacrifices with their money to show appreciation for others.
- They were engaged in drama activities to demonstrate how to show respect for others.
- They were able to reach out to an elderly person in the communities in which they live by lending a helping hand.
- Students were given the opportunity to interact positively with the elderly in their school community.
- Students made use of their personal talents such as singing to show appreciation for the elderly.
- They took leadership roles in performing specific tasks such as collecting money, buying fruits, leading in song as well as in prayers.

Other teachers are now interested in also paying visits to Lourde's House.

The wider Caribbean Community (Trip to Barbados)

Is my plan realistic?

Well it is. However it takes a lot of preparation and planning to execute it to the end. It also requires the effort of all involved and the building of positive moral values by how we interact with others to accomplish our goal. The importance and relevance of what a trip like this can do to each individual in character building.

Is it achievable?

Yes. Providing you know what it is you are doing and the purpose of it. There must be a vision and a focus that will motivate us into seeing it to the end.

Can it work?

Not always, but it can if you persist. In a changing world there are always new methods and ways of doing things. We must not get discourage but be persistent to the end because it is at that very moment when you think it is the end and you are ready to give up, that is when you have to try even harder to see it through. It can work, providing you have the desire to see it through.

What can I do if it fail?

Find out why it was not going according to plan and what I can do to make it work. My attempt at first required more information and as I proceeded I kept going back to the same point. You see, I had the information but I also needed to give the detailed information to all the stakeholders as it proceeded to the various administrations that were necessary to have the approval for our trip.

Who or what is responsible for the success of your plan.

Everyone is responsible for the success of a plan even those who do not approve of it. Why? In my opinion, we are all unique and different. It is the difference which creates the spice of life and the opportunity to see ways of reaching our students the best way we know how.

Apply our learning

Field Trip

This is not the only way in which we can apply learning but it is the one that we chose to work with for our take action plan. We must find ways to motivate and create a need of wanting to learn and know more about our world around us. It is with confidence we will create that desire to go the extra mile to meet a need.

Celebrate your success

The Local Community



Students gather at the grotto area of Lourde's

The Convent Grounds House

The wider Caribbean Community (Trip to Barbados)

It was an incredible journey with regards to the interaction with our fellow Barbadian friends in which we shared experiences from our respective groups. A lot of learning took place from both countries with the pupils, leaders and parent. Opportunities like this give us a better understanding of cultural differences, of how our environment impacts in our lives as well as society's contribution to what happens next. It is with great expectation for a better future this is done. Why? Simply because we need each other to ensure we have a safe and promising future for the next generation. What are we doing to bring this about? Can we say our actions are providing hope and opportunities for our nation youths? Can we say it is with love for our community we are striving to do this? How? When will the hurting stop? Will it ever? I don't have the answers but together we all have the answer as we take our individual journey, with a united effort we can make this world a better place. What is your contribution to your community of faith within your own circle? Have you caused people to laugh or cry? Have we worked together for the common good for all or just ourselves?

My hope and prayer coming out of this trip to Barbados is that it will make a positive difference in the lives of many and transform lives. As we share with individuals we encounter in our journey in life. They say a picture tells a thousand words. I would like to share some with you.

On our first day we interacted and shared with leaders and other 4H'ers about activities and events which we experience in our respective clubs.



Our residence during our stay in Barbados



Our second day takes us on an island tour



Farley Hill National Park



Our third day was a visit to Harrison Cave, followed by a movie in Olympus “Journey” and a talent show with Three House 4H Club





A meeting with “Dora” at Sheraton Mall



Our fourth day, began with a welcome from Morning Barbados on television then shopping in Bridgetown, a visit to the 4H Foundation market day, followed by our formal dinner at Casa Grande Hotel and free ride on the spaceship.



Our fifth day involved an early morning walk to the light house, Sunday school and Palm Sunday Service at “New Life Ministry” followed with a picnic at Three House Park.





Our last day in Bridgetown followed by our departure from the airport



It has been an amazing journey over the past few days. These memories will last a lifetime in the hearts of those who had shared and assisted in the making of this event both in Trinidad and in Barbados. We continue to seek the guidance and direction from our Lord Jesus Christ as He shines in our hearts and lives. We would all strive to make a positive difference in this earth. **“Be the change you want to see in the world”. Mahatma Gandhi**

In doing this assignment, it is clear that we can strive to meet the needs of our school all based on our present situation in our respective schools. We do learn from each other and it helps us to work towards our goals that can become a reality. Realistic goals that can be achieved providing you have the resources, proper guidance and direction to make it to the end. Anything is possible, once you put your mind and heart into what you are doing and the Lord will provide you with the tools you need to accomplish any given task.

REFERENCES

http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/trinidad_tobago_53684.html

<http://www.lifeistrinidad.com/2012/04/06/cabinet-approves-programme-to-boost-pupils-self-esteem/>

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