



The official newsletter
of the Families in
Action Peer Helping
Programme

S.O.S. Newsletter

September to December 2008

Volume 2, Issues 1

THE S.O.S. IS BACK!

It's been a while, but we are back again. The S.O.S.—short for Students Offering Support—is the newsletter for Peer Helpers by Peer Helpers published once per term. Each forthcoming issue of the S.O.S. will focus upon some of the common concerns that Peer Helpers are required to assist their schoolmates to cope with, so that they can provide adequate support.

Our thanks to all of you who answered our call for the submission of poems and essays toward this term's issue. Your support has been invaluable so we look forward to your continued involvement in this project.

BEATING THE BLUES

*There ain't nobody on this old earth
Who'll give a nickel for what I'm worth
I got more worries that I can use
Don't look now but I've got the blues
- Lee Hazelwood*

Every one of us has felt like this at least once in our lives. Perhaps because we had an argument with someone we care about, or after the death of a loved one, or maybe even because we didn't do as well as we expected

to do on an examination. Whatever the reason, having an attack of the blues is a natural part of life and of growing up. Yet, instead of allowing ourselves to feel sad or blue, many of us prefer to pretend that everything is okay and therefore do more damage to ourselves in the long run because of it.

No-one likes to feel sad or blue but these feelings actually allow for

Continued on page 3



Peer Helpers of various schools engaging in a brainstorming activity during the 'Depression: the Teenage Perspective' workshop at ALGICO Plaza in November 2008

WHAT'S INSIDE

**Depression: What
you should know**
Page 2

Scholar Says...
Pages 2 & 3

**Your Voice...
Your Choice**
Page 4



Her Way Out (Submitted by the Peer Helpers of Mayaro Composite School)

She placed the rope around her neck,
And fought the tears that flooded her
eyes,
At the moment she didn't want to exist,
At the moment she wanted to die.

The pain in her heart,
The feeling of hopelessness,
Of fear, of sadness, of pity,
There was no reason for forgiveness

His voice still echoed in her head
His words engraved in her heart,

The words she thought she'd never hear,
She couldn't face the fact that they're
apart.

She attempted to jump
But a hand held her back,
A friendly face with a look of concern
Helped her to see the light where there
was only dark.

So now she's smiling again and is even
stronger

All because of a caring Peer Helper.



Some of the Peer Helpers of
Mayaro Composite School at our
recent Film Festival

SCHOLAR SAYS...

Meet Scholar Gangoolie - our student report who will research each of the issues to be addressed in this and other issues of the S.O.S. and provide you with relevant information statistics from time to time.

Scholar's Bio:

Age : Unknown

School: Always in
different
uniforms

Hobbies: singing
school songs, reciting
the pledge.

Favorite song: I'll Never Break Class

Favorite food: Box lunch

Look out for Scholar and his wealth
of information in the near future!

Depression: What should you know?

We may often hear someone say, "I real depressed yuh know". Depressed? This word causes much confusion and as loosely as it may be used, depression is real. How much do we really know about depression though? What is it? What are the causes? Are there any signs and if so what are they? Is there a cure?

Depression is a medical illness that causes a person to feel persistently sad and low and is not merely a passing blue mood. It is not a condition that simply goes away. People with a depressive disease cannot just "pull themselves together" and get better. Without treatment, symptoms can last for weeks, months, or years. Appropriate treatment, however, can help most people with depression.

If not treated properly depression can lead to sleep or eating disorders

and even drug abuse. An extreme but real outcome is suicide. Most people with depression can be helped with counseling, provided by a professional psychologist, and some are helped with counseling and medication. Medication is often used to treat depression that is severe or disabling.

Ha ha Corner

A teacher asked a pupil a question, but she could barely hear the child speaking because the other kids were making too much noise. In an attempt to quiet them down, she said "I can hear voices!"

Two janitors outside heard the teacher and one said to the other, "Jeez, she better stop telling the kids about her mental problems!"

Suicide

Staring out the window, hoping for a change,

Trying to change my life, I am such a disgrace,

Never wanting to see the sun shine

Just want to curl up in darkness behind these blinds.

No-one understands, no-one ever will
Searching for a meaning, hoping to be rescued still

Why does my life have to be like this, why am I always down?

I'm fighting and fighting to find a reason to smile behind this frown.

What sense does it make to have a reason to live?

How much do you want to take, I have nothing else to give!

Just wish I could erase the feelings and pain,

And leave the little happiness that remains.

How do I save myself from all this misery and lies?

What binds me and makes me suffer this way, all these ties.

Why does this never-ending heartache always burn?

When am I going to recognize my failures and learn?

Sometimes I wish I could just end it all

And save myself from this everlasting fall,

And you will not care when bitter shards of my life remain,

I hate you, you're so selfish and so vain.

Submitted by
Stefanie Mohammed
Naparima Girls' High School



"Looks like it could be depression."



SCHOLAR SAYS...

* In Trinidad 1 out of 6 teenagers suffer from depression.



* Between the ages of 14— 17, most teens are susceptible to depression.

Depression...
Suicide, are they related?
Or is it the destiny of the ill-fated?
State of mind...
Or action of choice...
It's terrible when you can't hear the sound of your own voice.
Day by day
Everyone thinks you're okay
But they don't see what's locked inside
They can't see all the pain you hide
You're withdrawn...
From family and friends
Bitterly contemplating how much your life ends.
Tears and sobs
With each heart throb
But what can I do to get you to talk
You'd rather lock it away
Like saving money for another day
For this disease there is no cure
But there are methods of prevention, of this I'm sure
I know we aren't close so you wouldn't tell me why
But even so, I'm going to try
On my shoulder, you can cry
While you let out what's inside
I'll listen to you, rather than let you put your life in the hands of suicide

Submitted by
Dannielle Samuel-Seeraj
Holy Faith Convent, Couva

Beating the Blues

from page 1

our healthy adjustment to loss or disappointment. So instead of trying to put up a brave front the next time you get an attack of the blues consider doing the following:

- ◆ Allow yourself to be sad because denying your feelings will only make it harder to deal with in the long run.
- ◆ Cry if you feel the need. Yes you too guys. You'll notice that you feel



almost instant relief after you've had a good cry.

◆ Plan a 'sad day' - one in which you can wallow in your feeling of despair and examine your thoughts and feelings. This can actually help you to move into the next day in a better frame of mind.

- ◆ Remember that your sadness will

eventually fade... that's a cheerful thought right?

You know how the label on your bottle of panadol advises you to see a doctor if symptoms persist for more than a specified period of time? Well in the case of the blues, talk to your school's Guidance Officer if you can't shake it after two weeks just to ensure that you aren't suffering from the more serious and sometimes life-threatening clinical depression.

Your Voice... Your Choice

I usually call my friends because I know that they will try to make me feel better and I try to do things that will take my mind off the issue—like listen to music
- VANDANA
Naparima Girls' High



I listen to music or hang out with friends because most times I'm happiest when I'm with my friends.
- LAI-YING
St. Augustine Senior



Most times I think about the good things that I have in my life that make me feel fortunate and I listen to upbeat music.
- VANDANA
Holy Faith Convent



Listen to music—mostly R&B—because it makes me feel calm
- DANIEL
Point Fortin Secondary



What do you do to cheer yourself up when you are feeling down?

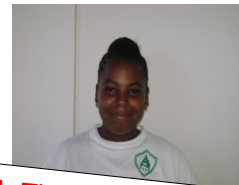
Play computer games because it takes my mind off of the situation.
- KEISHA
Brazil High School



I listen to music or call someone I'm really close to so that they can cheer me up. Sometimes I go on the internet... facebook.
- T'SHANNA
Holy Faith Convent



I watch TV, listen to music, talk to my brother, or if I'm really down I visit my dad because he comforts me best.
- KEZIA
St. Augustine Senior



I go somewhere open and watch birds... the sky. Sometimes I play with my dogs.
- KRISTIAN
Brazil High School



I watch TV—cartoons, comedies etc. Because it makes me feel better.
- MICKELLA
Point Fortin Secondary



I do things that I enjoy and I surround myself with friends because I know that they won't allow me to stay sad
- KRISTY
Naparima Girls' High

