

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
MINISTRY PAPER 44
BEHAVIOUR MODIFICATION INTERVENTION

INTRODUCTION

Members are being asked to note that the Ministry of Education, (MoE), has developed a School Wide Behaviour Modification Intervention Programme to address students' anti-social, disruptive and deviant behaviour. This is aimed at improving learning outcomes and the development of well-rounded students, with wholesome values and attitudes.

BACKGROUND

Data from the Ministry of National Security's Safe School Programme indicated that during the 2012/2013 Academic Year, three thousand six hundred and seventy one (3,671) students were cited for anti-social behaviours of varying degrees. Substance use and misuse among adolescents also continue to be a major concern. In a number of cases, schools resort to the use of detention, demerits, suspension and exclusion, which disrupt the teaching and learning processes. In order to address the behavioural problems, the Ministry is using various strategies at all levels of the system.

The general school -wide at risk behaviour modification programme is implemented within a three - tiered framework that entails:

- i. Primary Prevention, that is, school-wide system for all students, staff and settings through the Culture in Education Programme, Civics and Citizenship, Valuable Pathways, uniformed groups and in-service teacher training.
- ii. Secondary Prevention – specialized group systems for students with at-risk behaviours. This allows for rapid intervention before issues escalate through the *Dream-A-World Project, Change from Within* and Drug mis-use services.
- iii. Tertiary Prevention – specialized individualized systems for students with high risks students who are referred for intensive and specialised interventions such as psychiatric services and entities such as the Child Development Agency (CDA) and Victim Support.

COMPONENTS OF THE PROGRAMME

The components of the programme are:

- Culture in Education Programme
- Health and Family Life Education (HFLE)
- Valuable Pathways
- Dream-A-World Project
- Change from Within Programme
- Establishment of additional Uniformed Groups

SYNOPSIS OF THE STRATEGIES

- **Culture in Education Programme**

The Culture in Education Programme is designed to promote civics education which includes citizenship, greater appreciation of self and others and respect for national symbols, national heroes and icons, all relevant to cultural integrity and nation-building.

The Teachings of Garveyism was introduced in the curriculum. A series of readers on the “*Heroes of Jamaica*” will be introduced in September 2015 to inspire our students to bring out the best within themselves and inculcate the positive values and attitudes demonstrated by the heroes.

- **Health and Family Life Education (HFLE)**

The aim of the HFLE is to help young people understand that the choices they make in everyday life profoundly influence their health and personal development into adulthood as well as to help children and adolescents practice healthy choices. The programme which began in 2007 had a complete rollout in 2012 with approximately 1000 public and 200 independent schools, from early childhood to the secondary level.

- **Valuable Pathways**

The Valuable Pathways, a programme that was developed and implemented in 2004 in all Technical High Schools, has been modified for full roll out in the system for September 2015. The programme is aimed at assisting students to develop, demonstrate and embrace core values that have been identified and to apply them to their daily lives. It provides a general overview of core values within the Jamaican context and provides practical ways for these to be demonstrated. The programme comes with a teacher’s guide and a student manual.

- **Dream-A-World Project**

The Dream- A- World Project is being implemented by the University of the West Indies, Mona, through the Caribbean Institute of Mental Health and Substance Abuse (CARIMENSA). At present, the project targets the poorest academic performers and most disruptive students entering Grade 4 in 5 parishes, (Kingston, St. Andrew, St. Mary, Portland, St. Thomas) in 35 primary schools.

After one year, the intervention is expected to transform annually 1000 academically failing and behaviourally dysfunctional Grade 4 primary students into confident, disciplined, high-achieving students for Grade 5.

- **Change from Within (CFW)**

The *Change from Within (CFW)*, a programme developed in 1992 by the University of the West Indies, Mona, is aimed at curbing the incidence of violence and anti-social behaviour in schools by taking a whole-school approach to the question, building self-esteem among the students in

the schools and thereby improving overall performance and reducing violence. The interventions are not just for students, but include strategies to motivate teachers and build leadership.

- **Uniformed Groups**

Schools across Jamaica have long maintained the tradition of uniformed groups, clubs and societies. It is a fact that students who are members of uniformed groups are more disciplined as they conform to rules, regulations and general law and order. Currently, there are more than 600 uniformed groups in schools which include an addition of 205 new groups in the last two years to assist with character development among students. Plans are advanced to expand these groups by 100 in 2015/2016.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the foregoing initiatives will improve the emotional and behavioural well-being of the students, support their academic and social functioning; enhance the ethos of the classroom setting and reduce the use of reactive disciplinary measures.

There will be the formulation of an inter-ministerial committee to guide the continuous implementation and monitoring of the programmes.



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