



1936 Daly Avenue, Bronx, NY 10460 • 718-542-4454 • caribvoice@aol.com
621-6111 • bibiahamad1@hotmail.com

For Immediate Release

TCV Launches

Community Outreach and Students' Self Esteem Workshops

Georgetown, May 9, 2016: In its continuing efforts at suicide prevention, The Caribbean Voice launched its community outreach and students' self esteem workshop in Demerara in April.

The community outreach is geared towards reaching out to communities from where suicide emanates and within which suicide potential is potent and investing in sessions that enable such communities to voice their fears, concerns, experiences and suggestions. Additionally, the outreach provides the communities with strategies and information that will help them to be proactive first responders for their respective communities.

Held at Parfaite Harmonie on April 8th, 2016, in collaboration with lead organizer, Orchid Foundation, along with GIVE Foundation, the inaugural community outreach focused on self-esteem, suicide awareness and prevention and related issues, especially teenage pregnancy. Presenters included Bibi Ahamad, Chandanie Rooplall and Rayon Mantoos of TCV, Dr. Mark and Ms. Indra Constantine of Orchid Foundation and Daniel Ali of GIVE Foundation.

According to Dr. Constantine, "We From the Orchid Foundation found it an extreme delight to have Partnered with CaribbeanVoice in the hosting of a Community Awareness outreach on Suicide Awareness and Prevention. The session was very well attended with some 45 people from the community of Parfaite Harmonie and its environs in attendance. It is my hope that we would be able to, in the future, partner again for such programs in other communities, as we together seek to inform and educate the Guyanese populace on these social issues."

Daniel Ali of GIVE Foundation, added, "Overall I think the audience was well informed. They got to know about the suicide hotline , the reason(s) why the Caribbean Voice is pleading with the Government for the age of consent to be raised from 16 to 18 , and also they got an to opportunity to better understand the dilemma in today's society regarding suicide and depression. The audience received leaflets with the suicide hotline numbers and words of encouragement to build their

'self esteem'. In addition they got brochures revealing information about suicide, prepared by the Give Foundation.”

The occasion was also used to launch TCV two petitions, calling on H.E. President David Granger and his government to establish a registry of sex offenders and raise the age of consent to 18 years. Attendees also signed and pocketed the “ME” pledge developed by The Caribbean Voice and lunched during a press conference at Cara Hotel on February 9th. The pledge encourages self-esteem awareness and provides the suicide hotlines to signers. This pledge has already been widely distributed, including to a number of schools in Berbice and Demerara.

The self-esteem workshop is a follow up to similar workshops held last year in high schools in Berbice, by the New Jersey Humanitarian Mission (NJASM), in collaboration with Peace Corp and the Ministry of Education. It provides students with information and strategies to build self-esteem, develop self confidence and practice self forgiveness. The occasion is also used to interact with students to solicit first hand information and views about suicide and general mental health issues, drawn from their experiences and experiences from their schools and communities.

Held at Covent Garden Secondary School on April 28th, in collaboration with lead organizer, GIVE Foundation, along with POTS, GRPA and the US Ambassador Youth Program, the self-esteem workshop was combined with another community outreach. Based on feedback and information gathered, GIVE Foundation, The Caribbean Voice and other stakeholders will return to the same venue for a follow up. Also in the coming months this workshop hopefully would be taken to secondary schools and youth entities throughout Guyana, again in partnerships with locally based groups and other stakeholders.

It must be noted that both in Berbice as well as at the workshop at Covent Garden Secondary, it was learnt that many young people suffer from depression and suicide ideation as well as sexual and physical abuse, which are often hidden via threats and appeal to family ‘honor’. Alcohol and drug use are also creeping into schools and being used more widely by the young.

Meanwhile, The Caribbean Voice extends an open invitation to other Diaspora based NGOs and activists to contact us to organize/support outreaches and self esteem workshops in communities and schools across Guyana. Call Bibi at 621-6111 or 223-2637, Pandit Deodat at 627-4432, Chandanie at 697-9968 or email bibiahamad1@hotmail.com or caribvoice@aol.com or caribbeanvoice101@gmail.com.