



We See

What We See
Changes
Who We Are

WITNESS Project Youth Page is made possible by the Margaret Clemons Foundation and The Ministry of Education

Thoughts

By WITNESS Youth Staff

In the Burrowes School of Art, we have fewer students so more interaction happens than in a normal school environment between everyone: the boys, girls, teachers, etc. Therefore I see or hear a lot more “hustling” and “sweet talk” than I ever did. The thing I have trouble accepting and understanding is when some guys have to take it beyond just complimenting and talking with a girl to being obnoxiously sexual with her.

For example, a rather curvy girl and her friends were walking past the bridge in front of school, where a reasonable amount of people were waiting to catch a bus. Shawn saw the girl and her friends and started to sing, “Ass, Ass, Ass,” the lyrics to a Big Sean song, multiple times as they passed, loudly enough for the girls to hear. To us it would have just been a little joke but it was taken to another level that embarrassed both the girls and me. Since most of the people there heard his expression and I was sitting next to him, I was associated with him.

Now the amount of things that were caused by Shawn’s expression, if I was to list them all I would need another page, but the essence of the situation is that everyone there was affected especially the younger children and

the girl in question. In this situation, the actions or reactions of the person involved tell a lot about who they are and how they think. The curvy girl heard him and for a slight second an expression of disgust was on her face but quickly she composed herself and looked the other way as if nothing happened. This says she doesn’t find such statements appealing; she has high self-esteem and holds herself as someone of importance and not just a body to be admired. Girls with opposing mindsets would have smiled or reacted positively to his statement; most of the time these are the girls who are used and abused. I think this is so because they have been raised in an environment that accepts this and they were never taught or spoken to differently.

All of these thoughts come from someone who has graduated from the Guyana school system at the secondary level and is in the process of graduating at the tertiary, but not everyone gets the chance to see this mindset even after high levels of learning because they were already programmed as a child. Share the light with everyone, especially the children, because “what we see changes who we are”-JR.

Kites up in the air

By WITNESS Youth Staff

Kites up in the air high
Singing sweetly in the air so bright
And the wind in reply
Echoes with great delight
See them fly with their bright colors
Kids laughing and playing for many hours
With their family, even grandfather and grandmother
The delicious meals are prepared: chicken and chips
And grandmother constantly sipping on some ginger beer
While they all frolic and laugh in the Easter Monday sun



Members of Team WITNESS

Husband Abuse

By WITNESS Youth Staff

There were several sounds I heard on Friday night from my neighbors: crying from their four year old daughter, and yelling and cursing from her mother. This was usual every Friday, but listen, it never bothered me because I had never decided to listen to the indecent tones of their voices and words. Well, since then I have joined the project to help eliminate acts against women and children. So I decided to listen one night, and at about seven o’clock I heard the wife cursing and yelling at her husband, saying, “Where the money deh? You’re always bringing home the wrong pay!” And he sounded scared as ever, started pleading with her to stop yelling because their daughter was crying. Despite the pleas she still continued, so I went up to my bedroom and looked.

The branches of the laden mango tree blocked most of my view, but I still could see a little bit of the situation. As I stared at the uncanny scene I saw that the wife had a rolling pin in her hand and was holding the husband by his collar. I didn’t know this could happen, but it was clear that she was stronger than him. And their poor four year old daughter was crying bitterly! This made me feel sad and also mad because she wasn’t working, just sitting at home doing nothing but minding other people’s business and gossip, while he was working very hard to support her, the house, and their daughter. As they continued arguing I heard her saying,

“You always bring home the wrong pay every Friday- Ya must be giving it to another woman!” And he was pleading with her to believe him, so she was saying, “So how come it’s only 21000 out of 22000?” He said that he bought lunch and she violently pelted the rolling pin at him and yelled, “What happened to the food I gave you?!”

Deep down in his thoughts he knows the food she cooked was poorly cooked, and he always throws it away, but he dares not say that or he will be beaten again. So he said he was hungry again and bought more food. Then he was beaten with the rolling pin again. This time he was bleeding and he couldn’t take it anymore, so he decided that he would call a friend, borrow a thousand dollars and put back the money. He decided to share the idea with her and this time she pelted a violent hit at him. He ducked, and this time it hit their poor daughter. This made her cry, and made me mad and also sad because now the little girl was crying even more, so I went to bed.

Later that night I heard him sneaking out the gate with his daughter and some clothes. I didn’t know where they went, but the next morning the people from human services came and took away the mother, and the next week the father and his daughter moved back into the house. And the mother?well let’s say she got what she deserved. Whether you’re a man or woman, violence of any form is unacceptable!

“What we see changes who we are.” – JR

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