

WITNESS

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

South!!!

By WITNESS Youth Staff

Since I've been coming to Witness meetings at Help and Shelter on Homestretch Avenue, I have come to ooze hatred for the operators of public transportation so much so, that it vexes me whenever I think of having to "catch" a bus. Before, I didn't need to take the bus so often along this route, so I didn't have this frustration.

I live in North Ruimveldt where the forty-one mini-buses operate. A large number of these buses take a detour called Norton St. This notorious Norton St is used for avoiding the traffic lights and turns of Homestretch.

I don't have a problem with them going down Norton Street but too many of the buses are taking this detour, so much so that it is almost the regular route now. I can't remember the last time I saw the National Cultural Centre. Ok, it seems legal for them to go down Norton Street but what happened to customer service? I was on a 41 bus (HotSkull to be exact) going to a Witness meeting, the conductor asked "Anybody before Orange

Walk?" and I said, "Go straight. I'm getting off on Homestretch." One big dirty laugh started from a few people on the bus. Some others just turned and looked at me. The Conductor said they were turning and I had to choose then and there whether to get off there or at Cuffy square.

No consideration for the customer! No thought about the passenger! I was casted out to walk the rest of the way to the meeting. Why, because a driver wanted to reach town fast!

When they crash in Norton Street I have mixed feelings. This shouldn't happen, but they gain this hatred from me by not respecting my rights as a paying consumer. This isn't an article to complain (alone), but one where I plead to the drivers and conductors of buses, and people related to them, to think and understand the importance of customers and how to treat them. If X is the regular route, go X! If the person needs to slip out on Y and it's out the route, tell them up front. If they are on the bus, drop them where they have to go. Simple.

The System: Bullying

By WITNESS Youth Staff

Twelve years old and full of energy, a young girl's personality was changed because of her insensitive classmates. "You're so fat and ugly" and "you're retarded" were the words that they uttered to her almost every day. At first she took their teasing as a joke, but then it got to a point where it was unbearable. She actually began to believe what they said. Their words lingered in her mind, just bugging and bothering her. It bothered her to the point where she made herself change. Of course she didn't have to change but she did. She forced herself to starve and to go on a diet. She then decided she would keep to herself more often and not mix with the rest of the kids. After a couple of months she began to feel alone and she started losing a lot of weight, so much that she got sick. She made the wrong choice listening to them and this is what happened to her. There are situations where bullying comes to a point where it forces the victim to commit suicide or to engage in self-abuse. This should be stopped.

It happened in a school, a very good

school in Guyana. We examined the system and found its biggest flaw. The school system isn't connected to social behaviour. There isn't a rule or plan on how to combat bullying in schools in Guyana, and we sympathize with the teachers on this. Without a manual, would you try fixing a very complex and expensive machine? A child's mind and future is just that. However, to the teachers "Why Do You Still Not Do Something?" You can't tell me that you don't see the bullying. You can't tell me you don't see how it affects the child and his/her work. You tell them, "Go do your homework", "talk to an expert, read a book on bullying, look at documentaries." You think once you give them education, they'll stop? The worst cases of bullying are from the smartest ones; it's just that in black and white, most victims are the smart ones. The source of the problem is in your hands. It doesn't take forever to help a child and you don't need a PHD in psychology, all you need is to help. This Must Be Stopped!



Photographed by Teriq Mohammed

Amazing Flora forgotten in our Botanical Garden. As one blooms the other begins to die away....and so will the youth arise to create new beauty as the old world disappears.

The Great Rebellion

By WITNESS Youth Staff

I am young and I haven't seen much, but I know the little I have seen seems so unclear, so polluted. Hmm... some days I ask myself "what has the world turned to?" I know in the movies the good seem to always triumph, but I guess that's why they are called "movies:" a fantasy world in which I'll never live.

I see good people succumb to the evil of the world, all the bribery, all the inequality, all the anger and hatred that man has for their fellow man. It erodes the good, piece by piece, until the lights in their souls dim and vanish. The chaos in man's heart seems to be the new HIV or cancer: Sadness grows, Love turns to dislike, dislike turns to anger, anger turns to hatred, and sooner or later another brother or sister bites the dust, not even knowing what knocked them out. A new world it is indeed, but not the world I'd like to live in.

My youth makes me feel insignificant. My words leave my lungs and enter my mouth but when the elders stare, I feel just the air leave my lips. They don't care what I think, they don't want to know I can help, but it's like they're not seeing that something is going wrong. Don't they see that they are oppressing our young minds from freeing this world from the grasp of injustice and inequality? These times are changing, but the elders seem to be stuck in their 1800's outfit. They want to try to make change, but their change is old and overused. It's funny how complex they make simple decisions, for I believe if you're going to feed a child, then feed the child. Don't give them a form to fill out. Maybe if they listened while we spoke, we could show them their ways and the harm they are doing, but nevertheless in their eyes I'll always be a toddler. Many of you

might disagree, but I believe that for them to hear our thoughts and our words we must rebel, rebel against inequality and injustice, prejudice and all that's bad. Rebel! Become outcasts if we must, for as time goes by we will find our fellow outcasts and maybe we can build a whole new world. Hmmm... "Civil disobedience ain't a crime, hope you know that." A world where everyone has a voice, a true democracy. Rebel for all that is good and just. A world where all man looks out for his fellow man. I believe that we ourselves need to rid ourselves of these deadly sins: pride, greed and the others, for we ourselves must change in order to facilitate change. Yes, I know it will be hard, but I believe in my fellow youth. We can and we will, for we must; the world needs it. I can't beg you to join me, but we all have to play our part in making a difference. So are you ready?

"What we see changes who we are." – JR

Are you a witness or victim of violence? You are not alone. Make your anonymous call to Help & Shelter today and speak with a live counselor on 227-3454 or 225-4731.