

The Bishops' High School Old Students' Association collaborated with the Bishops' High School to pilot a mentoring programme for third form students during the 2002-03 academic year. Because of its success, a programme was introduced for first form students at the Bishops' High School and Tutorial High School during the 2005-06 academic year and was supported by UNICEF.

The programme is suitable for implementation by other secondary schools and is endorsed by the Ministry of Education.

Documents to facilitate implementation of the programme are:

- Establishing and Managing a Mentoring Programme
- Becoming a Mentor: Role, Activities and Possible Outcomes
- Introducing the Mentoring Programme (Brochure)
- Now Your Child is in Secondary School: A Booklet for Parents
- The Changing World of the Secondary School Student

The documents are available from the School Office as well as [www.bhsosa.org.gy](http://www.bhsosa.org.gy)

Prepared by

The Bishops' High School Old Students' Association

(BHSOSA)

2007

## MENTORING PROGRAMME

FOR

## SECONDARY SCHOOLS



## The Changing World of the Secondary School Student

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This booklet is suitable for use by individuals as well as for discussions in groups.

## Useful Resources



### *Booklets*

Alleyne, M. & Andrews, N. (1974). *Thoughts for Teens*. London: Macmillian Education Ltd.

Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Osaba, Dowlath, K. & Henry, I. *Developing Study Skills*. Georgetown: Commonwealth Youth Programme.

Waithe, N. A. (1998). *Managing Anger, Resolving Conflicts: A Handbook for Students*. St. Michael, Barbados: Newtork Services Centre.

### *Local Organizations/Agencies*

Guyana Responsible Parenthood Association, 70 Quamina Street, Georgetown ☎ 225-4731

Help & Shelter, Homestretch Avenue, Georgetown ☎ 225-4731

Ministry of Culture, Youth & Sport, Main Street, Cummingsburg.

National Commission on the Rights of the Child, Ministry of Human Services & Social Security, 1 Cornhill & Water Streets, Georgetown

National Commission on the Family, Ministry of Human Services & Social Security, 1 Cornhill & Water Streets, Georgetown

United National Children's Fund, Brickdam, Stabroek ☎ 226-0738

**Be consistent with what you have to do. A little every day is better than cramming all your studying in one or two days.**

### Studying at Home

- Decide on a time to study. You may choose to study mainly after your evening meal, right after school or before preparing for school in the early morning.
- Design your home study timetable. The timetable will help you to allocate time for:
  - ⇒ Revision of the work done in school that day.  
Immediate revision keeps things fresh and allows you to ask for help with concepts that you do not fully understand.
  - ⇒ Giving adequate attention to all the subject areas over a time period.
  - ⇒ Ensuring that you have enough time to work on projects or other assignments.
- Make a chart of due dates for assignments.
- Arrange your chores so that you can dedicate time to studying. You may need to discuss this with your parents so that you are allowed to study without interruption.



### Studying in Groups

You may find studying in groups helpful. You may do this at school or at your home or that of one of your friends. If you choose to study with friends at home, you should ensure that your parents as well as theirs agree to this.

You will find that you to focus on a ideas, learning from the best solution to need to agree on



working in groups helps topic by the pooling of each other and finding a problem. You also conditions of participa-

tion in your group to encourage all members to contribute meaningfully.

### Introduction

Entering secondary school is an exciting time for students. It is a time when many new experiences are gained and changes occur in routines and relationships.

Once the student knows which secondary school will welcome him/her, he/she begins to think ahead to the whole new world which is opening up for him/her. For the student who has a sibling or good friend attending that school, he/she already has some idea of what is in store. For the student who has had no direct contact with the school, his/her knowledge is gained from what has been reported in the media and/or what the teachers or others in his/her life may have said. Regardless of this pre-knowledge, the student who is new to a secondary school may approach the first day with fear and trepidation and/or anticipation of wonderful things to come.

This booklet addresses some of the realities of life in secondary school and the world of the adolescent. It draws on the experiences of students who participated in the Mentoring Programme offered at the Bishops' High School and Tutorial High School in addition to the wealth of information on adolescent development available in print and non-print resources.

### Moving from Primary School to Secondary School



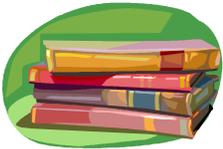
The transition from primary school to secondary school is much anticipated by most students. It is a time when many changes are in store for you. These changes will affect your perception of yourself, your body, your relationships and your way of life.

As an entrant to secondary school, you will have many experiences that are different from those of primary school.

You will wear a new uniform which identifies you with your new school. You will be expected to behave in a manner which shows that you are proud to be a student of the school, especially when

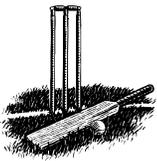
you are in public e.g., while walking on the street or travelling in a minibus.

You now have to study many more subjects and work with several teachers. You will find that each teacher has his/her own style of teaching and expectations of you as a learner. You will have to use your initiative more frequently and research topics, using several resources. You will have to organize your time carefully if you are going to be able to review your work satisfactorily and complete your assignments on time.



You will find that secondary school has more rules and that these are likely to be enforced. Not only are teachers responsible for enforcing rules but so are prefects and class representatives, in some instances. This is one of the ways in which secondary school helps to prepare you to function in the wider world.

The secondary school often affords the opportunity for participating in many co-curricular and extracurricular activities. You may choose to participate in debating, drama and elocution competitions, sports



such as basketball, cricket, netball and hockey and/or clubs which focus on religion or a subject area, for example. You may also be taken on field trips which are different from those experienced in primary school.

You need to remember that the new environment and the activities in which you engage will have an effect on your life as well as those of your parents and siblings.

Some of the changes you will encounter in secondary school and what they may mean to your life appear in Table 1.

way of coping is to set yourself **SMART** (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound) objectives.

- S - Decide on exactly what you want to do or complete in a session; e.g., Tonight I will finish this mathematics exercise.
- M - If possible, set a figure which could show that you are making progress; e.g., 10 mathematics problems, 1 chapter of the Integrated Science textbook.
- A - Set the work which you can finish within the time, without distractions.
- R - Be realistic about what you want to achieve. Set short spaces of time for each topic or assignment.
- T - Set the time span within which you want to complete your tasks; e.g., 45 minutes or 1 hour.

You should make notes while you study. You will find that these will help you to highlight important points which will be available when you want to review the topic.

You should store your study material in the a place that is safe and where it will be undisturbed.



If you are a procrastinator, believing that you can get your work done just before it is due or needed for an examination, you should try to find out why you behave in this way. You may be unsure of what is expected of you, you may want to produce the perfect piece of work or you may feel overwhelmed by the task. Whatever the reason, you may overcome procrastination by taking the following steps:

- Organizing the task into sections - completion of one section would give you a sense of achievement.
- Allotting enough time for completion of each section to ensure completion of the task within the required time frame.
- Rewarding yourself upon completion of each section.
- Keeping track of your progress on each section, checking to see that together the sections adequately represent the whole task.

what caused you to react in this way, how you feel about yourself when you are angry and what you could have done differently. You must take responsibility for your anger and the way you respond when you are angry.

### Maintaining a Clean Environment

If you are a child who leaves your possessions around the house, you will most likely be admonished by your parents. Even if you do not do this on an on-going basis, you will be reprimanded for being untidy from time to time. You are expected to be neat and tidy at home, at school and in the wider society.

You should tidy your bed when you get up in the morning, put your dirty clothes in a special place and wash the dishes after eating.

You should place your litter in bins at home, at school and in the community. You should also encourage your siblings, peers and even strangers to do the same. Remember that many people are accustomed to dropping litter anywhere and will behave in an irresponsible manner if they are not told to use bins on a constant basis.



### Staying on Top of School Work

You should plan how you would approach your work, whether in school or at home. Your plan should cater for individual as well as group activities. You should ask the teacher questions during or after a class if you are unclear of what is being taught.

If you need information or assistance with your work, you may ask your parents, older siblings or another adult for help. You will find that the library, the Internet and bookstores are valuable sources of information.



### Approaches to Studying

School work, assignments and studying may seem to be never ending. You may feel frustration that you have too much to do. One

**Table 1: Differences in Secondary School and Consequences for the Student**

Secondary School	Consequences for the Student
Use of pen rather than pencil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited use of eraser</li> <li>• Greater attention to presentation of work</li> </ul>
Individual desk and chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sole responsibility for care of furniture</li> <li>• Comfortable seating</li> </ul>
New school uniform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New badge of honour</li> <li>• Easily identifiable</li> <li>• Higher standard of behaviour expected</li> </ul>
Making new friends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaching out to different children</li> <li>• Learning tolerance and negotiation skills</li> </ul>
Different forms of discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responding to less physical and more attitudinal sanctions</li> </ul>
Moving from 4 subjects to 10 or more subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shorter periods of instruction per subject</li> <li>• A diversity of homework and assignments</li> <li>• Careful planning and scheduling of activities</li> <li>• Challenges in understanding some of the material presented</li> </ul>
Different teachers for different subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More teaching styles and standards to learn about</li> </ul>
Stricter rules, e.g., dress code enforced, side of corridor to walk on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Varied penalties for breach of school rules</li> </ul>
Assembly in school building rather than school yard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-exposure to sun and rain</li> </ul>
More extracurricular activities after school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater opportunity to participate in activities and manage time</li> <li>• Wider choice of activities</li> <li>• Physical exercise</li> <li>• Group interaction</li> </ul>
Variety of recreational/development activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to participate in activities such as sports, elocution, drama</li> </ul>
Importance of peer group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pressure to conform to peer group</li> <li>• Being teased or excluded if non-conforming</li> </ul>

## The Family the Child Comes From and/or Lives With

The children you meet in secondary school, like those in primary school, come from different types of families. Some live with both their mother and father. Some live with one parent only while others live with other relatives such as grandparents, aunts, cousins or siblings. Some of those who live with



their parent or parents also live with one or more siblings. Yet others live in households which have combinations of relatives or even friends or strangers.

The type of household in which you live and the relationships among its members have a significant effect on how you see yourself and on your behaviour. As a consequence, it may also have an effect on the way other people see you and their expectations of you.



Just as other people may form opinions of you based on your family background, so could you form opinions of the other children in your class. You need to remember, however, that each individual is unique and has many experiences and many qualities of which you may be unaware. You must take time before you form judgments about others as there is likely to be much about them which you do not know just as there is much more about you of which others are ignorant.



In this booklet, reference is made to parents with the understanding that for some children, the person playing the role of parent may be someone such as a grandparent or guardian.

### Adolescence

You will experience many changes as a result of the process of adolescence which occurs from the onset of puberty to stage of

## Violence at Home, at School and in the Wider Society

Some children are exposed to violence in the home. Some are abused by their parents, siblings or other relatives or friends. Some children may witness their parents or siblings in violent situations. Many children witness violence in the community or hear about violence through media such as the television, music, newspapers and movies.

If you are bothered by the violence around you—at home, in school or in the community, you should talk to someone you trust. If you are directly affected by abuse at home or at school, you should talk to an adult such as a teacher, a family member or an adult friend or you may call an organization which provides support such as Help & Shelter.



If you abuse other children, whether they are younger or older than you, you need to think of the consequences of your behaviour. You should think of how you felt if you have ever been abused as well as how the other person may feel.

Remember that you are responsible for your behaviour. You can stop your own abusive behaviour. You should seek help from other people if you cannot change your abusive behaviour on your own.

### Managing Anger

You may become angry for a number of reasons. You may feel justified in being angry in the moment yet when you reflect on the situation, you may question yourself about why you became angry in the first place.

You must realize that anger may be positive as well as negative. What is important is how you react when angry and how you manage that anger. If you lash out at others, want to hurt them and think you do not care what the consequences are, you need to examine

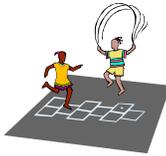


remember that you need a balanced diet, eating foods from the different food groups, if you are to have a healthy body and minimize your health risks.

You should limit the amount of junk food you eat since it is high in fat. You should know that too much fat in your diet increases the risk of obesity and lifestyle diseases such as heart disease and diabetes; the incidence of childhood obesity and the onset of childhood diabetes are increasing globally.

You should learn to cook, working alongside your parent or an older person. You could experiment with different foods and discover different ways of combining ingredients.

You should participate in sports and games to help with flexibility, balance and physical growth and development. You would also gain from the social interaction with others.



At this stage of your life, you need to have about eight hours of sleep per night. Your body has a chance to recuperate from the activities of the day, produce new cells and help you to prepare for the next day in a refreshed frame of mind.

### Discipline in Your Life

You will be disciplined by your parents from time to time as they try to teach you values and moral standards which they expect to guide your life such as differentiating right from wrong and between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour as well as respecting the rights of others. You will have limits set e.g., the time by which you should be home and how much time you spend watching television.

You may find that your parents are inconsistent in how they relate with you. You may feel that you have the upper hand if you do not do what your parents expect. You should realize, however, that you are the person who will be affected negatively by such behaviour.

early adulthood. You will notice differences in the development of your body as well as in the way you think, feel and act. You will observe that some children develop faster than others. Whether you develop sooner or later than other children - physically, emotionally or socially, you should feel good about yourself as this is your journey and nobody else's.

### Puberty and Its Importance to Girls and Boys

Puberty is that period of life when girls and boys go through physical changes which signify their transition from a child to an adolescent. Your body has started to change and will continue to change over a period of time. You need to understand the importance of those changes and learn to cope with them.

Physical changes which occur in both girls and boys are:

- Increase in height;
- Growth of hair in the pubic area and under the arms;
- Development of the reproductive organs;
- Appearance of acne caused by blocked pores, in some cases;
- Secretions which occur during the night (wet dreams); and
- Perspiration with an odour.

Girls and boys also experience physical changes which are unique to each sex; some of the changes are visible to others while some are not. Some of these changes appear in Table 2.

**Table 2: Physical Changes Unique to Girls and to Boys**

Girls	Boys
Breasts get larger.	Muscles begin developing.
Hips get wider.	Voice gets deeper.
Eggs mature in the ovaries.	Hair grows on other parts of the body, e.g., on the face and chest.
Menstruation occurs.	Sperms mature in the testicles.

Because of the changes which occur, both girls and boys may become self-conscious and secretive about their bodies. Some may begin hiding their bodies from their parents and siblings. Some may feel ashamed while others may be proud of their development. You should realize that all girls and boys go through these physical changes and that they are normal.

For girls, menstruation is a major transition. It normally occurs every month when the reproductive organs prepare for fertilization. Once an ovum (egg) is not fertilized, the girl will experience a flow of blood each month. This flow of blood is commonly called 'the period' and is also known as 'dem things', 'the health', 'the red lady', 'the curse' and many other names. At this stage, the girl can conceive and bear a child. However, bearing a child and becoming a parent is more than a physical event. It requires a certain degree of psychological development, a sense of responsibility, adequate financial resources and spiritual strength if the female is to be an effective parent.

 At this stage, boys produce sperm which are essential for the conception of a child. However, they too need to recognize that parenting requires more than the physical capability of producing sperm. Similarly, it requires psychological development, a sense of responsibility, adequate financial resources and spiritual strength.

Because of the changes taking place in your body, you need to practise good hygiene as follows:

- Bath regularly;
- Wear clean clothes;
- Use deodorants;
- Drink lots of water;
- Take good care of your skin; and
- Avoid heavy make-up (girls).



should expose yourself to a different types of music. In fact, your taste in music is likely to change as you get older.

You should spend some time reading material other than your school books. You could join a library, exchange books with your friends and discuss the books you have read with friends and family members.

You may have access to the Internet and be excited about the opportunity to browse widely. You may also join chat rooms, communicating with friends, relatives and strangers. You should be aware that some of the information which you access may be inappropriate for you or may be inaccurate and that some strangers with whom you communicate may not be interested in your welfare.



 You will want to talk with your friends on the telephone. You should remember that you are not the only person in the family who wants to use the telephone and must, therefore, be considerate of others' needs. If you have a cellphone, you should use it in a responsible manner rather than for playful chit-chat with friends. You should also exchange some of the information with your friend on the telephone and save some for when you meet him/her in person.



You could also join clubs such as the Girl Guides, Scouts, school drama club, youth group of your religious organization or community group. You would gain new knowledge, skills and valuable experience as well as meet new people.

### A Healthy, Active Lifestyle

Your growing body needs your care. You may be interested in trying new snacks, buying lunch from the school canteen or elsewhere rather than taking a home-cooked meal to school. You must

You should remember that you are responsible for yourself, not your peers. If you feel uncomfortable with a friend or within a group, you have to make the choice between maintaining the relationship or changing it.



You will have some friends who are more special than others. You should determine the role each friend plays in your life.

You should encourage your friends to meet your parents. In this way, your parents will know the persons with whom you are interacting. This may increase the level of trust they place in your judgment.

You should also try to meet your friends' parents. You would be increasing your chance of understanding your friend better.

### Using Your Leisure Time

You should pay attention to how you use your leisure time. You have many choices and may feel like doing the easiest thing. You should, however, go for variety as different activities help you to develop in different ways.

When watching television, you should view a mixture of programmes, ones that are appropriate for your age and that are both entertaining and educational. You could view programmes with other members of the household and discuss these so that you gain a better understanding of how they think and feel. You should also limit the amount of time spent watching television.



When listening to music, you should pay attention to the lyrics as well as the beat. You should recognize when the lyrics contain negative messages, e.g., those that promote violence against women and girls, and refrain from listening to and singing them. You

You should remember that puberty is a time for growing physically, psychologically, socially and spiritually. You should continue to enjoy childhood for as long as possible even as you make the transition from childhood through adolescence to adulthood.

### Independence

You may have spent much of your time so far participating in activities which your parents suggested or guided you into, wearing clothes which someone else chose and generally did what someone else thought was best for you. You will continue to have similar experiences but will soon find that you want to make your own decisions, choose your own clothes, where you go, when, with whom and what you do. You will increasingly want to assert your independence.



You are developing a greater capacity to think for yourself and want others to recognize this. Your parents may tell you that you are "playing man" or "playing woman", but that may mean that they too are trying to cope with your becoming an adolescent.



Greater independence comes with taking responsibility for your actions. Responsible action means that you have to show good judgment. The more responsible you are, the more likely it is that your parents will afford you more scope for making your own decisions.



Even as you become more independent, you will still need guidance and assistance from adults. You must remember that your parents are ultimately responsible for your well-being and development.

### Freedom

You want more freedom. You feel that you can "look after" yourself. Your parents recognize that you are entering a new world

that you do not fully understand and that your behaviour needs to be monitored.

You should talk with your parents or other trusted adults about the way you think, feel and behave, particularly if you become confused as you experience greater freedom. By doing this, you will help them to understand you better even as they help you to improve your understanding of yourself.

### Relationship with Parents

Your parents are important to your development. They are responsible for providing for your basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter and love. They are also responsible for teaching you morals and values which would help you to function well in society.

You, no doubt, want your parents to take you seriously. You are likely to achieve this if you pay attention to the guidance they provide and if you too act responsibly. For example, you should carry out household tasks without having to be prodded continually and seek to establish open communication with your parents.



Even if your parents' ideas seem old-fashioned to you, you should listen to them and discuss their ideas in a respectful manner.

If your parents do not provide the guidance and support you need and expect, you should identify an adult such as a grandparent, aunt or uncle, member of an organization to which you belong or a teacher who can listen to you and can steer you along a positive path.

### Relationship with Siblings

Your sisters and brothers are important to your development and well-being. You may compete with them for your parents' attention or feel that you are being treated equally by your parents. While

sibling rivalry occurs in several families, you need to try to be friends with your siblings, give support and guidance where you can and also be open to their opinions and ideas. You should behave in such a way that your siblings could be proud to call you "sister" or "brother."



You may have the responsibility for caring for siblings who are younger than you or may have a disability. You may feel that this is unfair to you or feel a sense of importance. Whatever your feelings in such a situation, you should act with care and concern since you will influence the health and well-being of your siblings as well as your own.



You may find that your parents treat their daughters and sons differently. You see, many parents still give more freedom to boys than they give to girls and make a distinction between what girls do around the home and what boys do. You should know that both girls and boys deserve to be treated equally and should learn to perform all the tasks which are needed to manage a home as this fosters independence.

### Relationship with Peers

When you move from primary school to secondary school, some of your classmates may accompany you to the new school and this may help you to feel comfortable. However, you will meet many new children and become friends with some of them. You will continue meeting new people throughout your life and make friends along the way. You can still maintain old friendships as you form new ones.

You will find that the group of friends to which you belong becomes very important to you. You will want to fit into the group rather than being the odd one out. You will be challenged to do new things, some of which may make you uncomfortable, wanting to live up to the expectations of your peers. You should seek to make friends with persons whose interests and opinions are similar to yours.