

## Antiguan school Children benefit from Positive disciplinary practices being implemented at school

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14-year-old Glenroy Martin is among the more than 200 students attending the T. N. Kirnon School in Antigua and Barbuda who are now benefiting from the new positive disciplinary procedures being implemented at the school.



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Glenroy Martin standing outside the Student Express Themselves Wall - one of the new additions to the school since the implementation of its Child-friendly School program

This is because since September 2008 the Principal and staff have been embracing the child-friendly school concept being advocated for and supported by the UNICEF Office for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean where the primary focus has been on positive behavioral management with an aim of reducing corporal punishment in schools.

Glenroy, whom some teachers have described as a troublesome student, admitted to frequently being in trouble- having had to be sent often to the Principal's Office for misbehaving and having received lashes with a belt on occasions for his misbehavior

### **Behavioural contract replaces corporal punishment**

Today however, instead of receiving lashes Glenroy is benefiting from other options. One such option includes establishing a behaviour contract between himself and the teacher.

This is one of the ways teachers at the T. N. Kirnon School now discipline students, since the implementation of the new behavioural colour wheel that can be seen in every classroom as part of the positive approach to discipline



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Glenroy's teacher reviewing the behaviour wheel with the students at the end of the school day

The behavioural contract is done with students who like Glenroy - often go on the red and yellow sections of the colour wheel. The teacher sits with the students and tries to find out what is the problem and why the student continually goes on red. Then the student and the teacher develop the contract together and determine what will be the punishment for future misbehaviours.

Glenroy, who has had to develop such a behavioural contract with one of his teachers, said that he prefers this system to lashes.

“Lashes wear off.” He said. “And you will do the same thing over and over again,” he added.

According to him, the colour wheel is a good idea because it gives the teacher “other things that they can do when children misbehave. Before “they just use to say stop and nothing would happened.”

### **Reward System encourages good behaviour**

The colour wheel is also complimented by a rewards system which is part of this new positive approach to discipline to help boost students’ self esteem.

For the two weeks that he was on his behavioural contract, Glenroy received certificates for his good behaviour and he admitted that is felt “really good,” especially as it made his Mom “very proud.”

But while he perceives the changes as good, Glenroy also realizes that changing one’s individual behavior is a process and will not happen overnight. He admitted that after two weeks of good behaviour he got into trouble for “answering back a teacher”.

He recognizes as well that for his peers the change will have to happen over time as some of them are still “behaving badly.”

According to him, “in addition to the colour wheel and the other positive approaches being used”, it is also necessary to show his peers “what life is like without education.”

They need to see that they can end up “on the streets or in jail,” he said. “This too will help them to change.”