



# SCHOOL FIGHTS AREN'T NEW

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# Investing 101: A young adults guide to budgeting and financing

BY HAILA FORDE

*Are you a young adult who struggles with saving? Do you find it difficult deciding whether to purchase a new pair of Jordans or a new car? Well, this article is for you!*

For many of us, school consisted of all things academic, vocational, or both. Unfortunately, real life skills like saving and budgeting just weren't a part of the curriculum. The lack of such lessons leaves students and young adults clueless about how to efficiently manage their finances, apply for credit, or simply stay out of debt. A list on how to incorporate better financial skills has been compiled and is stated as follows:

## Step 1: Learn self-control.

Some of us were taught self-control at an early age, but for those of us who weren't, it is challenging to develop this skill overnight. Self-control teaches us to save enough to purchase the item we want. However, self-control requires patience and dedication. The constant urge to purchase anything whenever money is acquired will put you in debt before you're even 40.

## Step 2: Take charge.

Control your finances: If you do not learn to manage your finances, then other people will mismanage your money for you, regardless if said persons have



good or bad intentions. Instead of relying on untrustworthy persons for advice, read books that teach you about personal finance. This process educates you and allows you to unlock another level of financial thinking.

## Step 3: Know where your money goes.

Once you keep track of where your money is being spent, it allows you to budget properly. Always remember your expenses should never exceed your income; if they do, then you have some budgeting to do. You'd be surprised to know how much a daily cup of coffee every day at your favourite coffee store totals up to, over the next six months. Maybe if you limit these purchases, you'd be able to purchase your very own coffee machine.

## Step 4: Create a budget and stick to it.

After completing the first three steps, you'll be ready for step four. This final and crucial step is the most important step of all. It involves creating a budget plan and sticking to it. Always ensure that you set an objective for your plan. Whether your objective is to save for college or a trip to Dubai or simply for retirement, ensure that you STICK TO IT!

I have a challenge for you. It's called the 50/30/20 saving method. This entails the following: 50% of your income goes towards your needs which can include, but isn't limited to, bills, groceries, etc.; 30% of your salary goes towards your wants – whatever they may be – a little treat for yourself won't hurt. Lastly, 10% of your income should go towards your savings.

When doing this challenge, remind yourself of the four steps, and don't forget to ask yourself: "What am I saving up for?"

Happy saving!



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# Get real! School fights aren't new!

*Nearly everyone has either witnessed or has been directly involved in a school fight. Should we see a fight involving students in uniform in the vicinity of a school, the road is suddenly abuzz with excitement, students start to shuffle for a good spot to view the action, and someone yells out, "Fight!"*

Fighting is an unfortunate reality in and around many schools. It's an exaggeration to say that rates of school violence are on the rise as fighting is hardly a new development. For centuries, students have gotten into altercations that have resulted in bumps, bruises or worse. Although school fights are common, some still wonder why they occur. Every fight is different, but some common causes do exist.

At Teen Times, we often shake our heads when we hear government officials come up with far-fetched ideas to tackle fights as if fights are a new phenomenon. They are not. Social media is newish; and armed with a smart phone, teens record and post everything. If adults think fights seem new or are on the increase, they do not want to see what happens in school bathrooms. But that's for another time.

We shake our heads when it comes to school fights because of two reasons: First, the issue (like most

youth issues) is grounded at home. That's where it starts and stops. Second, government's lack of action or minimal actions to address the cost-of-living, short-term working contracts and an education system that is failing our students contributes to the social erosion that triggers desperation and bad behaviour of some students. Parents simply do not have the time as they are too busy surviving!

The public school system is a mess with students from all sorts of backgrounds crowded together in a school building too small for a conducive learning environment. It's a powder keg waiting to explode and it deprives students of excellence. The largest secondary school, MPC, continues to produce mediocre results every year and fosters an attitude of "average is good enough". When will someone get the hint that education in our mother tongue is the only way to go?

Additionally, many school fights are caused by the forced mixing of students who come from different backgrounds and hold disparate core values. School violence can be the result of a simple lack of respect for others. There should be a push to integrate value-based lessons into the school curriculum. Schools should teach character education courses in an attempt to provide students who lack good role models with



a basic knowledge of how they should interact with their peers and teachers.

**Other influences include the following:**

**Reputation maintenance:** Students often fight as a means of maintaining their reputations in their schools. Reputation is often seen as a precious commodity. If someone crosses a student who is concerned about his or her reputation, that student may feel forced to retaliate or risk being called weak and having his or her reputation damaged.

**Pop culture influence:** By the time they get to high school, most students can differentiate reality from TV and movies, but in lower grades, this distinction is commonly a bit more

fuzzy. Some young students engage in fights merely because they are replicating what they saw on TV or in a film. These students are simply trying to copy the tough guys or gals they so adore. Educators and parents must have frank discussions with students regarding pop culture influences, in an effort to reduce the number of incidents of violence that result from this type of mimicry.

**Problems at home:** The environment at home affects the state of mind of a child a lot. If he hears or sees his parents fighting regularly at home, he may vent his frustration and anger in school, thus getting in unnecessary fights with fellow students. If the parents are not around at all, due to societal shortcomings that force them to be elsewhere, well then you have a child raising himself or herself. Obviously this is a recipe for disaster.

**Bad company:** If a student surrounds himself with people who are aggressive and rude, then he is likely to become like them as well and pick on others without any kind of provocation, which can lead to a fight.

**Poverty:** Teen Times submitted its report of youth delinquency twice to government. First in 2013 and as recent as 2021. There are many factors that contribute to youth delinquency. The most concerning factor is the socio-economic factor. If this is not addressed and improved, nothing else that we do as a country will matter. Poverty or challenging economic situations are reoccurring factors in juvenile delinquency that is progressively getting worse in St. Maarten.

are pressured to survive in tough circumstances on an island that lacks resources such as job opportunities, social programs, financial support and proper mental health services. The lack of resources impedes these youths from becoming successful in a society that favours those with money. Those without money are more likely led down a path of crime as their parents are forced to choose between quality time with them and making ends meet.

The effects of poverty and delinquency are far-reaching and they therefore, affect the community, victims of the delinquent, the society as a whole, and even the delinquents themselves. It is therefore vital that this issue is addressed with a view of reducing the rates of offense and re-offense by improving society's shortcomings in terms of programs, cost of living and education.

The bottom line is that fights have been around forever and happen more than you know. We know of some because they are recorded on smart phones and posted on social media. Parents have to fulfil their roles in their children's lives and the government needs to stop acting as if there is a magic pill that will eliminate school fights forever and ever amen.

The government needs to focus on providing a decent quality of life, increase minimum wage, change the language of instruction, do something about the high cost of everything and maybe, just maybe, parents will be able to focus more time on their teens instead of struggling to put food on the table.



Youth living in poverty

Feature

# Saakshi Daryani – Touching Hearts

BY ROHAN GOSWAMI

*There will always be those teachers who are memorable. One such teacher has touched the hearts of many of her students at St. Dominic High. Whether it is finding resources for lost and confused students, playing the role of a great teacher with a maternal feeling towards her students, validating her students' experiences and opinions both academically and outside of the classroom, or incorporating culture into her interactive teaching style, Teacher Saakshi Daryani does it all – currently filling the role of CSEC Principles of Business teacher and IB Business Management instructor and examiner at the St. Dominic High IB World School.*

The following interview highlights her teaching journey and life experiences:

**1. When did you begin your journey as a teacher and when did you become an IB educator?**

It all started when I was 14 years old, tutoring two kindergarten children who lived in my neighbourhood. I didn't think of it as anything at the time and it was just to make some money, but within a year, that group of two students grew into two batches of five students each. For context, it is essential to understand that tutoring is a practice that's em-

bedded in Indian culture, because it is a belief shared among many parents that a teacher cannot pay sufficient attention to each individual student without sacrificing quality (considering class sizes on average are 50). And considering the worldwide importance of education in terms of opportunities in the work field, it was not unconventional to tutor kids who could use the extra time being taught.

As I advanced into high school and further into university, I transitioned into tutoring primary school students and then high school students. I continued doing so and eventually I was tutoring college students while simultaneously studying to pursue my Master's degree in commerce, which I earned at the age of 24. At this point, I was not only studying part time, tutoring students part time, but also working full time at my godfather's tax consultancy firm. Although I wasn't employed as a teacher at a school and didn't have a degree in education, I had developed a deep passion and love for teaching. I cared for my students and was always available to make sure I could give them anything that could aid in their learning.

In 2002, I moved to Sint Maarten but felt there was nothing for me here, so I moved back to India in early 2005. In 2006, an opportunity presented itself – an international school, offering only Cambridge programs (IGCSE & A-Level) at the time, had recently opened in

my hometown and was looking to hire. I was hesitant, mostly because I didn't think I would get the job, but I did and that's where my official teaching journey began. I started teaching Business Studies across the board and my love for teaching grew leaps and bounds. Then finally in 2008, that school introduced the renowned International Baccalaureate program and, being a part of the implementation/authorization process, I was eager to learn about what the program was unveiling for us.

Following the introduction of IB, I was sent to Singapore to attend a workshop. Meeting educators at the workshop, whose conversations comprised topics like collaboration, facilitation, critical thinking, pedagogy, self-reflection, continuous improvement and academic balance, was fascinating. I soon realized that IB was unlike any other curriculum out there. Since then, I have been a CAS (one of the core elements of the program) coordinator, a Business Management teacher at DP (Diploma Program) level, as well as an official IB examiner at Cardiff, all of which are achievements I am proud of. When I found out that a school on Sint Maarten was offering the IBDP program, I decided to move back and I have been teaching IBDP Business Management at St. Dominic High School ever since.

**2. How did you motivate yourself to remain so dedicated to stu-**



**dents and your profession during your move across the globe?**

When you love something so deeply that it becomes a part of who you are; motivation often gets excluded from the equation. It's always been an internal drive that's constantly pushed me to keep working hard and to help as many students as I can. But apart from my passion for helping students, the IB program itself has been a big contributor to my dedication. The International Baccalaureate Organization has built a hard-earned reputation for quality, high standards and pedagogical leadership in the field of international education, encouraging students across the world to become engaged world citizens who are active, compassionate, and lifelong learners. The IB professional development encourages educators to be critical, reflective practitioners who value lifelong learning and it offers opportunities to develop deeper understanding of what it means to be an excellent, internationally minded teacher. When you are part of a worldwide professional learning community responsible for delivering a high quality, innovative service that could improve students' academic performance, persistence, college-enrolment, success and overall perception of a school environment, the motivation comes from within. Seeing my students being nurtured and transformed into global citizens keeps the ball rolling for me.

As briefly mentioned earlier, the only driving factor for me to uproot myself and my children from India and relocate back to Sint Maarten at the age of 37 was to continue being able to teach the IB diploma program, but now to a different student demographic. The goal was still to be able to make even the smallest positive impact possible on my students' lives. While working at my previous school, NES International School Mumbai, India, I attended several more IB workshops at Singapore as well as regionally, in order to possess both, strong pedagogical knowledge and an in-depth knowledge of the Business Management subject. In addition to that, I pursued my second Master's degree, this

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time in Business Administration, to gain a deeper understanding of business to be able to improve my delivery of the subject in class.

### 3. Did being the mother of an IB student change your perspective on the program itself?

Well, that's a challenging question to answer. It was mostly good. My children have seen my love for IB since they were little. When my son, Yash, was in form 5, I told him he was free to decide whether he wanted to do IB or not, but deep down inside, I wanted him to do IBDP because I believed he possessed the qualities of an IB student. Not only that, but I knew from my experience with IB that doing the program could have a great, positive impact on his life. So, when he decided to do IB and got accepted based on his merit, I was thrilled. But Yash was to me like any other student in the class. We set boundaries beforehand to avoid any friction in the classroom. And likewise, in the classroom, Yash viewed me as his Business Management teacher and nothing more.

Having Yash as my student helped us get closer as we were able to connect and bond over this shared aspect of our lives. Additionally, I was able to get a better perspective about what it's really like to be an IB student. It is one thing to hear from students about their experiences and another to observe it first hand at home. Yash and I would have conversations about class almost every day and it really helped me gain an honest outside perspective about my classes. Seeing as "reflective" is one of the IB learner profiles, it was really important that I reflected about my teaching style and the methods I employ in class to ensure they are helping the students perform the best they can.

But it wasn't all positive. Yash often felt that I was harder on him than others and there was always a pressure to perform well or say the right thing in class and, honestly, that was the case for me as the teacher too. But if we ever had a conflict, we would talk about it and it got easier along the way. Besides, receiving a compliment from my son for being a good teacher was the most rewarding part of teaching him. And it got all the more rewarding when Yash worked extremely hard and obtained the highest score possible which is a 7. Without a doubt, my love and appreciation for the IB program deepened after observing the growth of my son in all aspects.

### 4. What would you recommend to students in general to keep them motivated?

Losing motivation during the two-year long program is not uncommon and in fact, anticipated. Most students start their IB journey with high hopes and great expectations, believing it would only be marginally more challenging than high school. However, once the workload escalates owing to CAS activities and documenta-



tion, content, IAs, the EE, etc., it can get very overwhelming, resulting in students getting demotivated and, more importantly, them losing sight of why they chose to take on that journey in the first place. And so, as an educator, I constantly remind them of the bigger picture so as to rekindle their work motivation. IB is indeed rigorous, but it's a journey that involves major self-improvement and once students acquire the right mindset, it suddenly becomes more manageable.

Besides that, consistency goes a long way. As such, here are some constant reminders I give to my learners:

- Remind yourself of why you took upon yourself this challenge. What is your ultimate goal? (Change your mindset from wanting to simply complete IB to wanting to achieve a desirable grade).
- Constantly remind yourself of the benefits of IB and how your choices and actions now are going to affect you in the long run.
- Set realistic goals and always have a plan of action to achieve them.
- Don't be afraid to seek help. Work with other students and participate as actively as you can.
- Do work every single day.
- Most importantly, don't overwork yourself and enjoy the journey.

### 5. As a teacher, do you have any advice to give to other teachers?

I strongly believe that every teacher out there working with his or her students every single day is doing a great job by playing a very important role in their lives. But from my personal experience, I've real-

ized it's important to really connect with students. Let students see your passion and reciprocate by understanding and embracing all students' strengths and weaknesses. Understanding students leads to a better appreciation for teaching, which makes the entire process so much more exciting. My heart is always filled with joy when I meet former students that have grown into wonderful humans and are doing amazing things in their lives, especially knowing I contributed in even the smallest bit. But I'm sure this feeling is mutual among all teachers, because that satisfaction really is the reason why we're all teachers.

Furthermore, learn from your colleagues because each individual is unique and will always have something great to bring to the table. When multiple perspectives and methods come together, teaching can become much more enjoyable and productive. Lastly, look after yourself. Ensure a good work-life balance and enjoy the challenging, yet fulfilling journey as an educator.

### 6. Can you talk a little bit about your passion for maintaining a balance between extracurriculars and academics within the classroom?

I am of the belief that education isn't simply about achieving a "higher state of knowledge"; it's about equipping our students with the tools they need to go out into the world and shape it for themselves. So, education should be a comprehensive package allowing students to evolve on not just an academic

level, but also on mental, social, and creative levels. This is where one of the core components of IBDP, CAS, plays a major role. CAS stands for Creativity (creative thinking), Activity (physical exertion and healthy lifestyle), and Service (unpaid, voluntary exchange). CAS is an essential counterbalance to the academic rigor of the IBDP which enables students to enhance their personal and interpersonal development by learning through experience. Having been a CAS coordinator for more than eight years, I try to initiate or help students initiate various projects and extracurricular activities. One such service activity that made a big impact on my students at SDHS was the revamping of the Charlotte Nursery School in Dominica, in association with the Rotary club of Dominica after the island was hit by the storm Erika in 2015.

Other past activities of mine include feeding stray dogs, charity runs, the Business Showcase, bake sales, painting parking lines in front of the school, car washes, Teacher Appreciation Day celebrations, role-play and skits on social issues, moot court simulation, Diwali celebration and TED talks. One of the most striking benefits of taking part in such activities is the development of real-world skills. These activities help students in planning, time-management, problem-solving, leadership, public-speaking, analytical thinking and organization, all of which are essential for their lives after IB.

### 7. Would you like to share any other comments or ideas?

I would like to use this medium to thank the Foundation Catholic School Board, Stichting Katholiek Onderwijs St. Maarten, for bringing the most prestigious program for excellence, the International Baccalaureate, to St. Dominic High School; and by doing so, helping several hundred students of this small island to pursue their dreams and making them life-long learners. Going forward, I would like to request the school board and the Minister of Education to consider implementing the IB programs at primary level (PYP), and high school level (MYP). The IB PYP, MYP and DP programs are united by the IB's philosophy and approaches to learning and teaching that encourage both personal and academic achievement, challenging students to excel in their academics as well as personal development.

*What is an IB education?*  
www.ibo.org – This document explains the ideas that underpin all IB programs, communicating what lies at the heart of an IB education.

*What is IBDP at St. Dominic High School?*  
www.stdominichigh.com

*As you can see, Teacher Saakshi Daryani has been through it all and uses her experiences to her benefit and for her to become a better teacher, mother, and individual. As one of her students, I would like to thank her for always supporting me in my IB journey, which I must add was not an easy one.*





# Black Inventors

## Home Security System

African American nurse, Mary Van Brittan Brown, devised an early security unit for her own home. She and her husband took out a patent for the system in the same year and were awarded the patent three years later, in 1969. Home security systems commonly used today took various elements from her design.

## Automatic Elevator Doors – Invented by Alexander Miles in 1887

When the daughter of African American inventor Alexander Miles almost fatally fell down the shaft, he took it upon himself to develop a solution. In 1887, he took out a patent for a mechanism that automatically opens and closes elevator shaft doors and his designs are largely reflected in elevators used today.

## Refrigerated Trucks – Invented by Frederick McKinley Jones in 1940

Frederick McKinley Jones created a roof-mounted cooling system that was used to refrigerate goods

than the typically used condenser microphones.

## Automatic Clothes Dryer

George T. Sampson was an African-American inventor best known for his early patent of the automatic clothes dryer in 1892. His mother was a slave, washing clothes for her mistress. When she suddenly died, George T. Sampson had to help his father do the job of hanging out the clothes to dry thus the clothes dryer was born.

## Fountain Pen

William B. Purvis was an American inventor, best known for his patented improvements to the fountain pen in 1890. Purvis was born in Pennsylvania to Joseph and Sarah Purvis on August 12, 1838, as one of eight children.

## Folding Cabinet Bed

In 1885, Sarah Goode became the first Black woman to receive a US patent. After receiving her freedom at the end of the Civil War, Goode moved to Chicago and eventually became an entrepreneur. Along with her carpenter husband Archibald,



## Invented by Garrett Morgan in 1923

With only an elementary school education, Black inventor (and son of an enslaved parent), Garrett Morgan came up with several significant inventions, including an improved sewing machine and the gas mask. However, one of Morgan's most influential inventions was the improved traffic light. Morgan's was one of the first three-light systems that were invented in the 1920s, resulting in widespread adoption of the traffic lights we take for granted today.

The light bulb itself was perfected by Thomas Edison, but the innovation used to create longer-lasting light bulbs with a carbon filament came from African American inventor Lewis Latimer.

## Potato Chips

George Crum was working as a chef at a resort in New York. A customer sent his dish of French fries back to the kitchen, claiming that they weren't good. In an irritated fit, Crum cut the potatoes as thinly as possible, fried them until they were burnt crisps, and threw a generous handful of salt on top. Thus, the chip was born.

## Carbon Light Bulb Filament – Invented by Lewis Latimer in 1881



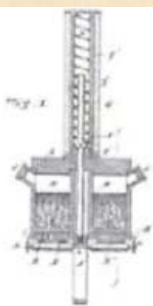
on trucks during extended transportation in the mid-1930s. He received a patent for his invention in 1940 and co-founded the US Thermo Control Company, later known as Thermo King.

she owned a furniture store. Many of her customers, who were mostly working-class, lived in small apartments and didn't have much space for furniture, including beds. As a solution to the problem, Goode invented a cabinet bed, which she described as a "folding bed," similar to what nowadays would be called a Murphy bed.

## The Three-Light Traffic Signal –

## Electret Microphone – Co-invented by James E. West in 1964

Dr. James E. West co-invented a foil electret microphone, which was less expensive to produce





# BLACK LIVES STILL MATTER AND ALWAYS WILL MATTER

BY ROHAN GOSWAMI

*In the last couple years, the world has been through quite some trauma, including the Covid-19 pandemic, Australian fires back in 2020, and a social epidemic of racially based crimes. In May of 2020, the murder of one man, George Floyd, led to worldwide protests and a great promotion overall of an already existing social justice movement, Black Lives Matter. Despite the constraints of the virus, these protests demanding justice for Floyd were not silenced. In addition to that, social media hashtags such as #blacklivesmatter and #justiceforfloyd were trending.*

As a result of the global effort for justice, Derek Chauvin, the primary police officer responsible for Floyd's death, was finally arrested, charged with third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter, and found guilty on all counts. The other police officers involved were also subsequently charged. Even in 2020, the movement was initially challenged by an irrelevant argument known as AllLivesMatter, but this was quickly shut down by activists with knowledge-based logic and factual information. Although the social media hype of the movement has died down, in the event of black history month, it is important to update yourself about the movement.

The movement itself is broken down into three entities: The BLM Global Network Foundation (BLMGNF), BLM Grassroots, and BLM PAC. All three deal with the same message: To bring justice to black individuals, to validate them in society, to provide voices for them, and to promote black joy. In Phase 1 of 2020 (February to August), the BLMGNF served as an information centre for black Americans. There were multiple live stream events done, and videos were released in order to assist with the intention of education.

Activists such as Bubba Wallace and Mysonne Linen did their own videos under the organization, giving their own real experiences of what it is like to be a black individual in America, along with advocating for the families of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Rayshard Brooks,



and many others. In phase one, the intentions of the movement were often confused with promoting black superiority, which is not the case at all. In order to clear up this confusion, the movement said the following: "Black Lives Matter, as a movement, seeks to eradicate the white supremacy that is behind the violence inflicted on Black communities by the State and vigilantes.



This summer, many others joined us. In late May, this petition ad was started in which we called for an end to the systemic racism that made corruption and State violence permissible. This petition had 2.5 million impressions on Twitter."

to not vote due to dis- and misinformation. In order to combat this, BLMGNF intended to provide the information to eradicate the lack of knowledge and encourage a higher voter turnout among blacks and other people of colour. Along with many different voting campaigns, the organisation engaged in many different partnerships in 2020. In partnership with the American musical "Hamilton", they made instructional videos on mail-in ballots which were popularized through social media. Along with Sprite, BLM launched the "Create your Future" campaign to encourage young voters to participate in the 2020 election.

The organisation also intends to promote black individuals in the creative scene namely, art and music. Some creatives that were promoted include Janelle Monáe,

Richie Reseda, Tessa Thompson, Kendrick Sampson, Adrienne Maree Brown, Yara Shahidi, Regina King, and Ellie Goulding. These celebrities and influencers have a reach of millions and our movement is leveraging their platforms to reach millions more! We're grateful for their solidarity. Along with this, the movement had a total of \$90 million in 2020 alone, with average being \$30.64 and more than 10% of donations being recurring. The following is an excerpt from the 2020 Impact report under the financial aspect:

"Black folks have waited over 400 years – to be seen, to be heard, to live in a world where their lives are fundamentally valued. Despite the strength of our movement, this has yet to happen. Our demands continue to go ignored. As the organization supporting this movement, we've decided that we will wait no longer. The transformation and new focus of Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation starts here: with the end of a centuries-long waiting game. Given the traumas of the last year, it's important to call out that our experience is about more than the deaths we protest and the pain we hope to heal. Black life is so much more than that. We are not only triumphant and resilient, we deserve to be celebrated and valued."

This movement may have lost some of its hype and social media popularity, but the message remains valid and will remain a need for us until black equality is achieved, until black lives are actually valued, until black experiences and talents are humanized and more importantly validated. Given that this month is for highlighting black excellence, it is important to remember the message that BLACK LIVES STILL MATTER AND FOREVER WILL MATTER.



Feature





Don't Call Me Jennyfer is a young brand that has grown in popularity on the internet. The store also caters to a variety of styles, from comfortable clothing for most occasions to more hip, styles you can easily mix and match. It is located in College Ave. next to Sebastiano. Photo by [unclear]





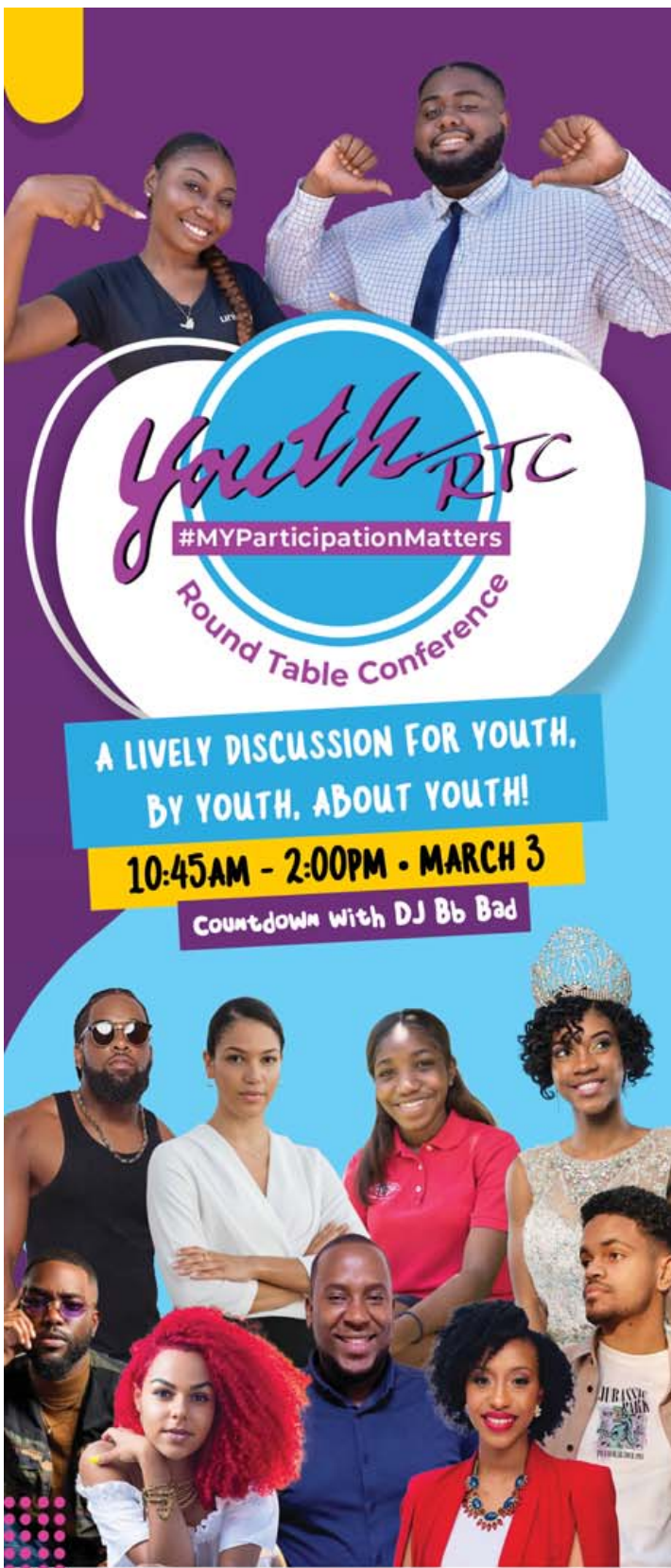


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casual occasions. It's about fun, modern  
I match. Check out Don't Call Me  
e Bay, In front of Carrefour Market,  
otos by Elvis Harrigan.







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# Formula for Success

BY EVELYNE ILCÉUS

Though one may say there is no set formula for success, Mr. Arrendell thinks otherwise. An additional math teacher at St. Maarten Academy, Mr. Alberic Arrendell has come up with a set formula for success, which he has shared with his students throughout his years of teaching. He even had the formula printed on T-shirts and gifted to his add-math students this year.

The formula reads: 
$$S = \frac{d}{wt/ts}$$
 whereby s= success, d= determination, WT= wasting time and TS=talking smack. The idea is that as the numerator of the equation increases, the quotient of division decreases. Moreover, the greater the numerator of the division, the greater the quotient will be. So if someone is very determined or disciplined, their success will decrease with the more wasting time or talking smack they do.

In essence, for someone to be successful, he or she must be very disciplined, determined and must minimize the amount of wasting time/talking smack. Apply this formula in your day-to-day life, to be more successful in your pursuits!





# TIME TO TALK DAY

BY DIVYA RAJPAL

*"Time to Talk Day" is celebrated annually in the month of February and as the name suggests, it is the day on which people come together to share their stories and save lives. This day is known as the "biggest mental health conversation" where those struggling with mental illnesses are able to freely talk about their experiences without being afraid of the stigma attached to this controversial topic. This day creates a safe space for everyone to open up and become an ally for mental health. Many people are afraid to open up and instead choose to fight their battles internally and without a strong support system, which can have a very negative impact on the person.*

But why is this day truly necessary? Well, there are many misconceptions relating to mental health, which deprive those struggling with them from basic needs and opportunities like good universities, stable jobs, and safe housing. Some of these misconceptions include the thinking that people with mental illnesses are very weak, unable to work, and their problems are permanent. This discrimination deters individuals from seeking the help they need and instead they battle through their struggles alone.

In addition to this, it lowers the person's self-confidence as they start to ask themselves: "Am I the problem?" or "Am I broken?" People with mental illnesses are vulnerable, but aren't any lesser than others without any. Unfortunately, though, it isn't seen this way in society and thus it is important to keep spreading awareness and giving those the platform they need to comfortably share their experience.

There are various ways in which you can become an ally and lend a listening ear to your friends and family or even a stranger who may be struggling with mental illnesses. These may include creating a welcoming environment by letting the person know they are being heard, reassuring them by telling them they aren't alone, and taking the initiative to start a conversation about this topic.

Additionally, as the saying goes, "You must love yourself before you can love others". It is also important for you to care for yourself and make sure you are also mentally stable before trying to support others through their journey. This can be through daily journaling, meditations or doing a hobby that brings you joy. It is necessary to give at least 10 minutes a day to just focus on yourself before you take care of others.

Especially with the global pandemic and everything going on in the world, many people are struggling with mental health issues and just one conversation could really make a big difference. So create a safe and encouraging environment to make Time to Talk Day a daily thing instead of just a yearly one. Have more open conversations about mental health and let's get rid of this stigma!

i want to talk about my mental health, but...



No one should feel ashamed to talk about mental health



#timetotalk

time to change

let's end mental health discrimination

time to talk day  
03/02/22

CHANGE YOUR MIND



However you do it, start a conversation about mental health  
Talk, Listen, Change Lives

Feature



# Don't Break The Comb

BY CHANTALIA VAN HEYNEGEN

*"Don't Break the Comb" was officially launched in 2010 by Rochelle Ward. Her business has come a long way from its beginning in 2013 with a Facebook page and the hosting of Natural Hair Mixology Workshop on St. Martin.*

When Rochelle first started out, her passion for helping others to appreciate, manage and love their curls drove her to expand her line of products, and gave her the impetus to turn hard work and inspiration into a booming online store. She currently serves customers on St. Martin and neighboring Caribbean islands, and is thrilled to be a part of the "sun and salt" wing of the natural hair care industry.

This interview with Rochelle will give more insight into her business, Don't Break the Comb.

## 1. What is your business about?

Don't Break the Comb offers a variety of quality hair care products, natural hair dolls and hair care tools for its clientele, women with curly and afro-textured hair, and has built a tradition of hosting informative and engaging events since 2013, which included

workshops and lectures by local and regional guests, a writing competition among local primary and secondary schools, and panel discussions.

## 2. What inspired you to start your business?

Natural hair has always been a passion and there was a general need among consumers, so it was exhilarating to do what I loved and help others in return. There was a need for what I had to offer so I started a business.

## 3. When did you start this business?

It was officially launched in the third quarter of 2015. Don't Break the Comb, a small St. Martin-based retail brand, has transformed from a natural hair care blog to an at-home delivery service, with an e-commerce store and a kiosk in Tina's Accessories in French Quarter.

## 4. How does it feel to be an entrepreneur in St. Maarten?

Being an entrepreneur in St. Maarten is liberating. I have access to the world not just via the Internet but also through our international ports. As a result, my reach is limitless.

## 5. What is your aim for your business?

In its future, the organization envisions the sustainable growth of natural hair and a supporting community. Its mission is to empower Afro-Caribbean women to master their natural hair with ease and celebrate its uniqueness, putting an end to generational hair trauma.

## 6. How do you advertise your business?

I advertise my business via social media: Instagram and Facebook.

## 7. What type of products do you produce?

Don't Break the Comb curates workshops and events providing the products mentioned above.

## 8. Do you feel you satisfy the needs of customers?

I feel that Don't Break the Comb satisfies the needs of its clientele.

## 9. How do you feel your products contribute to St. Maarten?

The products contribute to St. Maarten as its women show up and show out in the way they express their beauty through their crowns and are equipped to nurture their curly or kinky hair to its full potential.





# Abstinence vs Safe Sex

BY AVANELL PINK

*Dietrich von Hildebrand says, "Sex is essentially deep. We become what we do with our bodies, and there is no deeper act than sex" – and I could not agree anymore. It is no question that one will reach to a point in their life where their hormones will be besting them and they become stuck between the choices of safe sex or abstinence. Should I abstain from sex to stay safe until I meet the right person, or should I engage in proper safe sex? Either decision made between these choices can result in both negative and/or positive outcomes. Neither one of these is a wrong or right answer because it's all about preference and safety.*



First off, what even is abstinence? Abstinence is the practice of not engaging in sexual activity. Sexual activity can indicate a variety of things depending on who you ask. We'll use the term "sexual activity" to refer to any type of sexual interaction in this article. Abstinence is 100 percent effective in preventing sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and pregnancy, unlike other safe sex alternatives. The only caveat is that willpower is required.

To properly avoid STIs and pregnancy, an individual must abstain from sexual activity 100% of the time. Abstinence should be viewed as a technique of guaranteeing sexual maturity in young adults, and sex education programs can help students achieve this goal by encouraging them to wait until they have reached emotional maturity before having sex. Abstinence can also help people prioritize their job or education over sexual activity. Individuals should pursue abstinence if they are not ready to have sex, but they should also know how to have safe sex if they are ready.

Safe sex is defined as sexual activity in which people take precautions to protect themselves against sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies. Protecting yourself and your partner from STIs requires the use of a barrier such as a condom. These barriers are designed to keep STIs from spreading through sexual contact. Testing for STIs is also a crucial part of safe sex that is in addition to removing barriers. Individuals who are sexually active should get tested around



three times a year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Individuals who engage in safe sex and have a thorough awareness of the topic can reduce their chances of contracting an STI or becoming pregnant. One overlooked disadvantage of safe sex is that not all contraceptives are 100% effective. A solution to such a problem is limiting the number of sexual partners you have or knowing whom you sleep with. On the safe side, if one chooses to, they can always re-

vert to abstinence.

In conclusion, there is no best answer, but what matters is how one educates oneself on their choice. No matter how a person is taught to abstain from sex, they make their own decisions at the end of the day as so with safe sex. It matters not how educated a person is on how to practice safe sex, because a contraceptive isn't always 100% effective. So the question stands: Which would you choose?

Feature



# Watch that digital footprint!



BY LAVISHA DADLANI

*For some, the internet is just an educational tool; but to many, it acts as a safe space allowing them to express themselves in various ways. And whether it is intentional or not, people tend to overshare online, without being aware of the consequences that follow. Digital footprint as explained by "Family Lives" is the data that is left behind when users have been active online; for example, posting photos on social media, subscribing to a newsletter, commenting reviews or shopping online. This alone should indicate that digital footprints are permanent, meaning that regardless of you deleting posts or comments, everything remains somewhere online even if it is not accessible to the public eye.*

It is vital that internet users understand the consequences of sharing embarrassing or inappropriate information regarding their personal lives online. To put it into context, imagine your future self walking into a multi-national company for a job interview where background checks are crucial for their prospective employees. Their rigorous screening would not only look for your traits but also past blunders committed by you. Hence, any character flaws that would create red flags would limit



your chances of being seen in a professional light.

A negative side to the internet that is frequently overlooked is the harsh messages, derogatory posts, or hurtful content directed at individuals via online platforms that can torment a person mentally. Statistics from an online report written by dosomething.org read that around 37% of kids ages 12-17 have been cyberbullied at least once, with 30% having it happen more than once. Another shocking number states that 60% of youngsters who have witnessed online bullying have not taken any action towards it. Keeping these stats in mind, it should be obvious that being vigilant about this topic is as important as creating awareness about cyber harassment. That being said, parents, guardians or vulnerable net users should be mindful of all their online actions.

Keeping a tab on your kids' online activity, like their social media posts and uploads, can help lessen chances of any kind of danger and filter the data they release online. Monitoring teens for behavioural changes can also aid in detecting whether they are being cyberbullied. The proper netiquette (internet etiquette) should be tutored by parents/teachers as this is a crucial responsibility of all net users. As we put into perspective the adverse effects of cyberbullying, you should note that "young people who experience cyberbullying are at a greater risk than those who don't for both self-harm and suicidal behaviours", according to dosomething.org. Seeing the many youths addicted to the internet now more than ever, we should keep in mind the risks involved in improper usage of the online platform.

Acts such as sending harassing texts, hacking into someone's social profile, pretending to be someone else or even pranking someone's phone are all considered cyberbullying and can be traced back to the bully through digital footprint. Being able to cause a ripple effect on a teen's future life in ways like having missed job opportunities, abusing online personal information or ruining relationships, we should definitely consider taking digital footprints more seriously even when simply browsing online. So choose your words wisely, be smart in the way you surf the internet, turn on privacy settings and, most importantly, remember that digital footprints are permanent!





## GlamBrands

By Noshavyah Whinfield

First, I would like to say a big thank you to Teen Times for selecting me as one of the young, black entrepreneurs on St. Maarten to interview. I am currently the owner of a small business called Glam Brands and Glam Brands Men, whereby I mostly sell accessories such as necklaces, rings, bracelets and earrings for both men and women. You can find me on Instagram @ g.brandssxm and g.brandssxmmen721 and Facebook @ Glam Brands and Glam Brands Men.



It all started back in 2020 when I was unemployed due to the pandemic. I tried my best to find other ways to make money, but the result was that I lost money instead. I then thought about starting a business based on what I was interested in. After pondering and deciding, I finally got an idea as I was simply scrolling through the app "Pinterest" and came across a picture of a young, beautiful woman wearing a unique headband.

This is how I started out by selling headbands with all kinds of styles and sizes and then eventually expanded my business to sell other kinds of items as well. Although my business has been very successful at times, I have also faced my fair share of

battles whereby I had many dry seasons, issues with importing the items and worst of all being demotivated to continue with the business. Fortunately, I didn't give up and neither should you, when you want to do anything in life. In the future, I would like for my business to grow, along with the content, so I invite persons to view what Glam Brands and Glam Brands Men is all about.

## TheMathTutor

By Haila Forde

*"Life is a math equation. In order to gain the most, you have to know how to convert negatives into positives."*  
~Anonymous



My name is Haila Forde and I am the face behind TheMathTutor. I came up with the idea to start my own math tutoring company because of the love I have for the subject. Being a graduate of St. Maarten Academy and its CAPE Division, I observed the challenges faced by my peers to comprehend the subject. Because of this, I was able to assist my classmates and teachers where needed. The look on their faces as they were able to comprehend and understand the topics motivated me to start tutoring. The ability to break down the complex parts of mathematics into something simple has always intrigued me. My favourite part about math is that there's no right or wrong answer.

TheMathTutor was created on January 20, 2021. It can be found on Facebook under the name Themathtutor and on Instagram as themathu. The main goal of TheMathTutor is to provide instruction to individuals to improve their academic performance by teaching

proper study skills and providing assistance with homework, tests and assignments. Students have the option of choosing a teaching style, whether it be online or face-to-face, that benefits and encourages them to do their best. TheMathTutor specializes in different levels of mathematics such as high school mathematics, CAPE, IB and GED. After all, mathematics is a universal language, why not get to know it?



## AyamBlasian

– Entrepreneur

*My name is Maya Ellis, aka Blasian, and I am a young entrepreneur who sells art paintings. I started noticing my art skills at the age of nine, but unfortunately I wasn't consistent, due to my multitasking mind.*

I am a self-taught artist and was inspired by my mother who pushed and helped me to recognize my talents. Art in general helps me mentally as painting keeps me focused. I believe that everyone has their own talents.

Even though some would say they don't like another's art, I think that art isn't supposed to be perfect it's what you portray it to be – your style and your creation. I want to inspire other young or upcoming artists that might be struggling because I understand how it is to have mind blocks and feel unmotivated.

One day, I would love to sit across from Ruby Bute and get her feedback as I admire her art skills. I would love to continue my journey as a painter, but I do have other talents I also want to pursue and of course have a business within those fields.

I am grateful for all the support I get, especially from my number one supporter, my mother. And I just want to thank her for pushing me because I see myself doing great with all these talents in the future.

*Don't let the darkness control who you really are. ~Blasian*



Feature



SUN  
26  
JUNE

TEENTIMES  
FOR THE YOUTH, BY THE YOUTH!

PROUDLY PRESENTS

# Prom Night 2022

*"Pyramids and Pearls"*

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER FOR ALL HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

VENUE: LOTUS NIGHT CLUB, SIMPSON BAY  
ATTIRE: ELEGANTLY FORMAL / PRICE: \$20 PER STUDENT

MUSIC BY DJ OUTKAST AND HOSTED BY RUMER  
VARIOUS TITLES AND PRIZES TO BE WON!

*"One Night, A Lifetime of Memories"*