

## **[INCLUSIVENESS] DIVERSITY IN BARBADOS**

We are all beautifully and wonderfully made. Yet we continue to exclude and treat groups of people differently.

This month is dedicated to people from the disabled community. Blindness, hearing impaired, cerebral palsy and autism, dyslexic, Down Syndrome are some conditions that affect people. Persons of this community just want others to accept their differences and embrace them. Some of these children are part of my school. Have you ever stop to speak with one of them, or say a kind word? Are they really included?

They are talented disabled persons who perform international arena like Stevie Wonder and Ray Charles. Even some of the world's officials and parliamentarians have disabilities. They move in wheelchairs, use canes and guard dogs. Others are confined to their beds. Janeil Odle and Senator Kerry-Ann Ifill, President of the Senate of Barbados are blind and they are still participating in the affairs of my country. The Olympics even has events for persons with disabilities, the last Olympics Oscar Pistorius from Republic of South Africa ran with ordinary athletes in 2012.

Teasing and acts of manipulation should not be allowed to continue, that's why there are the K-Kids association and other

organizations that can stop these taunts. The K- Kids association is one organization who fights against bullying and exclusion of children and there are many more organizations that fight for this situation.

Education is also used as a weapon of exclusion. There are the newer secondary schools and the prestigious ones.

### Political Parties

The K-Kids has at its center the following core values. I am proud to be a member since it has helped me to appreciate that even though I dress differently from my peers I am still included. I have endured and tolerated many nasty comments from both parents and children from my school. Many days I did not want to go to school, up to today I am still being bullied by popular people and this time it is not about what I wear it is about how smart I am. Can you believe that?

Racism is another divisive factor. It prevents people from accepting persons from other races. For example in days gone by white people use to insult black people about their skin. They also called black people negroes. This habit is still around. Even people from the same race are turning on their companions.

History is filled with many notorious acts committed in the name of Religion. It is still used to divide are not include people. There are senseless killings and suicide bombings. I think that all human beings should be treated with respect.

If the world would understand that other people are different, we would be living a war free or peaceful world.