



USAID Transitional Living Programme for Children in State Care (TLP-CSC) handing over of buses to CDA

February –April 2017



Inside this issue:

USAID TLP-CSC handing over buses to CDA	1-3
Child Rights Sustainability Initiative (CRSI) - Working to ensure consistency and improvement in the quality of service delivered to child abuse victims and their families	4-6
Collaboration with Bow Valley College	7
Temporary Location of CCDC	7

Photo: Sen. The Hon. Ruel Reid, Minister, Ministry of Education, Youth and Information; Floyd Green, Minister of State, Ministry of Education, Youth & Information; Mr. Eric Khant, Deputy Chief of Mission- US Embassy Kingston; Mrs. Rosalee Gage-Grey, Chief Executive Officer, Child Development Agency; Deanroy Bernard, Permanent Secretary- Ministry of Education, Youth and Information; Prof. Julie Meeks, Deputy Principal, The University of the West Indies Open Campus; Hon. Mrs. Maura Barry-Boyle, Mission Director, USAID Jamaica

At a handing over ceremony which was held at the Alpha Institute in Kingston on Friday, April 7, 2017, three buses were handed over to the Child Development Agency (CDA), as part of the Transitional Living Programme for Children in State Care (TLP-CSC) project, which is being implemented through a partnership with The University of the West Indies (UWI) Open Campus, the CDA and United States Agency for International Development (USAID). One bus will be used as a Mobile Mental Health Unit, 'Smile Mobile'. The bus, a Toyota Coaster is retrofitted with two counselling areas, Wi-Fi service, air conditioning, a refrigerator, sink and cabinets and will play a significant role in strengthening the capacity of the CDA to respond to the needs of youth who have been traumatised by various acts of violence and abuse.



Photo: Mr. Eric Khant, Deputy Chief of Mission- US Embassy Kingston; Hon. Floyd Green, Minister of State, Ministry of Education, Youth & Information; Mrs. Maura Barry-Boyle, Mission Director, USAID Jamaica; Sen. The Hon. Ruel Reid, Minister, Ministry of Education, Youth and Information; Prof. Julie Meeks, Deputy Principal, The University of the West Indies Open Campus; Mrs. Rosalee Gage-Grey, Chief Executive Officer, Child Development Agency.

The Mental Health Unit, together with the two 15-seater Hiace buses are earmarked to meet the transportation needs of children in the care of the State and will serve the southern and western regions of the island. The TLP-CSC is a six-year project that aims to equip youth in State care with life and vocational skills training, mentoring and providing safe and appropriate transitional living facilities for this group. Youth transitioning out of State care must be prepared for independent living and, in doing so, be empowered to achieve their full potential and make meaningful contributions to the wider society.

The main objective of the project is to support the creation of safe neighbourhood spaces and services for protecting and addressing the social needs and concerns of marginalized populations. The TLP-CSC aims to improve the transition to independent living for Jamaican youth leaving residential care at 18 years, and reduce the risk factors such as unemployment, involvement in crime, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, etc. associated with low education or job skills, inadequate life skills, and poor self-image.



Photos: Mrs. Maura Barry-Boyle, Mission Director, USAID Jamaica and Sen. The Hon. Ruel Reid, Minister, Ministry of Education, Youth and Information



Photo: Deputy Principal of the University of the West Indies (UWI) Open Campus, Professor Julie Meeks; Mission Director for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Jamaica, Maura Barr Boyle; Minister of State in the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information Floyd Green and Chief Executive Officer of the CDA, Rosalee Gage-Grey.

Child Rights Sustainability Initiative (CRSI) Working to ensure consistency and improvement in the quality of service delivered to child abuse victims and their families - Heather Gallimore



Photo: MARCA Team: Representatives from OCR, OCA, JCF CISOCA and PRDB, CCDC, and UNICEF at the consultation held at the National Police College of Jamaica

Child maltreatment is a global problem. Locally, we have many challenges. Professionals working in Jamaica's child protection system admit that they tend to focus on cases of physical and sexual abuse, giving little attention to emotional abuse, neglect and child victims' mental health. Apparently there is a shortage of resources to adequately begin to address these areas, but there is consensus on the urgency of the need to begin to examine cultural norms and traditions that perpetuate acceptance of certain types of abuse.

Accurate, current data is required for prevention and effective early intervention of all forms of child abuse. We know that violence is predictable and preventable, so why don't we identify those who are likely to become victims and perpetrators, and prevent further violence, particularly physical and sexual abuse of children? We believe the prevalence is high and services for victims are inadequate, but we really have no idea of the extent to which this is true and cannot understand the complexities of the problem without good data. Empirical evidence of violence against children and of the impact of the Jamaica's child protection system's response to child abuse is quite limited, though it is desperately needed to develop effective interventions to prevent, reduce and treat victims (and perpetrators) of child abuse. Last September, the Child Rights Sustainability Initiative (CRSI) shifted focus from within the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) to reactivating a partnership of government agencies that are mandated to protect children.

With continued UNICEF and CCDC support, JCF undertook leading a national series of consultations for the development of a Multi-Agency Response to Child Abuse (MARCA), partnering with The Child Development Agency (OCA), The Office of the Children's Registry (OCR), The Office of the Children's Advocate (OCA) and the Victims' Services Division (VSD) of the Ministry of Justice. Five consultations with the front-line experts, engaging 167 key stakeholders who respond to child abuse on a daily basis, were convened nationwide, between November 2016 and March 2017. Participants explored ways of creating a more protective and responsive environment, of developing and establishing an effective early response mechanism to reduce and eliminate the re-traumatizing of child victims of abuse in the child protection system.



SP Enid Ross Stewart, Head CISOCA, presenting to MARCA stakeholders from Trelawny, St. James, Hanover and Westmoreland, at the first consultation, held in Montego Bay.

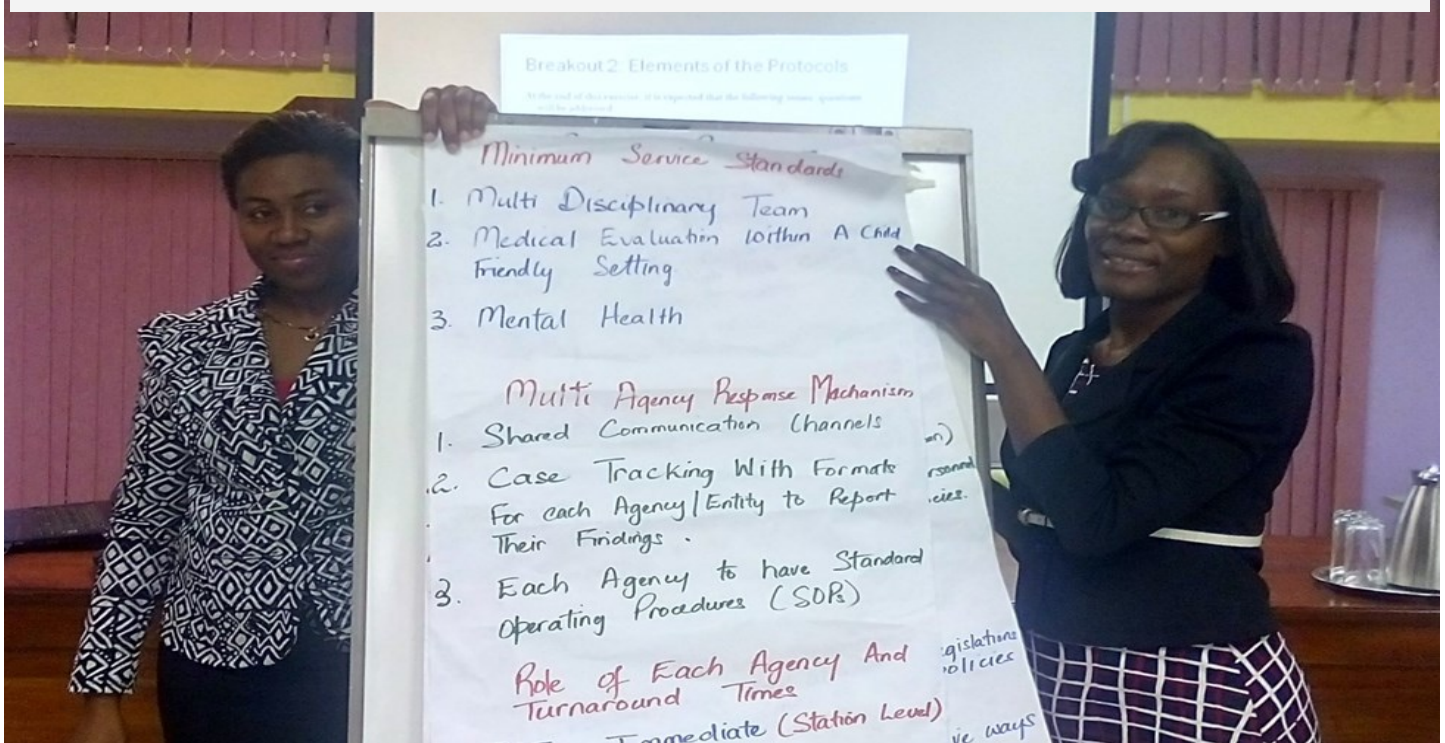
Specifically, the responders deliberated and cooperatively:

- Identified service standards/benchmarks in the response to child victims of abuse;
- Identified gaps and challenges in service delivery;
- Proposed possible solutions to address the shortcomings identified in the current response mechanism;
- Identified shared guiding principles that will underpin the proposed protocols; and
- Determined elements that should be included in the proposed protocols

Numerous obstacles were identified, such as insufficient data, shortage of capable human resources, inadequate facilities, inadequate interagency communication and collaboration, and the absence of political will and public trust.

The next envisioned steps in the process include the drafting of the multi-agency protocol, then testing, finalizing, publishing and disseminating the protocol. MARCA partners are currently seeking support to continue this work, engaging other key Ministries, such as Health, Education and Justice.

CCDC remains committed to supporting the MARCA process through our education, training, research and community outreach.



Photos 1 & 2: Deliberating MARCA Stakeholders from Clarendon, Manchester and St. Elizabeth at the February consultation, held in Mandeville.



Collaboration with Bow Valley College

Cathryn O'Sullivan, Early Childhood Coordinator within the Caribbean Child Development Centre, The University of the West Indies, Open Campus is collaborating with Cheryl Kinzel, Director of Bow Valley College on their new Centre for Early Childhood Development and Applied Research (CEDAR). Cheryl is the recipient of the *Bow Valley College Internationalization Innovation Fund* which provides up to \$8000CAD per award towards initiatives which aim to integrate an innovative international dimension or perspective into teaching, training, research and service functions of the college.

In January 2016, Bow Valley College signed a Memorandum of Understanding with The University of West Indies, Open Campus with the intention to collaborate in themes related to Early Childhood development applied research and professional development, faculty and student mobility opportunities as well as investigation of synergies in other areas of academics.

For the past 18 months, Cheryl and Cathryn have been working via distance to conceptualize their joint research proposal and initiative. Through their collaboration, they will develop a culturally contextualized survey that will be used to assess the level of social-emotional support in the relationship between a child and their caregiver in a child care setting.

The initiative will also set the foundation for faculty and student mobility opportunities within the Early Childhood Education unit. Cheryl and Cathryn intend to publish and present on the process and findings of their research, within both institutional communities as well as with the wider scholarly early childhood education community.



*The Caribbean Child Development Centre
has temporarily moved from
1 Port of Spain Way, Kingston 7 (Mona Bowl)
to the
Gerald Lalor Flats
Flat D2
Telephone numbers
(876) 594-8697
(876) 598-3248*