

National Council on Substance Abuse



**Quarterly Newsletter of The National Council on Substance Abuse** 

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December 2020 - March 2021

# IRUGS



Submitted By Mrs. Makeada Bourne Community Programme Officer

# Prevention First Parents Programme - Its Online

ith the onset of the shut-down in Barbados from 1st January 2021, Programme Officers at the National Council on Substance Abuse (NCSA) were challenged to quickly recalibrate their programmes to align with the times. As such, the Prevention First Parenting Programme was transitioned from an in-person session, with only parents of children who attended our 2020 Project Safeguarding

Our Future Today (SOFT), to a fully online programme with the target audience expanded to include parents with children in Secondary School (11-16years).

Research shows that a dysfunctional home can be a precursor to an adolescent experimenting or using a drug. As the

Drug Prevention Agency in Barbados, the NCSA aims to prevent children and adolescents from using a drug, or encourage them to seek help to stop experimenting or abusing a drug. One of the main avenues towards this goal is to work with the home. The home is one of the key protective factors in the life of a child and adolescent. The goal of this programme is therefore; to increase the knowledge and skills of parents with children at the adolescence developmental stage as a means to prevent drug use in the home. It is also hoped, that through this programme that parents will be able to identify children who maybe experimenting with a drug and know where to access the needed resources to help the family.

This move to the online platform yielded great benefits. We were able to host the sessions at a suitable time in the evening without incurring additional cost to the organization or participants. The participants' list grew from approximately 40 parents to over 300 registrants. To the surprise and delight of NCSA, participants included parents from the Vieux Fort Comprehensive Secondary, Pierrot Combine School and Choiseul Secondary School in St Lucia. NCSA thanks the Principals, staff and parents of these schools that promoted this programme and joined the sessions weekly.

Topics included: Mental Wellness During COVID-19, Helping Your Family through Loss, Stress Management, The Link Between HIV and Drug Use, Substance Use Awareness and , Understanding Adolescent Development.

Feedback such as "Boy oh boy what a fantastic interactive session!" "I missed last week and I was very upset!" "I appreciate what you guys (NCSA) are doing!", creates a picture in one's mind that participants genuinely learnt new information, new skills and were motivated after each session to improve on their parenting style. Moreover, where parents reported that they were able to implement information taught and share information with other family members and friends attest to the positive impact of the programme.

At this time I must recognize and thank the following facilitators who made the programme a success: Ms. Olivia Sobers, Social Worker, Ms. Deiann Sobers, Grief Counsellor Specialist, Mr. Anthony Alleyne, Principal, Lester Vaughn Secondary School, Ms. Laurel Springer, Social Worker & Justice Sector Reform Consultant, Mr. Mosiah Hoyte, Social Worker, Mrs. Faith Marshall-Harris, Attorney at Law, UN child Rights Advocate, Ms. Nicollette Williams, Creative Arts Psychotherapist /Addiction Counsellor & Mental Health Therapist, Ms. Paulavette Atkinson, Programme Officer.

Check our website www.ncsa.gov.bb, for the start of season 2 of our Parenting Sessions:

## Matters Of Substance



Submitted by: Mrs. Laura Foster, Research Assistant & National Coordinating Entity for the MEM, Eighth Round

"During the next phase for this year, CICAD's Technical Consultants and the Government Expert Group (GEG) will examine the submissions, request additional information where necessary and prepare the thematic reports for each country as well as the wider hemispheric brief."



# The Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism Eight Round

The Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM) is a tool designed and used by the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) to assess member states' progress in addressing the global drug problem and related issues. Evaluations are conducted in "rounds", with each round lasting approximately three to four years.

The collected data is used to prepare country reports highlighting achievements, obstacles and recommendations for individual member states as well as a wider hemispheric report which examines the collective efforts of all countries participating in the MEM. Barbados has participated in each round since its inception in 1999.

The eighth round of the MEM was launched in January 2021 and will end in January 2025. The National Council on Substance Abuse (NCSA) remains responsible for the local MEM process during this round, and Mrs. Laura Foster, the Council's Research Assistant, is once again serving as the island's National Coordinating Entity (NCE).

Participating agencies will notice that data collection for this round differs somewhat to that in previous rounds. In past years, data was simultaneously collected during a single period from all stakeholders in the demand reduction and supply control sectors. However, during this round, data will be collected for a different thematic area each year.

The focus for 2021 is "Measures of Prevention, Treatment and Recovery Support". As such, the NCSA collaborated with demand reduction partners and other related agencies to complete the questionnaire for this year.

The compiled responses were discussed during a virtual Stakeholder Verification Meeting held on March 12, 2021.

This platform promoted dialogue and allowed partner agencies to work together to finalize the country's response. The completed questionnaire was submitted, along with supporting documents, to CICAD by the stipulated deadline of March 25, 2021.

During the next phase for this year, CICAD's Technical Consultants and the Government Expert Group (GEG) will examine the submissions, request additional information where necessary and prepare the thematic reports for each country as well as the wider hemispheric brief.



he Drug Smart Ambassador Program will equip and educate young people with skills necessary to walk away from drugs.

This program will be interactive and utilize real life scenarios to emphasize the harmful health, social and economic effects substance abuse can have in a way that is relatable and resonates with them to the point they will want to stay away from marijuana and alcohol abuse.

## The three main objectives of this program are to:

- 1. To decrease or delay the onset of the use of marijuana and alcohol by 80 percent among 13 to 16 years old within the Drug Smart Ambassador Program.
- 2. To increase participants' knowledge about the physical, biological, and social impacts associated with marijuana and alcohol use by 50 percent.
- 3. To enhance the personal, social, resistance and decision-making skills of 20 young people in the Drug Smart Ambassador Program by the end of 3 months.

Primary School Children as young as seven years are engaging in substance abuse, with alcohol, energy drinks an inhalants being identified as the top three being used. PARENTS AREN'T YOU CONCERNED?

# Matters Of Substance

# Secondary School Survey Gets Underway In 2021

eenage use of legal and illegal drugs early and unplanned pregnancy and substances at an early age also inand drug use disorder.

However, all adolescents who use legal and but the significant risks associated with drug tion. A vital component of the mandate of evidence-based drug education services to date, the NCSA relies on information colmentation of initiatives to deter the con-

In 2021, The National Council on its fourth self administered secin the first term of the school's

## A random sample of students



**Research and Information Officer** 

is linked to poor school performance and retention, various mental health problems. The use of these creases the likelihood of having an adult alcohol

illegal drugs do not experience long-term problems use during adolescent's warrants early interventhe NCSA's is to deter substance abuse through children and adolescents. To execute this manlected from surveys to inform the design and implesumption of licit and illicit substances.

Substance Abuse (NCSA) hopes to conduct ondary school drug survey in an online format academic year.

from the 2nd, 4th, 5th, and 6th forms will be

selected to participate. Information collected will include student's demographic profile, use of legal and illegal drugs, perceptions of harm associated with drug use, attitudes towards drugs and access to legal and illicit substances. The 2021 secondary school survey forms part of a broader comprehensive study in select countries across the region, and Barbados' inclusion in this study is not only beneficial but timely for the following reasons:

- It will allow the collection of much needed, current data on the Barbadian secondary school population.
- It is the fourth of its kind to be conducted in Barbados and provides opportunities to identify trends.
- The study will provide invaluable information to guide the development of substance abuse prevention programmes and policies geared towards adolescents in Barbados.
- Provide useful information on drug use among secondary students during the pandemic.



Be brighter, put down the lighter. Be smart – Don't start. Choose life not drugs. D.E.A.D – Drugs end all dreams. Do Math, Not Meth. Don't be insane, drugs ruin the brain. Don't get high, reach for the sky. Don't Huff, Don't Puff. Keep away from that stuff! Get high on grades not drugs. I never smoke weed on days that end in Y. I'm too good for drugs.

It's not a lie, drugs will make your mama cry.

# **NCSA Moving To Deliver Programmes Online**

he National Council on Substance Abuse (NCSA) is moving full speed ahead to deliver all Drug Education programmes through the use of technology.

This will help to diversify the delivery of the organization's mandate through the incorporation and utilisation of technology for drug prevention education and fundraising.

The COVID 19 pandemic has resulted in the closure of schools and restrictions in the number of people permitted to assemble has forced the NCSA to adjust to digital approaches to disseminating its drug prevention messaging in order to ensure maximum effectiveness and efficiencies.

It is against NCSA's pro-87 other repbados and 140 countries Engage – February 4 –

Nearpod is an tation tool any lesson



this backdrop that gramme officers joined resentatives from Bareducators from over at Nearpod, Camp Winter edition, from 7th 2021.

award-winning presenwhich can transform into an interactive foridentified as any which

mat. With classrooms, offices and churches closed, this tool has been identified as one which will allow NCSA staff to have the "in-person" atmosphere in an online environment.

It has been adopted by many schools in Barbados as teachers seek ways to engage their students in the virtual classroom.

Over the four days, participants were introduced to the new technology and the suite of integrated software and online apps. In an effort to reinforce that experience, NCSA's participants also engaged in an in-house session where the team made presentations using the tools, to expand efforts to develop drug education through technology.

This training will also add value as the Council seeks to maximise on this new approach to programme delivery.



Programme Officers who attended the training Front I-r: Mrs. Paulavette Atkinson Programme Officer, Mr. Troy Wickham Deputy Manager, Junior Programme Officer Ms. Jennifer Baptiste.

Back I - r: Mrs. Wendy Greenidge Drug Education Officer for Secondary Schools, Mrs. Laura Lee Foster Research Assistant, Mrs. Natalia Corbin Iffill , Counsellor and Mrs. Makeada Bourne Community Programme Officer.

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## Matters Of Substance



Submitted by **Ms. Deanzer Roberts PR** Consultant

the time speaking before accepting a poster from the NCSA, the poster was part of a "Bee Drug Free" Art and Poetry Competition held last year.

"For us, the people of the Caribbean Region are at the centre of all we do. Youth are the people of tomorrow on whom this Region will depend, and it is therefore in all our interests to nurture them in the best possible way as a means of securing the future of Caribbean people. We are therefore indebted to institutions such as the National Council for Substance Abuse that have committed their energies towards nurturing positive behaviours in our youth. We acknowledge and your mission applaud of "promoting sustained action for positive change in the fight against substance abuse and in the facilitation of drug education, prevention and drug-free lifestyles," he noted.

He explained that the Bank has adopted a whole system approach that addresses the risk factors such as lack of education, and unemployment that predispose youth to the use of illegal drugs.

Those interventions support young people in the targeted communities through literacy and numeracy training programmes, skills development training, adaptive life skills training and education on the dangers of engaging in illegal drug use.

**CDB Happy With Its Partnership With NCSA** 

The association between the two institutions dates back to 2013 when the Bank first contributed to the sponsorship of project SOFT - Safeguarding Our Future Today.

"We are happy to continue the association with this recent initiative of the Arts and Writing competition - "Be Drug-Free".

We appreciate the gesture of sharing one of the posters with us and we will position it in our Aftercare facility as a reinforcement to the children of CDB staff of our expectations of them. CDB is a child-friendly institution and we welcome the opportunity to extend our corporate responsibility to child-friendly activities," he said.

remaining true to its corporate responsibility, noting that the



he Caribbean Devel-

Substance

This from Director, Pro-

Daniel Best, who was at

Department

the nation.

jects

opment Bank (CDB) has signaled its com-

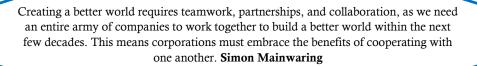
Abuse

Mr.

**Director, Projects Department Mr. Daniel Best receiving the donated poster from NCSA Deputy Manager Troy Wickham** 

> heard about the programme and stayed the distance with us every week," she said.

> She also applauded the work of Mr. Adrian Headley Production/ Sales Manager SignUP Inc and his team for the framing of the posters which she noted was perfectly and professionally done.



NCSA Manager Betty Hunte in her remarks lauded the CDB for NCSA remains concerned with

the activities of the youth especially now that many are left unsupervised.

She commended the bank for putting measures in place to facilitate employees with young children the opportunity to be at home and supervise young children, which she believes is a step in the right direction.

"As you said CDB has been with us since 2013, and you will be surprised that in 2021 fruits have been realized. We have just finished an almost 12-week online course, sessions at night for parents for those persons who have participated in the camp joined by teachers and am sure you will be happy to know that we even have participants from the region who

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ho would have thought ...... that 2021 would usher in a new wave of the COVID 19 pandemic and return us to another lockdown and stringent public health measures?

We had barely regained some sense of "normalcy" but were again impacted by the spread of COVID. The resulting shutdown of the business sector resulted once again in some persons needing additional assistance with basic food items. And so we reached out to help our clients and their families in any way we could.

How did we do it? The NCSA reached out to our landlord, who played a major role in providing the Council with care packages during the 2020 national shutdown. He in turn got his sister on board and words are not enough to express our thanks to Ebrahim and Bibi for the support they have given us in ensuring that we are able to reach out and assist some of our most vulnerable persons again and again.

## Here Is Their Story : ONE LOVE VILLAGE

#### How Did It Start

Bibi indicated that her project started with a desire to help others in March 2020, registered through Covid volunteers at that time; five hundred packages were put together over a 14 week period in 2020.

The journey to assist began again in Feb 2020, when she sent out a plea on her personal Facebook page for persons to pledge \$40 weekly to feed a family.

At that time of the interview just before Easter 2021, over 400 packages were assembled from cash dona-

tions. During the week of Good Friday, Bibi connected for the first time with The Lady Box Project and received 25 lady bags, thanks to **Dr. Crystal Haynes and her team.** 

"As of March 2021, we have registered as One Love Village Foundation and are awaiting official paperwork. We work with several organizations who receive packages consisting essentials such as: pasta, cooking oil, flour, peas, rice, canned meats, potatoes onions, bread, eggs, bathroom tissues and so much more," she said.

In turn, as a gesture of appreciation, the Board of the NCSA donated a small sum of money to the newly formed charity "One Love Village", to help offset the cost of preparing the packages almost weekly. We wish Bibi and Ebrahim a peaceful Ramadan, and look forward to a continu-

ing partnership.

It would be remiss if we did not extend our thanks and appreciation to other persons and organizations who responded to our requests or who volunteered to provide donations:

- Peak Customs Services
- Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Gittens



- The Barbados Defense Force
- The Ministry of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs
- Ms. Alison Gotip
- Mr. Eucklyn Thompson
- Mr. Desmond Sands
- Mrs. Natalia Corbin- Ifill
- Ms. Lisa Layne

I also must recognize members of staff who were always available to help in any capacity.

Several persons have called back to say a big thank you and we have restarted our efforts to ensure that we can help some of the nation's most vulnerable citizens throughout the year!

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# Quarterly Newsletter - NCSA



Dealing With Stress During The Pandemic Submitted Submitted By: Mrs. Natalia Corbin Ifill NCSA Counsellor

- Seek professional help, to have a thorough assessment of your situation. Engage in a form of exercise which can be.
- Meditation is another approach that you can take to relax and you can also find some of these routines on YouTube.
- Reading a good book is another option.
- Listening to music.

# NCSA Clients Benefit From Care Packages Donated By The Lady Box Project



t least five clients of The National Council on Substance Abuse (NCSA), have received female care packages from The Lady Box Project.

The presentation of the packages was done recently, as the NCSA continues its drive to ensure that clients were able to get basic supplies during this time.

The Lady Box Project is a non-profit organization which seeks to ensure that women and girls have access to safe, hygienic sanitary products and are able to manage their periods with dignity. In so doing the mission of the project is in part, to reduce the burden of period poverty, where females, particularly those facing economic deprivation, have challenges affording and accessing essential menstrual hygiene products.

Senator Dr. Crystal Drakes of The Lady Box Project commended the work of the NCSA in its quest to helping its clients and those in need. She says the box which contains women's hygiene products and other essentials, will go a long way in helping women who had no other



NCSA Manager Mrs. Betty Hunte (left), presenting the document to Senator Dr. Crystal Drakes of The Lady Box Project

safety net at this time.

The handing over of the boxes took place at The Barbados Council of The Disabled. Manager of the NCSA Betty Hunte in accepting, said not only was the council happy for the help they have been receiving in aid of the clients, but also pleased with the response from the recipients.

She used the opportunity to present to Senator Drakes a copy of a report on the

focus group of deaf females, which was Prepared and presented to The Barbados Council of The Disabled on an earlier occasion.

"Community service gives me a valuable opportunity to walk into a different community that is less familiar to me but just as colorful and most importantly, in need." Caroline Landry

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# All Smiles !











**Mr. Hadford S. Howell MBE JP, Chairman**, **National Council on Substance Abuse** 

International Women's Day (March 8) is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women.

NCSA Chairman Penned This Message To Women as The Council Observed The Occasion



am delighted for this opportunity to offer congrat-8th, the day des-

ignated as International Women's Day (IWD) 2021.

Since 1911, IWD has been that day annually when we celebrate and recognise, on a worldwide basis. women's achievements historical, social, familial, cultural, economic and political. Raising awareness of women's issues - particularly related to equality, and lobbying for increased gender parity, are also core objectives of IWD. And rightly so. IWD colours are purple (for justice and dignity), green (for hope), and white (for purity).

This year's IWD theme is "Choose to Challenge," while the UN Women's theme is "Women in Leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world."

The ongoing pandemic has seen women serve on the forefront of the COVID-19 fight, for example, as health and wellness workers, caregivers to seniors, educators to our schoolchildren, as heads of women's organizations, across the public service, business sector, and in politics as Heads of Government in a mix of European, African, Asian and Caribbean countries.

Where would we be without women? Right here at home in Barbados, our Governor General and Prime Minister are women of great note. In preparation for this year's IWD message. I reflected on the immense value women have provided (and continue to provide) in our inclusive Barbadian society.

A 1985 Pic O De Crop Finals song entitled "Woman", was performed by renown calypsonian, Peter 'Adonijah' Alleyne. It contained these chorus lines: "To me, she is mother of my children, bearer of life, my queen, my friend, my woman, my wife ... come walk with me, hand in hand, to guide

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the youth into the promise land." Adonijah also urged us to "show appreciation, love, consideration, stop the exploitation... its time to take a stand (because) woman helped to build this nation, she helped it to advance...without her, the human race is gone..."

Adonijah was on point nearly forty years ago. Others who have also recognized the worth of women include our own Rihanna: "There's something so special about a woman who dominates in a man's world. It takes a certain grace, strength, intelligence, fearlessness and the nerve to never take no for an answer". Mother Theresa once said: "I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples". Serena Williams has opined: "Every woman's success should be an inspiration to another. We're stronger when we cheer each other on".

So, how can, or should we celebrate IWD 2021? By writing and performing more positive calypsos celebrating women's successes and contributions to our society? By appointing more senior female business leaders, professionals, entrepreneurs. church and public service leaders? And what about out invaluable home-makers? As a husband, father and God-father, I remain convinced of the great value of women within our society and welcome scenarios to celebrate female contributions and achievements in Barbados, our Caribbean region and around the world.

I look no further than to our agency, the National Council on Substance Abuse (NCSA). The Permanent Secretary from our parent Ministry, is female. As is our Manager. Sixty and fifty percent of NCSA staff and Board Directors are women. The role women play in the NCSA's ongoing work is hugely valued and as such contributes significantly to the output of this important national agency.

Congratulations again to women everywhere on International Women's Day 2021. I wish you all continued success, health and happiness for the rest of 2021 and beyond. Stay safe!

"There is no limit to what we, as women, can accomplish." Michelle Obama

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# Quarterly Newsletter - NCSA





A pregnant woman goes out of her room goes to the fridge, opens a can of tuna, soda, yoghurt and a cookie. What did she open first?

A woman with no driver license goes the wrong way on a one-way street and turns left at a corner with a no left turn sign. A policeman sees her but does nothing... Why?

A girl is sitting in a house at night that has no lights on at all. There is no lamp, no candle, nothing. Yet she is reading. How?

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As a woman walking with God my desire and purpose is always to be nurturing, kind, loving and exhibit the characteristics of Jesus by my living. As a woman I'm resilient, strong and supportive of women young and old in my wider community helping to uplift those who may be disadvantaged due to their circumstances.

As a strong woman I also know when I need help spiritually, mentally or physically to reach out and seek help.

Don't try to do it all on your own. .....But with God all things are possible Mathew 19:26.

#### Mrs. Agnetha Roach-Chase: NCSA's Clerk/Typist

Being a woman means to being a role model, being a mother and a care-taker.

It also defines me being someone who is strong, dependable and independent, confused sometimes but very proud, full of love and a genuine person with integrity.

I am also a woman of God.

#### Mrs. Cheryl Osbourne: NCSA's Office Assistant

A woman is one capable of reproducing, and one who is usually there for everyone. As a woman, one must have a strong sense of self-worth, be one who can balance her emotions, regardless of any situation and yet still remain solid and stable .

A woman must have the ability to think for herself and uphold good values. She must be able to protect and respect herself, no matter what lies ahead.

God should be her only source of strength as she toils from day to day, to make ends meet for herself and her family. I AM THAT WOM-AN!

#### Miss. Cindy Bennett: NCSA's Receptionist

I am a woman that understands my strength and weaknesses. I am bold and courageous, that is what a woman must always remember.

I feel great in being a woman, a mother, a sister an aunt.

I believe that we have come a long way as women but we have more to go. We need to pull together and gather our resources and skills to create a greater world.

I am Lisa Layne NCSA's Secretary A PROUD WOMAN

Women are the largest untapped reservoir of talent in the world. | Hillary Clinton



# **Substance Use Prevention TIPS For Women**

## Maintain balance between your family and work life.

Prioritize your family and work commitments and be sure to allocate adequate time and attention to both.

#### Communicate & Participate.

Regular communication with family and friends helps maintain healthy interaction and relationship-building. Participation in skills-building activities helps express creativity and feelings and avoids boredom, self-isolation and drug use.

## Submitted by: Ms. Paulavette Atkinson Programme Officer

#### Every Life Matters!

Every life matters. Your unborn child depends on you for love, protection and nourishment. Never use alcohol, cigarettes, over-the-counter or street drugs during pregnancy. Pregnancy is a special and life-changing stage in every woman's life. Everything you put

into your body impacts the health and development of your child.

## Feel comfortable to reach out for help.

There is no shame in asking for help or in reaching out for support, if you or someone you know is experiencing a substance use / abuse problem. You are not alone... drug intervention and counseling is one phone call or click away.

535-NCSA ncsa.info@barbados.gov.bb

# **Poems From Women In Prison - They Too Have A Voice!**

"Women in prison are human too,

To be honest sometimes we do not know why we do the things we do. Maybe we were molested; maybe we were neglected or even misdirected. People see us as damaged, defected and in that seen we are automatically rejected." Some women in prison are caught between rock and a hard place. For me as a drug dealer prison is the harsh reality I had to face." **HMPD Inmate** 



:Look what drugs have done to me!" Winning my whole soul so easily, I just can't believe I let these drugs control my mind and take over my life. I just cant get enough of it, and the fabulous things it does to me. That make me feel wonderful, high ad ready to fly. Look what drugs have done to me! Loosing my job! losing my car Loosing my house and walking out on my family. I stole from my community, from family and friends Taking innocent lives and selling my body just to get a monetary high" **HMPD Inmate** 



We Surely Rocked Those Socks

National Council on Substance Abuse "The Armaira Building", Corner of 1st Avenue and Pine Road, Belleville, St. Michael, Barbados Opening Hours: 8:00am - 4:30pm (Mon - Fri) Telephone: (246) 535-6272 Email: ncsa.info@barbados.gov.bb



Are you concerned about your loved one, family member or friend who is struggling with substance use/abuse but you don't know what to do? The NCSA will be free hosting these free sessions to assist you.



To register for these sessions please click the link below. Each session will be from 7:30 pm. to 8:30 p.m.

Register in advance for this meeting:

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0oceGprjojHt0R0LzBcTlINfiEaTTBTFb0