



# Quarterly Newsletter of The National Council on Substance Abuse



## Matters Of Substance

September 2021- December 2021

Volume 8 Issue 4

### New Year's Message



**By: Mrs. Betty Hunte**  
**Manager NCSA**

**T**he new year always brings with it a promise of hope – hope for improved health, finances, relationships. We commit to renewal of some kind, plan our processes and begin to make steps towards the ultimate goal. Sometimes we make it; sometimes we don't. Knowing where you're going is the first step to take control of your life. Which is important, because if you don't control your life, someone or something else will.

For persons who are afflicted by substance use disorders, redirecting a life towards sobriety can be extremely difficult. Living can simply be existing to feed the habit which is in control. If you are using drugs including alcohol, you probably aren't in a place in your life that you would describe as being a very happy one.

Overcoming the damage caused by addiction and living a life free from drugs or alcohol is like climbing a mountain. Climbing a mountain, as well as overcoming addiction, takes planning, preparation, skill development, practice, hard work, courage and commitment. However, no mountain is ever climbed, or addiction overcome without taking the first step.

Substance abuse and addiction can damage family dynamics, erode trust, and weaken communication. Family members who experience a loved one battling with a substance use disorder (SUD) often endure a host of painful emotions. Equally frustrating is the hopelessness loved ones feel in response to substance abuse. Despite seeing a loved one struggle, family members can and ideally do play a major role in the treatment process and can help their loved one achieve and maintain sobriety. The role of family in addiction recovery is large and important.

This year, The NCSA will be focusing on families in our prevention outreach. Our theme “**Strong Families: Stronger Nation**” recognises that the healthy family is the bedrock of national stability. We pray for all families going through this struggle. If you have a family member, a close

friend, or a loved one struggling with addiction, you may feel there is nothing you can do. Maybe you attempted to intervene, but your loved one turned away, dismissed, or ignored your goodwill. Have faith and try not to give up.

We know that God is at work in every heart, whether we can see the results or not. We trust and believe in His plan. “For I know the plans I have for you, declares, the LORD” (Jeremiah 29:11). When you feel there is nothing you can do, you can pray.

The Council will continue to offer its array of services to families in need and with the help of caring persons, over the Christmas season we were able to provide thirty (30) families with food hampers. This number has grown from around nine when we started at the beginning of the pandemic. There are so many more people reaching out but we are severely constrained by finances. If you or someone you know is willing and able to help, please call us at **535-6272**.

In conclusion, I want to use this opportunity to sincerely thank staff who have weathered a tumultuous year but have continued to rally to support our mandate- nothing could have been achieved without you. I pray too that your God will continue to strengthen you as the drug prevention effort becomes more complex and more chal-

lenging. And to those who say this effort is futile, remember you only fail when you stop trying!

If you are not sure what to pray for your loved one, here is a prayer for loved ones affected by addiction.

***Beloved Father, God in Heaven, we praise you. Praise you that we can come to you on bended knee to ask for help. Comfort us in this time of fear and anguish while we must sit on the sidelines and watch our loved one suffer through addiction. Give us the strength to endure as our hearts break, and frustration grows. We feel there is nothing we can do to help. But we can help. We know that whatever we ask in the name of Your Son, you will provide. We know you hear our prayers. We also believe you are mighty to save and that right now You are fighting for our loved one. You delight in our loved ones and us and sing songs of rejoicing over us all (Zephaniah 3:17 NIV).***

Thank you, Father, for the grace you have provided. Thank you for the Spirit that guides us to pray. Thank you for your love, compassion, and kindness lavished on the ones we love and us.

Amen.



## Workplace Survey Launched

**T**he National Council on Substance Abuse launched their Workplace Safety Survey on Wednesday December 15<sup>th</sup> 2021.

Dr. Johnathan Yearwood, Information and Research Officer at the NCSA, explained that the organization was seeking to collect data from January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022.



**Dr. Johnathan Yearwood**

“The National Council on Substance Abuse will be conducting the survey online and data shall be drawn from employees in the various departments under the Ministry of Home Affairs as well as a from a private sector organization that the council has worked with in the past that has over 500 employees. Selected workers would submit their email addresses to the National Council on Substance Abuse and receive the questionnaire via their email. Participants would return the completed questionnaire to the NCSA,” he said.

He said for employees who fall under the Ministry of Home Affairs such as the Barbados Prison Service, The Barbados Police Service et al, the NCSA would begin collecting information from January 10<sup>th</sup> 2022 through January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022. Data collection from the private sector entity is scheduled to begin July 2022 and last through October 2022.

The NCSA is deeply concerned with the number of persons who are seeking treatment for drug addiction as many of them are between 20-40 years old: “If [they] are unable to work because of their problems with substance abuse, the exclusion of young

adults from the workplace due to their drug addiction may represent a significant loss of individual potential, financial loss to the workplace and retarded growth to the economy. More importantly the widespread use of drugs including alcohol can become issues in the workplace because they can increase accidents and injuries, absenteeism and inappropriate behaviour. Employers also have a duty under the health and safety laws to protect the health and safety of employees,

workplaces, and in this vein can educate workers about drugs including alcohol, as well as identify those individuals who have problems with substances so that they can receive appropriate treatment. The workplace also has a potential role in supporting the social reintegration of people who would have had a history of severe drug problems.” The Research and Information Officer believes it is tantamount that workplaces are knowledgeable of the harms of substance abuse and implement preventative measures that can aid their entities in becoming safe spaces for their employees. He explained that the NCSA is seeking to train 30 public sector and private sector entities. The NCSA will ask workers who are selected for this training to train their respective ministries and private sector organizations.

He said that training for public sector workers will commence March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022 to June 15<sup>th</sup> 2022 and the training for private sector workers commences November 22 through February 2023.

**NOTICE**

**THIS IS A  
DRUG-FREE  
WORKPLACE**

## NCSA To Focus On Developing Local Drug-Related Research



**Mr. Troy Wickham**  
**Deputy Manager**

The National Council on Substance Abuse (NCSA) will over the next five years will be paying keen attention to developing local drug related research.

This from Deputy Manager Troy Wickham during the recent launch of the Workplace survey. Mr. Wickham said that while there is a lot of international research, regional research and local research is sporadic on all matters related to substance abuse.

This he explained has left several gaps in the local research as it relates to substance abuse matters and as a result the NCSA will be making a concerted effort to build out the organisation's capacity to conduct more local research.

"Therefore, over the next 5-years, the NCSA will focus on developing local drug-related research, as the Council continues along a programming path defined as

from Research to Policy to Practice. Increased urgency will be placed on timely dissemination of results and reports in order to

provide accurate and timely data on the use and abuse of illegal drugs and efforts to stem the consumption and distribution of illicit drugs," he explained.

The workplace survey he noted is one of the many surveys the NCSA has planned to inform policy as well as assisting the Council to develop evidence-based drug education prevention programmes for Barbados. Some the surveys planned and ongoing include: National Secondary School Survey, Barriers to Treatment: Factors



Hindering Women's Access to Treatment in Barbados, National Household Survey, National Drug Reports, Tertiary Level School Survey, Early Warning System and Barbados Drug Information Network.

## NCSA Concerned - Barriers To Treatment For Women



**Mrs. Laura Lee Foster**  
**Research Assistant**

**R**esearch Assistant at The National Council on Substance Abuse (NCSA) Laura Foster, says the NCSA is concerned with the low number of women seeking treatment for substance abuse, noting that there is evidence to suggest that there may be barriers to them seeking this treatment.

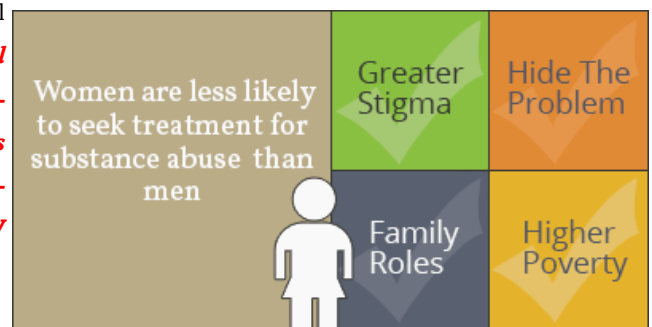
She said the data shows that males typically outnumber females in treatment centres but this she says does not appear to accurately represent the true proportion of females who are in need of treatment at this time. This was supported by informal research with the treatment centres.

“Obviously, we saw this trend year after year in the preparation of our national reports and we started to ask questions. So that is the reason we therefore then opted to undertake the study on barriers to treatment for women,” Foster acknowledged.

She added, “In doing the preparatory work for the study, what I started to realise was that the issues that may limit persons’ uptake of treatment could be at the individual level, it could be something as simple as not recognizing that you have a problem, but of greater concern to us are things that may be more structural in nature.

So it could be related to the programmes or the lack of what are called wrap-around services. So persons in treatment may need help with things like child care or they may need help with transportation to get to the treatment, or with...job training in order to get employment. So those wrap-around services, if they are missing, will make a big difference in whether or not women come into treatment.

She explained that they are also interested in issues related to the social environment of the women. *Research published by the NIH (National Institute of Health published 2020), states that the “patterns, consequences and reasons that women abuse alcohol and other drugs differ from those of men.” It stands to reason therefore that interventions must be tailored to address these challenges. Ref: LEX B.W “Alcohol and other Drug Use Among Women”.*



So we have started our data collection in this regard and we are looking at myriad of barriers to find out what is going on. So what we are hoping is that when we can get down to the bottom of what is happening here in Barbados, we can use this data to inform policy and programme changes, that will then in turn increase the uptake of treatment by women,” Foster concluded.

*Don't keep delaying the act of asking for help. Finding the courage to speak with an addiction professional may be the first most significant step on your journey to recovery.*

*Believe you can and you are halfway there. – Theodore Roosevelt*

## Project SOFT 2021 - An Online Success



**By: Mrs. Makeada Bourne**  
**Substance Abuse Prevention Officer**

- **Co-operators General Insurance Co. Ltd**
- **Rose & Laflamme Barbados Ltd**
- **Royal Barbados Police Service**
- **Constable Rasheed Drakes**
- **Mr. Mosiah Hoyte**
- **Mr. Myles Smith**
- **Ms. Alicia Trotman**
- **Mrs. Sherry-Ann Inniss-Clarke**
- **Ms. Margaret Eastmond**
- **Ms. Rashida Maynards**
- **Mrs. Kerriann Hurley**
- **Ms. Raquel Yarde**
- **Staff of the National Council on Substance Abuse**

Project Safeguarding or Future Today (Project S.O.F.T) 2021 experienced one of its most challenging years in the 19 years of its existence, but despite that it was a success.

This one week traditionally residential camp which first began in In 2001, was this year held online, but that did not stop children from participating in the activities.

The goal which “to increase the protective factors of 11year old students transitioning from primary school to secondary school in order to prevent or delay the onset of drug use or abuse” remained the same, with programme-objectives updated to maintain its relevance.

Not only were the drug education and drug refusal-skills taught, but we spent time on life-skills including deportment.

The more than 100 children registered were exposed to topics such: Effective Communication, Stress Management, Adolescent Development, Anger Management, Bullying, Nutrition & Wellness, and Drug Prevention.

The project was successfully executed by the NCSA Substance Abuse Prevention Officers who were trained in 2020 in several online platforms, including PikToChart and NEAR-

POD, in preparation for NCSA to roll-out ‘Drug Education through technology.

The officers were ably assisted by a core of volunteers who have committed



to be part of this programme.

# Universal Prevention Curriculum School-Based Prevention Interventions



**By: Mrs. Wendy Greenidge**

## **Substance Abuse Prevention Officer**

**T**he Universal Prevention Curriculum for Substance Use (UPC) is an initiative of the International Society of Substance Use Professionals in collaboration with the US Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs and Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Programme.

This series of training programmes aim to address the need for knowledgeable and competent professionals working in the prevention field. The series is designed to meet the current demand for an evidence-based curriculum for substance use prevention that would complement the existing Universal Treatment Curriculum for Substance Use Disorders (UTC) for addiction treatment professionals.

The National Council on Substance Abuse (NCSA) represented Barbados and the Western Hemisphere throughout a ten-module online course on School-based Prevention Interventions. The course presented an overview of the school in society, the science behind school-based prevention interventions, and the application of such evidence-based approaches in school settings around the world.

As children mature, they spend more time at school than they do with their family and the school begins to have more influence on their lives. In addition to provide sound educational foundations, schools also teach children about: Teamwork, Social norms, Behaviour, Problem solving, Communication and Diversity.

Throughout the course, it was also recognized that schools, as one of the primary socializing agents, play a key role in the response to the drug phenomena in three main areas: Classroom Curricula, School Policy and School Climate

With the provision of adequate resources and training, schools can integrate drug prevention into their curriculum and implement evidence-based interventions.

Cognizant that schools are often bombarded with programmes and interventions, NCSA has sought to provide interventions which complement rather than add to the workload of teachers. Even as we move towards the implementation of more evidence-based prevention interventions across the school system, it is anticipated that elements of this approach will continue with enhanced active engagement and collaboration with school staff. In addition, efforts to maximise opportunities to partner with agencies providing extra-curricular activities will be ongoing.

Participation in this course has also highlighted the need for the Council to continue to explore and expand efforts in the development of a Substance Use Prevention School Policy, which clearly outlines rules and consequences regarding substance use in and around the school grounds and should be available to all members of the school community. The policy should also emphasize the drug counselling services which are accessible for students, families and members of staff.

The National School Climate Center defines school climate as the “the quality and character of school life. School climate is based on patterns of students’, parents’ and school personnel’s experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures”.

Schools which also aim to develop a health promoting climate can support and advance the emotional intelligence, cultural competence, team collaboration and school attachment needs of the students and staff.



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## Get Involved In Sports - Not Drugs

The National Council on Substance Abuse (NCSA) has facilitated the SPORTS – Not Drugs! Programme since 2007 with the objective: “to reduce legal and illegal drug use amongst sportspersons in Barbados”.

During 2021, SPORTS – Not Drugs! programming was transferred to virtual platforms, due to challenges caused by the global pandemic, as well as to comply with mandated health protocols and safety regulations locally.

To date, twelve (12) virtual workshops were conducted, the most recent of which involved fifty-two athlete support personnel and sports administrators (12 females and 40 males including 6 Cuban coaches) affiliated with the National Sports Council (NSC). The incorporation of information technology (IT) has resulted in expanded national outreach and the engagement of a larger spectrum of sportspersons from both governmental and community-based sectors. Imagine athletics



**By: Mrs. Paulavette Atkinson**  
**Substance Abuse Prevention Officer**

and cricket coaches at training sessions during regular working hours and not having to leave the comfort of their homes to drive to / from training venues with loads of sporting kits and equipment!

mance Coach Certification Course on their new e-learning platform, which they are scheduled to complete by the end of December 2021. Other technological and software tools introduced in 2021 included Nearpod, which enabled the Primary NCSA Facilitator to set-up interactive games; drug use simulations demonstrating the social impact, mental / physical harms associated with drug use in sport; quizzes and self-paced ‘refresher lessons’ participants could access any time, in real time, with just one click on a link!

Ongoing partnerships between the NCSA and the National Anti-Doping Commission (NADC), National Sports Council (NSC) and the Barbados Olympic Association (BOA), remain an important factor in building and strengthening the capacity of the programme to meet stated objectives. Through the SPORTS – Not Drugs! programme, the NCSA will continue to advocate and educate all local stakeholders about the importance of drug prevention education and how it contributes to sustaining our collective commitment to the principles of “fair play” and the elimination of drug use in sport. Sportspersons who complete all six modules of a virtual workshop are also awarded prizes and certificates.

**Phase II** will usher in new programme monitoring and evaluation components which seek to inform and enhance delivery methods and the quality, relevance and content of drug education. Sensitization sessions with national sport Federations and affiliates will also be enhanced to educate on amendments to anti-doping policy, as well as new approaches introduced to prevent and curtail the use of prohibited substances and methods in competition and out-of-competition; especially cannabis and other “drugs of abuse”.

NCSA encourages athletes and sportspersons from all sporting disciplines in Barbados to contact us via telephone number 535-NCSA or e-mail address [NCSA.info@barbados.gov.bb](mailto:NCSA.info@barbados.gov.bb) to register for participation in any of our **SPORTS – Not Drugs!** virtual workshops scheduled for the new year.



**Hand-Over of NCSA Educational Materials To NSC Director Mr. Neil Murrell**

Participation in our virtual workshops also provided timely opportunities for athletes and support personnel to utilize acquired drug and life-skills education to gain accreditation and upgrade their sports certification. In this regard, thirty-five (35) National Sports Council coaches who successfully completed all six modules of a recently concluded virtual SPORTS – Not Drugs! workshop, were enrolled in a WADA-accredited High Perfor-



## What Have You Been Up To NCSA?

### Giving Back To Those In Need



**Mrs. Deazer Roberts**  
NCSA PR Consultant

The mandate of the Council, although focused on drug demand reduction, is wide ranging. In addition to the impacts of drug use, in the disruption which continues to arise out of the Covid19 pandemic, the Council has recognized that there is a need to devote new resources to support families in need. We are also cognizant that families are struggling to adjust to the rising cost of living.

We recognize that if our vulnerable clients are further compromised by unavailability of basic needs, then our drug reduction interventions are futile.

It was out of this concern that the Council, largely through the efforts of staff at the onset, sought to provide simple hamper to some of our clients and their families.

This initiative has continued, and during December, the Council; distributed packages to thirty (30) families - our largest number to date.

This initiative is made possible through the generosity of Ebrahim and Bibi of One Love Foundation, staff and the Board of The NCSA, supporters, organizations and volunteers.

The packages which contain food, toiletries, fruits and other sanitary supplies are packed and distributed by staff.



Manager at the NCSA Mrs. Betty Hunte says, "It is something that is dear to our hearts here at the NCSA. We get the calls so often and hear the pain in their voices, and so we cannot just sit by and do nothing."

She says although the NCSA do not have the financial resources to sustain this "Giving Back" initiative on its own they are happy that many people reach out and offer their help.

If you want to be a part of this venture, give us a call at 535-6272 and or email us at [info@barbados.gov.bb](mailto:info@barbados.gov.bb)

**"Thank You Barbados, Thanks For Understanding That There Is Joy In Giving To Those In Need"**

**~Betty Hunte NCSA Manager~**





National Council on Substance Abuse

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**Drug Awareness Month January 2022**

**WEBINARS**

**Theme: "Strong Families, Stronger Nation"**

<p><b>"Life on the Gram: How Social Media Influences Children's Behaviour in the 21st Century"</b>  <b>Dr. Mia Jules, Lecturer and Coordinator of the BA Psychology Programme, University of the West Indies</b></p>	<p><b>Jan 4th 2022</b>  <b>6:30 pm</b></p>
<p><b>"What we do Matters: The Link between Parenting Styles and Drug Use"</b>  <b>Ms. Diana Goodridge, Senior Probation Officer, Probation Department</b></p>	<p><b>Jan 11th 2022</b>  <b>6:30 pm</b></p>
<p><b>"Who's the Boss? Parentification of the Child and its Impact on Behaviour"</b>  <b>Representative, Substance Abuse Foundation</b></p>	<p><b>Jan 18th 2022</b>  <b>10:30 am</b></p>
<p><b>"Adverse Childhood Experiences: Connecting Childhood Trauma and Addiction"</b>  <b>Representative, Substance Abuse Foundation</b></p>	<p><b>Jan 25th 2022</b>  <b>10:30 am</b></p>

**Register in advance for these meetings**

**Drug Awareness Month 2022 Jan 1st - 31st**

**Life on the Gram**

Meeting ID: 847 8606 9283

Passcode: 176243

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAqf--oqDloEtFX9HddmFw5DzN2sCQ6CZmk>

**What we do Matter**

Meeting ID: 837 5877 9614

Passcode: 710225

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcqcGvqTIsG9AqJNjzNN4Efji3yROAhw3A>

**Who's the Boss?**

Meeting ID 875 4849 6482

Passcode: 864685

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMoc-Gspz0uEtYqWfwj6jo8Du7c-0nUZsVz>

**Adverse Childhood Experiences**

Meeting ID 829 4945 7484

Passcode: 476957

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYkc-CsqzWuEtDayXPqmigTDIWiulPcVTNR>



### **MATTERS OF SUBSTANCE**

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