

# Education



# WORK



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## Regional and Local ECCE Educators Share Experiences with Chilean Counterparts

A regional meeting of early childhood practitioners and communication professionals with the theme *“Improving Early Childhood Education in the Caribbean through Cooperation with Chile”* was held from January 18 – 22, 2010 at the Belmont Salon, Hilton Trinidad & Conference Centre, Lady Young Road, Port of Spain. The purpose of the meeting was to sensitise, and create a better understanding of the issues that surround early childhood care and education and the role of the media in promoting its benefits. Media practitioners were invited to participate in the parallel Communications Meeting from January 18-20 at the same venue.

The Ministry of Education of Trinidad and Tobago, in coordination with the National Day Care Center Board (JUNJI) of Chile, the Office of Education and Culture of the Organisation of American States (OAS), the Secretariat of the Caribbean Community CARICOM, and UNICEF organised the meeting.

This event was organised within the context of a Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Government of Chile and the OAS, which has provided resources to undertake technical cooperation with governments of Caribbean states. Following this commitment, the project *“Strengthening Early Childhood/Preschool Education in the Caribbean through Technical Cooperation with Chile”* was approved to complement ongoing CARICOM and other hemispheric initiatives through direct exchange of programmes and concepts between CARICOM countries and Chile and to complement the mandate of the OAS Ministers of Education and the Ministers of the Caribbean Community in the field of Early Childhood Education.

As part of the project, in May 2009, national directors of early childhood education from 13 Caribbean countries visited and observed programmes and concepts developed within

educational centers in Chile. They also participated in the “Second Inter-American Symposium: Policies and Strategies for a Child’s Successful Transition towards Socialisation and School!”

The Chilean specialists and all representatives from the CARICOM region (e.g. Guyana, St. Kitts and Nevis, Barbados, St. Lucia, Suriname, etc.) visited the St Augustine South ECCE, Charlieville ASJA ECCE, St Sylvans Anglican ECCE, and St Catherine’s ECCE in Trinidad to observe the programmes and concepts developed within these centers. These visits initiated dialogue with national directors of early childhood care and education from the Caribbean to exchange experiences and lessons learned on policies, management, and non-formal educational practices involving the family and the community. This dialogue is intended to benefit the educational systems of both Chile and the Caribbean countries.

Communications professionals and educators came together from 18-20 January to discuss new developments and initiatives in early childhood care and education. A draft communication strategy for each country was elaborated on the first day and thereafter a communications framework was developed for Trinidad & Tobago and Suriname. This dialogue was intended to create a greater understanding of the importance of articulating the benefits of early childhood care and education to the public and the implications for the Caribbean community’s ability to use media to effectively promote pre-school education. Participants of the Communications Meeting agreed that a follow up session would have to take place between communications professionals involved in ECCE and educators in the participating countries, in order that a comprehensive plan be developed for each country taking into account the unique scenarios and issues.

## Partnering in Education

The Ministry of Education, with the support of the National Parents and Teachers Association (NPTA), will be conducting a series of Town Meetings in its seven education districts throughout Trinidad, over the next three months.

The objective of the meetings is to share with parents, communities and key stakeholders, the Ministry of Education’s policies and programmes. We seek feedback which can add value to our continuing efforts to achieve excellence in education.

District	Location	Date
POS & Environs	Tranquility Government	Tuesday, January 26
St. George	Bon Air Secondary	Tuesday, February 02
North Eastern A	North Eastern Secondary	Tuesday, February 23
North Eastern B	Toco Government Secondary	Tuesday, March 02
Caroni	Preysal Secondary	Tuesday, March 09
Victoria	San Fernando Central Secondary	Tuesday, March 16
St. Patrick A	Fyzabad Secondary	Tuesday, March 23
St. Patrick B	Pt. Fortin East Secondary	Tuesday, April 06
South Eastern	Tableland Secondary	Tuesday, April 13

Meeting Times - 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.





## John John Community Outreach Programme 2010



On Sunday 17th January, 2010 the Ministry of Education supported the Ministry of Social Development's Community Outreach Programme in the John John Community of Laventille. Tent booths were set up in St. Philip's Park, opposite to the community basketball court, as several Ministries participated by having displays of information related to their services offered to the public.

Also remembered that afternoon was young Tecia Henry, whose life was so violently cut short, as community group members wore "Community Order" t-shirts, a John John Laventille Community initiative launched that evening.

Despite assurances, there were a few hiccups with the set up for the 10 a.m. start and it became a 1 p.m. start, booths stayed open until approximately 4 p.m. Music by a house deejay lured passersby to stop in at the booths and the Family Planning Association's (FPA) air-conditioned bus stayed on site for health checks. The Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs (MSYA) also displayed information for youth on sports programmes and career opportunities. Ministry of National Security personnel distributed pamphlets and spoke to interested members of the public about careers in the national forces. The Ministry of Social Development had the latest information about social welfare programmes including card access to monthly assistance.

The Ministry of Education personnel

represented that day at the booth were Mr. Steve Headley, Ms. Le Shawn George and Mr. Wrenel Roberts of the Distance Education Unit; Ms. Nadine Staple of the Communications Division; Mr. Sule Joseph, School Social Worker for Port of Spain and Environs for Student Support Services Division; and Mr. Gerard Ramsaran of the Curriculum Division. Also at the venue was Ms. Marion Taylor, Senior Social Worker for Port of Spain and Environs. The group spoke with members of the public who stopped by to inquire about course offerings at various levels, distance learning opportunities, and the Caribbean Vocational Qualification, their questions about Ministry services were answered on site by the Ministry staff.

Later on in the evening Dr. the Hon. Amery Browne, Minister of Social Development addressed the community, as well as the Hon. Marlene Mac Donald, Minister of Culture, Community Development and Gender Affairs. Community leaders then spoke and the entertainment continued past the formalities into the evening. - NS

## New ECCE Centre Officially Opens in Maloney



The Handing Over Ceremony for the newly-completed Maloney ECCE Centre to the Ministry of Education took place on the morning of January 18, 2010. The Hon. Esther Le Gendre M.P., Minister of Education officially cut the ribbon on this, the first of the package of 50 ECCE centres to be constructed by the HaJI-Byucksan firm of South Korea. During the programme, children from the Maloney Government Primary and the Government ECCE Centre performed cultural items with such luster and confidence that it delighted the audience. Prime Minister Patrick Manning, who was scheduled to give the feature address, was absent, as he left for an emergency meeting of CARICOM heads in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic in relation to the 7.0 magnitude earthquake which severely affected Haiti on January 12, 2010.

## Focus on Schools – District Student Councils Meet

A series of district student council meetings have been scheduled for the period 28 January to 4 March, 2010. The first session was held in the North Eastern district and continues this week in the South Eastern district. The sessions are interactive and each council is expected to make a presentation that focuses on its activities, its successes and challenges. Representatives are also being invited to propose a way forward for student councils and to outline what further support the Ministry can provide. The Student Support Services Division will present on Peer Mediation.

These meetings are in keeping with one of the key priorities of the Ministry, Focus on the School, where student councils have been established in many secondary schools. It is expected that the presence of councils in schools will promote and encourage student governance and responsibility.

### Schedule of meetings

District	Location	Date
North Eastern	Guaico Government Secondary	Thursday, 28 January
South Eastern	Rio Claro West Secondary	Tuesday 02 February
Victoria	Debe Secondary	Thursday 04 February
St Patrick	Vessigny Secondary	Thursday 18 February
St George East	St. Augustine Secondary	Tuesday 23 February
Caroni	Waterloo Secondary	Thursday 25 February
POS & Environs	Mucurapo West Secondary	Thursday 04 March

# Haiti needs you!



## Ministry of Education Haiti Food Drive

**WHAT**  
You can donate bottled water, non-perishable food items in cans or tins and can openers

**WHERE**  
Donations can be dropped off at collection boxes at these four locations:  
Stores, Primary Section, H.R. (both upstairs exams and Primary)

**WHEN**  
February 04 to February 10, 2010  
(Cut off time is 2 p.m. on Wednesday 10, 2010)

\* Food items should have an expiry date of 6 months or more  
\* All tins and cans must have labels