



National Council on Substance Abuse

# Matters Of Substance

Volume #8 Issue #2

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## NCSA Going Digital

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**T**he National Council on Substance Abuse (NCSA) is moving ahead with its digital transformation agenda, and is in the final phase of an implementation of a Document Management System (DMS) with the assistance of the team from Productive Business Solutions Technologies (Barbados) Limited.

Change and Project Manager of the PBS Technologies, Ms. Shontelle Bryan says the project is timely and important since it allows the organisation to reduce the reliance on paper and to make files digital which will allow for easy access and will increase efficiency in the organisation since people can work remotely.

The team has configured the system and has been testing and training staff with a goal of going live at the end of this month.

Ms. Bryan said they are ensuring that security protocols are in place as protection of the data is paramount.

“Each time a document is accessed/ viewed/edited, an audit trail is created so that you know who viewed and edited a document, as well as the time when the document was accessed,” she said.

Manager at the NCSA Betty Hunte says they are excited about this project. “This is a long-standing deliverable and I am excited that our workflow will be greatly enhanced and that the NCSA will be foremost among agencies in Government’s thrust to full digitisation.”

The DMS is a centralised software system that facilitates the storage of documents in multiple formats as well as search and retrieval, collaboration and routing.



Photo (L-R) NCSA Deputy Chairman Troy Wickham, NCSA Manager Mrs. Betty Hunte, Assistant Vice President of ICT Services Mrs. Cheri-Ann Sealy Catwell, and Change and Project Manager of the PBS Technologies, Ms. Shontelle Bryan during the signing of the contract.

“The digital organization is a living thing with the ability to continually change as the world changes and evolves with an intersecting and interacting business ecosystem seamlessly.” — Pearl Zhu, The Change Agent CIO

## Raising The Minimum Drinking Age To 18 A Step In The Right Direction

**T**he National Council on Substance Abuse is in full support of the government's decision to raise the minimum drinking to age 18, since we have seen through our reports that children as young as 12 admit to drinking liquor.

A secondary school survey conducted NCSA in 2013 among children between ages 13 and 17 showed the mean age of the first taste of alcohol was approximately age 12, with less than three-quarters of them using alcohol at the same point in their lifetime.

And three out of 10 of the students who participated in the survey were currently drinking, while 12 per cent of them indicated that they had gotten drunk within a month of the interview.

Deputy Manager Mr. Troy Wickham explained that the Survey actually also reported that at least 14 per cent of those students reported binge drinking which for females [equates to] four or more drinks per unit ... and five or more units on one occasion for boys. This is important for us to pay attention to because early consumption of alcohol can lead to problematic use in adulthood which is a major concern for us at NCSA.



*Mr. Troy Wickham*

*Deputy Manager NCSA*



The House of Assembly recently passed a new Liquor Licences Bill to repeal and replace the 1957 Liquor Licence Act. Under the new legislation, anyone caught selling alcohol to those under 18 or encouraging them to become involved in the business of selling liquor to those under 18, can be charged and fined \$10,000, up to five years in prison, or both.

Mr. Wickham says he also believes that it is too easy for children to get their hands on alcohol within the home. "What is sad is that some parents are not seeing the dangers of allowing their children to drink such beverages, which most times leads to addiction from an early age," he lamented.

I encourage all adults to be aware and be careful that we do not create that appetite among children for alcohol.

# FACTS



⇒ Kids who drink are more likely to be victims of violent crime, to be involved in alcohol-related traffic crashes, and to have serious school-related problems.

⇒ You have more influence on your child's values and decisions about drinking before he or she begins to use alcohol.

⇒ Parents can have a major impact on their children's drinking, especially during the preteen and early teen years.

Source: <https://www.niaaa.nih.gov>

## Commit To Quit Smoking Tobacco



*By Mrs. Makeada Bourne  
Community Programme Officer*

**T**he tobacco epidemic kills nearly 6 million people each year. More than 5 million are users and ex users and more than 600 000 are nonsmokers exposed to second-hand smoke according to the World Health Organization (WHO). After high blood pressure, tobacco use is the biggest contributor to the epidemic of noncommunicable diseases — such as heart attack, stroke, cancer and emphysema — which accounts for 63% of deaths.

Smokers are more susceptible to certain communicable diseases, such as tuberculosis and pneumonia. Needless to say, this is not shocking since cigarette is known to contain some of the most dangerous chemicals. These include; Carbon Monoxide, Arsenic (Poison), Methane, Butane (Lighter Fluid), Cadmium (found in Batteries), ammonia (toilet cleaner) and nicotine.

In Barbados, the percentage of traditional cigarette smokers is very

low. However, we have noted an increase of persons who are showing an interest in vaping and using Fanta. Some of the vaping-juice contains nicotine and Fanta is wild tobacco. Sadly, our youth are increasingly being exposed to such harmful chemicals in the homes, and the community.

Exposure to cigarette smoke and to second hand smoke can result in an increase in the healthcare burden in Barbados. Such an increase in the bill, with the majority of the workforce unable to work, can lead to either higher taxes or Barbadians paying for healthcare. Thus, the choices you make in your home affect every Barbadian. This is why the NCSA fully endorses the passing of the law that prohibits the

health for individuals and their families. We have partnered with various individuals, non-government organisations and government organization to increase awareness of the impact of tobacco use on the individual, family and the society.

The NCSA was forefront in having the first mobile classroom in the region known as the Life Education Centre. This mobile classroom incorporated educational sessions on the dangers associated with tobacco use for Children in classes 1 to 4. Additionally, our secondary school programme, parents programme, workplace programme among others are used as vehicles to get the message across to our audiences.

Over the years we have sat on local, regional and international committees to develop Programmes, Policies, and Anti-Drug Plans to help govern nations. So it is no surprise that NCSA is an active committee member of the 2020-2021 CARICOM Regional Committee for Regulations for Tobacco Products Advertising, Promotion, Sale and Sponsorship Standard (RTC). The RTC is responsible for the development of Standards and Technical Regulations for tobacco advertising, promotion, sale and sponsorship. The focus of the Committee is similar to that of the NCSA, which is to protect human lives and promote healthy lifestyles.

We recognized World No Tobacco Day on 31st May, and we added our voice to that of the World to encourage users of tobacco products to 'Quit to be a Winner' and those who do not use tobacco products to continue to make healthy choices.

**World No Tobacco Day** **31 MAY**  
"Commit To Quit"

Tobacco smoking increases the risk of developing psoriasis, a noncontagious inflammatory skin condition that leaves itchy, oozing red patches all over the body.

Being exposed to second-hand smoke may increase the risk of progression from tuberculosis infection to active disease.

Quitting means there are no restrictions on where you can go, you can mingle socially, without feeling isolated or having to go outside to smoke.

**NCSA**

A Message From The National Council on Substance Abuse  
[www.ncsa.gov.bb](http://www.ncsa.gov.bb)

sale of tobacco to minors as well as smoking in public places.

For 22 years the National Council on Substance Abuse has been educating the general public on the dangers associated with tobacco use and has been lobbying for good

## Monitoring and Evaluation Training for Drug Treatment Courts



*By Mrs. Laura Foster*

*Research Assistant*

**T**he Organization of American States (OAS), through its Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), recently hosted a virtual training course entitled Good Practices for the June 1, 2021 and targeted participants Monitoring and Evaluation of Drug Treatment Courts (DTC). It took place from May 4 to from the English-speaking Caribbean.

The Council's Research Assistant, Mrs. Laura Foster, was part of the Barbados contingent which also included representatives from: the Judiciary, the Probation Department, the Forensic Sciences Centre, the Criminal Justice Research and Planning Unit, the Substance Abuse Foundation and the University of the West Indies. Contingents from Antigua, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago also took part in the course.

Training sessions were conducted by the Lead Facilitator, Dr. Douglas Marlowe, and other experts in the Drug Treatment Court (DTC) field. Dr. Marlowe is the Senior Scientific Consultant for the National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP) and the Senior Science and Policy Advisor for Alcohol Monitoring Systems in the United States. He is also the author of CICAD's Manual for Scientific Monitoring and Evaluation: Drug Treatment Courts in the Americas.

Logic Models for DTCs, Sourcing Information, Operationalizing Variables, Calculating Performance Indicator Variables, Management Information Systems and Cost Analyses were among the wide range of topics covered during the course. There was also a special focus on monitoring and evaluation from a gender and human rights perspective.

In addition to attending the twice weekly virtual sessions, each contingent prepared a work plan to establish or strengthen the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanisms for DTCs within their country. These plans were presented during the final session on June 1, 2021. Mrs. Foster and Professor Dwayne Devonish, representative from the University of the West Indies, delivered the Barbados presentation.

Having completed the training, the Barbadian contingent is now well-positioned to lead the establishment and operation of a local DTC M&E system. Such a system will be critical to ensuring the Court's efficiency and effectiveness. It will also allow for an assessment of its impact at the individual and societal levels.



### TESTIMONIALS

"DTC participants improved in their physical and psychological health. They displayed lower substance use and increased social stability." (Evaluator)

"I either stopped or died. I took the chance. Going to court (regularly) got me into a structured life." (Drug Court Candidate)

"It is great personal satisfaction to see someone who was a complete addict, written off by everybody, to go through the programme, do well and become a productive member of society." (Prosecutor)

"I hope that it (Drug Treatment Court) stays in the system so it can help others like myself. To help them bring their lives back on track." (Drug Court Graduate)

Source: The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

<https://www.unodc.org>

## Support For Families And Their Loves Ones Available



**By Mrs. Natalia Corbin Ifill  
Counsellor**

**T**he National Council on Substance Abuse (NCSA) launched its first series of “Helping Our Families” on April 14, 2021.

The six-session programme was conceptualized as a response to frequent calls for help from family members and friends

who were concerned about their loved ones' substance use/addiction.

When people think about substance use or addiction, the focus tends to be directed towards the individual using the substance. However, we saw through the experiences of these telephone calls, the impact addiction or drug use has on individuals close to those using the substance.

The programme sought to provide family members using/abusing substances with support, information, and skills to help and encourage their loved ones to get treatment. It also sought to provide the family members and friends with support to address stress and other emotional and behavioural experiences that may accompany this situation.

Each session focused on different topics:

**Session 1 Topic: Is there a problem or am I really overreacting? Was held on April 14, 2021.**

**The presenter was Dr. Ronald Chase**

**Sessions 2 Topic: How Drug Use and Drug Addiction Affect the Family? Was held on April 21, 2021 Presenter was Mr. Al Layne.**

**Session 3 Topic: How Do I Approach My Loved One to**

**Encourage Them to Get Help and What Do I Do If He/She Refuses to Get Help? – April 29, 2021-Presenter- Ms. Sharon Moaze**

**Session 4 Topic: Taking Care of Yourself (Managing the emotions- disappointment, anger, sadness, the shame, etc.) Was held on May 5, 2021. The presenter was Ms. Sarah Stennett**

**Session 5 Topic: What Do I Do in An Emergency? Was held on May 12, 2021 Presenter was Mr. Ronald Chase**

**Session 6 Topic: Family Support During Treatment Was held May 19, 2021- Presenter- Mr. Jomo Phillips**

From the feedback from participants, the sessions were informative and very useful. The NCSA is planning on hosting another series of Helping Our Families.

**National Council on Substance Abuse Presents**  
**Helping Our Families**  
**SPEAKERS**

Mr. Jomo Phillips   Ms. Sara Stennett   Dr. Ronald Chase   Mr. Al Layne   Ms. Sharon Moaze

**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.**

**TOPICS**

1. Is There a Problem or Am I Really Overreacting?
2. How Drug Use and Drug Addiction Affect the Family?
3. How Do I Approach My Loved One to Encourage Him/Her to Get Help and What Do I Do If He/She Refuses to Get Help?
4. Taking Care of Yourself (Managing the emotions- disappointment, anger, sadness, the shame, self-blame etc.)
5. What Do I Do In An Emergency?
6. Family Support During Treatment

**Wed April 14th 2021 to May 19th 2021**

Register in advance for this meeting:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/joinMeeting/register/tZooceGprjoiHtOROLzBcTIINfiEaTTBTfBo>

**Take time to deliberate; but when the time for action arrives, stop thinking and go in. – Napoleon Bonaparte**  
**It is important that you carefully plan your recovery program with family, friends, and therapists. However, unless you show up for your appointments and counseling sessions, no good can be accomplished.**



# Of Substance



**T**urn on your radio every Friday morning at 9:45 am for a fifteen minute show that focuses on issues relating to Substance Abuse in all spheres.

The live virtual show on VOB 92.9 began last month and has already garnered a large audience, who look forward not just to hearing it on Fridays, but to listen the repeat programme every Monday at 9:00 am.

We have already touched on Intervention for Mothers Dealing with children who are substance abusers; Offering Family Support, How Mentally Are You, Clearing the Smoke (Issues surrounding smoking and Vaping), Alcohol Addiction and Alcohol and Its Implication for Stroke.

The National Council on Substance Abuse has embarked on this initiative to give Barbadians a chance to hear from experts in the field on a number of issues that we are faced with.

*By Ms. Deanzer Roberts*  
**Public Relations Consultant**

It also highlights our commitment to our building on one of our mission tenets, “Empowering community-based organisations and private citizens through our creative, innovative and knowledge-based programmes”

This is being done as we have formed a partnership with a number of organizations who are also guests on the show.

To date Verdun House, The Heart and Stroke Foundation and The West Indies Rum and Spirits Producers’ Association Inc. (WIRSPA) have participated.

Do You Want Be A Guest On This Show? Just call us at 535 -6272 or email [ncsa.pr@barbados.gov.bb](mailto:ncsa.pr@barbados.gov.bb)



**NATIONAL COUNCIL ON SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

**RADIO Show**

*"Fifteen Minutes of Substance"*

EVERY MONDAY AND FRIDAY.  
BEGINNING FRIDAY MAY 14TH AT  
9:45 AM

Learn more about drugs and the family, substance abuse, where you can get help, Intervention for mothers and fathers suffering from substance abuse and new emerging trends.

92.9 FM  
VOICE OF BARBADOS

## We Need Fathers - They Complete The Family



*By Mrs. Wendy Greenidge*

*Drug Education Officer For  
Primary Schools*

**F**ather's Day may be one of the most under-celebrated events of the year. Whenever Father's Day is mentioned, most often it is met with a blank stare followed by "Huh? When is that again?"

Despite being in existence for over 100 years, Father's Day has failed to attract the passion, finesse or flair associated with Mother's Day.

The odd commercial may ask if your dad is a master of the grill or an exceptional handyman, but outside of that, there is little to acknowledge or promote an appreciation of a father.

Being a parent is nothing to be taken lightly, it is a lifelong investment, and commitment to a relationship. More than a "responsibility", fatherhood is also an expectation that one will respond to the best of one's ability.

History shows us that for centuries, all around the globe, women have successfully raised their children without a father in the home. The notion of a "picture perfect" family of mummy, daddy 2.5 children and dog, simply has not been a reality for many generations and as society changes, perhaps it never will be. But what of our daughters and sons? Are they being disadvantaged? There is no easy answer as a father's influence can be a positive or negative experience.

Whether you call him Old Man, Daddy, Dad or Pop's or even if you don't call him at all – none of us, despite the scientific advances, would even exist, without the 'contribution' of a father.

Each father is teaching his child something, regardless of whether his presence or lack of presence is by nature, by choice or by design, each child learns something from their father. The question is what will they learn? Will it be love, respect, courage and dedication or will it be anger, oppression, abuse, control and inequality? As parents we must all remember that our children are living and learning from their environment and that every encounter is an experience that will teach a lesson, even if it is what not to do.

Thankfully there have always been men who recognise the essence of fatherhood, and willingly step in and step up to fill a void or shortfall left by another, even if they have no biological children of their own. Some of these men put aside

the trauma of their own childhood to create building blocks of peace, purpose and success. Brushing away the bitter tears of their personal history, they rise from their experiences, stand on their past and do what they can to stop the reflections of hurt they see in child. Their stories may go untold, untold but not forgotten as they drive them forward as they keep an eye on the future. They are the defenders and protectors of our children, the quietly coach and mentor our children throughout their school days and even as they enter the world of work. They speak up for the abused and mistreated, offer calming words of encouragement and healing, diffuse tensions by their mere presence. They seek no fuss or reward. "Who are these father figures?" you may ask, take a quiet look around and you will see them.

There are of course, men who excel at the art of fatherhood. They are the ones who are involved in their children's lives from day one, whether that is at birth or when two families become one. They change diapers, press school uniforms and sleep on the floor so that they can watch over their children when they are ill. They try put on a brave face as they watch their child get their injections, barely veiling their own fear of needles. They cheer too loudly at speech day, proudly line up for the father's race on sports day and they embarrass their children with a never-ending supply of corny jokes and stories. They cook, plait hair, play games and give serious talks. They love and are proud of their children with equal measure.

We all need a father to turn to for love, support and wisdom.

## Let's Work Together! - By: NCSA Manager Mrs. Betty Hunte



**O**ver the past year, as the world has grappled with the massive change in how we live, I wish to reflect on the work of the National Council on Substance Abuse (NCSA) and what it has meant to us, not only in how we ourselves have had to re-engineer our processes but how we interact with those who are coping not only with substance abuse and the myriad issues which can result, but those who are struggling to “do the right thing” but still find themselves caught in this very overwhelming change.

What is clear to us at the Council is that we have to find ways to keep people engaged in our messaging- if persons are hungry, homeless, overwhelmed with life they are less likely to prioritize what to them may seem as “empty messaging”. I have been blessed to lead an outreach since June 2020 through which we deliver food assistance to a small number of persons. These persons are in the main, clients of our outreach, but a few are those we met or who may have been referred to us by concerned relatives

on the hope that perhaps, we could be of some assistance.

As we travel around, we see so many persons that are in need: as we speak with them, there are so many that have simply fallen through the cracks because they have become so tired of the futility of constantly being bounced around from agency to agency in their quest for assistance. It is heartbreaking. And so I welcome the recent remarks made by the Prime Minister to begin serious exploration of how our social agencies interact with each other, but more importantly how the needs of clients can be met more expeditiously.

To my mind, there are very few areas where we as social services providers can point to a lack of resources; rather we need-

to be brave enough to allow for the conduct of an audit of available services;

to increase our capacity to centralize our research in order to create a functional database/ profile of persons in need; When budgets are tight, monitoring and performance management are often casualties. It is necessary to be able to have a good understanding of service effectiveness and maintain and/or build the capacity to monitor providers' performance

to be confident enough to pool resources/ talents/ skills always with the client in mind.

The economic outlook is sobering. The pandemic has increased demands on already overloaded local social care services, which have been struggling to meet the growing needs of vulnerable populations. We acknowledge that our administration is having to take tough decisions about which services to fund with their limited resources.

We must therefore position ourselves to respond in a more strategic way by taking an evidence-led approach to commissioning and improving the provision of social services in the future. This may involve significant restructuring and fundamental rethinking of how our organizations can work together, as it is clear that government social service agencies, as presently constituted will not be able to sustain services in the face of more funding reductions.

With regard to those made even more vulnerable by the impacts of drug abuse, we must embrace the now accepted view that the response to drug abuse must incorporate more integrally, a health approach so that those impacted- both directly and indirectly- can have equal non- judgemental access to services.

The words of Mother Teresa, spoken so long ago, still bear relevance: “At the end of life we will not be judged by how many diplomas we have received, how much money we have made, how many great things we have done. We will be judged by ‘I was hungry and you gave me to eat, I was naked and you clothed me, I was homeless and you took me in.’ Hungry not only for bread — but hungry for love. Naked not only for clothing — but naked for human dignity and respect. Homeless not only for want of a room of bricks — but homeless because of rejection.”

Let us go forward therefore, focused on how best we can together provide interventions for the hungry, naked and homeless. If everyone is moving forward together, strategically, success takes care of itself.

Stay safe!

## Substance Abuse Awareness Badge Requirements Presented

### By: PR Consultant Ms. Deanzer Roberts



(From l-r) Mr. Troy Wickham Deputy Manager NCSA, Chief Commissioner of The Barbados Boy Scouts Association Mr. Trevor Jones, Mrs. Betty Hunte Manager National Council on Substance Abuse and Mrs. Wendy Greenidge Drug Education Officer for Primary Schools

Chief Commissioner of The Barbados Boy Scouts Association (BBSA) Mr. Trevor Jones, believes it is important to integrate some aspect of Substance Abuse Awareness in the Association's youth programmes.

He says this is one area they will be focusing on when they update and revise their programmes later this year.

Mr. Jones was speaking this morning as he was presented with a copy of the revised requirements for substance abuse awareness badges for the Cubs. These requirements were produced as a result of a collaboration between the NCSA and the BBSA. That presentation took place at The NCSA Headquarters on Monday June 28th 2021.

"It is with pleasure that I accept these requirements for the Substance Abuse Awareness

Badges for the various sections of the Barbados Boy Scouts Association. I would like to thank the Council for reviewing and updating the requirements for the badges bringing them in line with their updated programme," he said.

The Chief said later this year they will be conducting a review of their youth programme, "It will be the first time that I can recall that we will review our programme as a whole as opposed to by sections. It is my intention that certain aspects of Substance Abuse Awareness will be included in our core programme so that the basic knowledge is gained by all members, not just those who complete the respective badges."

Manager of the NCSA Mrs. Betty Hunte in her brief remarks lauded the Barbados Boy Scouts Association for reaching out to the Council with this initiative. The partnership she explained spans many years, starting with training for scout leaders and later evolving into badges for Cub Scouts, Scouts, Venture Scouts and Leaders.

Mrs. Hunte says they stand ready to continue to educate people on the impacts of Substance Abuse.





  
NCSA  
National Council on  
Substance Abuse

**26 JUNE**

INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST

# Drug Abuse & TRAFFICKING

*"Share facts on drugs, save lives - end drug abuse".*

**FACTS:**

- 1. Depressants, such as alcohol and marijuana, affect concentration and coordination and may slow down the ability to respond to unexpected situations, making activities like driving dangerous.**
- 2. The side effects of over-the-counter and prescription medications can be made worse when they are used in combination with other substances, including alcohol.**

## MATTERS OF SUBSTANCE

is published by the National Council on Substance Abuse

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