



TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN IN STATE CARE PROJECT (TLP-CSC)

CONTRACTOR(S)/GRANTEE(S): THE CARIBBEAN CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTRE (CCDC), THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES OPEN CAMPUS, & THE CHILD PROTECTION AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY (CPFSA)

DURATION: AUGUST 2014- AUGUST 2020

TOTAL PROJECTED INVESTMENT: \$4.2 MILLION

FUNDING SOURCE: DEVELOPMENT GRANTS PROGRAM, CBSI

Of the approximately 4,400 children placed in State care in Jamaica, about 290 youth are discharged every year because they have reached the age of 18 years. Global research indicates that young adults transitioning from the child protection systems to adulthood have notably poorer outcomes in all domains of functioning in the adult world when compared with their peers in society.

By 2030, close to 5000 individuals leaving State care in Jamaica, based on an annual rate of 290, will be included in the working world. While some will have successful independent living outcomes, others will need extended services that can enable them to participate in attaining the desired national outcomes.

The Transitional Living Program for Children in State Care Project (TLP-CSC), aims to improve the transition to independent living for Jamaican youth leaving care at 18 years, and reduce the risk factors such as unemployment, involvement in crime, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy etc. associated with low education or job skills, inadequate life skills, and poor self-image. The first of its kind in Jamaica, the project uses a multi-dimensional approach to prepare wards of the State to transition into independence. The six-year exit-readiness project includes life skills training for 540 care staff, life skills coaching for 900 youth, vocational skills training for 500 youth, mentoring for 92 youth and the creation of three safe and appropriate transitional living facilities for 92 youth who have nowhere to go on leaving State Care. This

is supplemented through public-private partnerships that have been secured for the program to provide employment opportunities to participants. 50 care staff from all levels of the CPFSA will also be trained in providing trauma-informed care to youth. A Standard Operating Procedure is being drafted to ensure sustained standardized preparation of youth for independent living, beyond the project lifecycle.

Successes to date under the project include:

- A Memorandum of Understanding signed between The University of the West Indies and the Child Protection and Family Services Agency (CPFSA) for the sustainability of the program.
- A Needs Assessment study to inform the development of the exit-readiness program conducted and the report drafted.
- 410 youth interviewed for the Exit-Readiness Profile using the Life Preparedness Measure
- A Standard Operating Procedure for preparing youth in State care for independent living drafted.
- 40 CPFSA Officers trained as Trainers in Life Skills.
- 412 care staff commenced training in ‘Life Skills Coaching for Youth’, of which 192 care staff have completed training.
- 251 youth exposed to Life Skills coaching.
- 756 youth enrolled in Vocational Skills Training programs, of which 438 have completed training
- 27 youth selected to reside in one of the two transitional housing complexes constructed. The process of approval for the third complex is underway.
- 50 Mentors trained, 63 Mentees trained and 44 mentor-mentees matches made.
- 237 youth provided with “starter-kits” to facilitate exit preparedness. (Kits include mandatory and important documents, basic personal care items, as well as a booklet titled ‘Independent Living Guide for Youth Transitioning from State Care’, packaged in waterproof document holders and backpacks)
- 76 youth placed in employment, through a network of public and private companies.
- Youth being interviewed for the baseline of the longitudinal study of the outcomes of 92 young adults who are housed in the independent living complexes compared with 92 matched young adults not housed in the complexes.
- 21 youth in receipt of scholarships in continuing education from The University of the West Indies Open Campus.
- Supported the development and implementation of the second phase of the Child Case Management System.
- Two 15-seater buses for transportation needs and a 30-seater bus retrofitted as a Mobile Mental Health Unit presented to CPFSA.

