



# Southern Regional Health Authority

Compassion | Accountability | Respect | Efficiency

3 Brumalia Road, Mandeville, Manchester, Jamaica WI  
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Website: [www.srha.gov.jm](http://www.srha.gov.jm)



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## PRESS RELEASE

February 20, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

### Health Staff Trained in Early Stimulation to Improve Development of Children

15 Community Health Aides (CHA) from the Southern Regional Health Authority (SRHA) have been trained and certified under the “Reach Up” Early Stimulation Programme, which provides support to parents to improve the development of children.

Formulated based on 20 years of research, the programme is being facilitated by the Ministry of Health in collaboration with the Caribbean Institute for Health Research, UWI. The programme utilizes a curriculum where the CHA’s support parents by providing a stimulating environment for children and facilitate interacting and learning through home visits.

The CHA’s who work in the parishes of St. Elizabeth, Clarendon and Manchester graduated on Friday, February 15 at the Ridgemount Church Hall in Manchester, after two weeks of intense training in several areas including listening, understanding and responding to children’s actions and toy making.

“This programme targets children from birth to three years based on the fact that the first five years in a child’s life is the most critical in determining the outcome of their cognitive and socio-emotional development and by extension how well they develop for the rest of their lives. During the ages of birth to five years the brain is developing very fast and what happens to the child and how they are treated by adults in their lives affects how the brain develops” Public Health Nurse from the Porus Health District in Manchester, Maxine Isaacs explained.

She added that the research revealed that effective early childhood intervention allows children to perform better in schools, are happier, have higher intelligence quotient as an adult, have better mental health and demonstrated less violent behavior.

Keynote speaker and Senior Public Health Nurse at the Manchester Health  
(more)

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Department, Carlette Thompson described the programme as having the potential to transform the society in several ways.

“Imagine a society with the relationship between babies and parents is so cemented that all individuals feel more secure. Many of today’s adult problems stem from insecurity developed in the early years of a child’s life. If we cement good relationships between persons from the start we will have more persons who are more secure, better accomplished, able to achieve many milestones and are more confident and capable of learning” Nurse Thompson added.

She urged the graduates to practice what they have learnt and teach others the importance of early positive stimulation in children.

Picture 1



The graduating class who are excited to practice what they have learnt.  
(more)

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Picture 2



These Community Health Aides demonstrate some of the strategies and techniques learnt in the early stimulation programme.

(more)

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Picture 3



Health Education and Promotion Officer from the St. Elizabeth Health Department, Michèle Smith (left) presents a certificate of completion to graduate and Community Health Aide from the Spalding Health Centre, Pansy Wilson.

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For more information contact:  
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