



PRESS RELEASE
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Music Sports and Technology Summer Programme Gets Aid from Sponsors

The Ministry of National Security's Music Sports and Technology (MST) Summer Programme has received sanitation products valued at over US\$7,000 from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), to assist in combating the spread of COVID-19 among students.

While handing over the donations to the Ministry which will serve six schools, on Wednesday at Cockburn Gardens Primary, Country Representative for USAID, Jason Fraser, said USAID has been supporting initiatives across the island to help address some of the challenges at-risk youth are facing. **"We've already contributed about one million US dollars to the COVID-19 response here in Jamaica, to work with vulnerable populations that might be susceptible to COVID-19"**, he added.

After receiving the donations and in expressing gratitude to the sponsors and partners, Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr. Horace Chang, said the MST summer programme embodies the Ministry's policy direction where crime prevention and community safety are concerned. **"This is an indication to our country that our policy direction is taking a holistic approach into the communities through our anti-violence campaign, Liv Gud, but at a technical level, using our Music, Sports and Technology Programme. The long term objective is to take into account these inner-city communities, provide quality education, for all the children to have a chance at a more rounded development. Of course, it's not just about education, it's a chance for us to get into schools and identify some of the challenges students face"** he said.

Other sponsors to the summer programme include Pure National, Camcorp Industrial, Wisynco, Grace Kennedy, JP Products, Beauty Queen Distributors and Guardian Life. Among the partners are the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information, the Jamaica Basketball Association, the Violence Prevention Alliance, University of Technology, and music enthusiast, Mr. Asley 'Grub' Cooper.

Meanwhile, Principal of the Cockburn Gardens Primary School, Dr. Patricia Kinglocke-Findley, said it is the first time the school is participating in the Ministry's MST Summer Programme and there are approximately 100 student-participants. **"An excellent facet of the programme is that parents did not have to consider any financial constraint such as lunch money"**, she added.

Dr. Kinglocke-Findley pointed out that the structure of the programme is unique and the elements incorporated such as music, sports and technology, which are outside of academics, make the programme exciting for students. **"Personal development and conflict resolution are also incorporated into the learning modules, which are excellent tools to help cauterise crime and violence from an early age"**, concluded the Principal.

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