

# 2021 | ANNUAL REPORT



# Contents

<b>LIST OF ACRONYMS</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>CHAIRMAN’S MESSAGE</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>DIRECTOR’S MESSAGE</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>WHO WE ARE, WHAT WE DO AND HOW WE ARE STRUCTURED</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Powers and Functions .....	<b>12</b>
Organisation Structure.....	<b>14</b>
Corporate Governance: The Board of Management and Board Committees.....	<b>15</b>
<b>OUR CLIENT - LIFE CYCLE OF A CHILD &amp; FAMILY</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<b>CASELOAD ANALYSIS FOR THE PERIOD</b>	
<b>OCTOBER 1, 2020 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2021</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>Child Protection Registry Unit</b> .....	<b>29</b>
Snapshot of Cases .....	<b>30</b>
<b>Emergency Response Unit</b> .....	<b>31</b>
Snapshot of Cases .....	<b>32</b>
Success Story.....	<b>32</b>
<b>The Investigation Unit</b> .....	<b>33</b>
Success Story.....	<b>33</b>
<b>Child and Family Services Unit (CFSU)</b> .....	<b>34</b>
<b>Shift to New Case Management Model</b> .....	<b>37</b>
Snapshot of Cases .....	<b>40</b>
Success Story.....	<b>40</b>

<b>Assessment</b> .....	<b>41</b>
Snapshot of Cases .....	<b>42</b>
Success Story.....	<b>42</b>
<b>Foster Care</b> .....	<b>43</b>
Success Stories.....	<b>45</b>
<b>Adoption</b> .....	<b>46</b>
Success Stories.....	<b>47</b>
<b>Child Support Centre</b> .....	<b>48</b>
Successes .....	<b>50</b>
<b>Child Justice Unit</b> .....	<b>51</b>
<b>Licensing and Monitoring</b> .....	<b>53</b>
<b>Legal Services</b> .....	<b>58</b>
Notable Success.....	<b>58</b>
<b>ACHIEVEMENT OF STRATEGIC PRIORITIES</b> .....	<b>60</b>
Annual Operational Performance .....	<b>60</b>
Strategic Priority 1 – Increased Prevention of Child Abuse .....	<b>61</b>
Strategic Priority 2 – Responsive and Timely Child Protection.....	<b>62</b>
Strategic Priority 3 – Effective Stakeholder Collaboration .....	<b>64</b>
Strategic Priority 4 – Sustainable Institutional Strengthening; Impact of COVID-19 on Operations, Adjustments, Risks etc.....	<b>65</b>
Strategic Priority 5 – Robust Corporate Governance .....	<b>66</b>
Strategic Priority 6 – Increased Financial Sustainability .....	<b>67</b>
<b>STRATEGIC PROJECTS</b> .....	<b>68</b>
<b>FINANCE</b> .....	<b>70</b>
<b>INTERNAL AUDIT</b> .....	<b>72</b>
<b>LOOKING AHEAD</b> .....	<b>73</b>
<b>UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS</b> .....	<b>75</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1:</b> .....	<b>89</b>
List of Key Terms .....	<b>89</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2:</b> .....	<b>92</b>
Legislative Mandate.....	<b>92</b>

<b>ALTA</b>	Adult Literacy Tutors Association
<b>CAC</b>	Chaguanas Assessment Centre
<b>CATT</b>	Children's Authority of Trinidad and Tobago
<b>CCL</b>	Children in Conflict with the Law
<b>CCRFCNA</b>	Children's Community Residences, Foster Care and Nurseries Act
<b>CFSU</b>	Child and Family Services Unit
<b>CHINS</b>	Children In Need of Supervision
<b>CMOH</b>	County Medical Officer of Health
<b>COSTAAT</b>	College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago
<b>CPIMS+</b>	Primer Child Protection Information Management Software
<b>CPR</b>	Child Protection Registry
<b>CPU</b>	Child Protection Unit of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service
<b>CSA</b>	Children's Services Associate
<b>CSC</b>	Child Support Centre
<b>CTU</b>	Counter Trafficking Unit
<b>DHWFD</b>	Division of Health, Wellness and Family Development
<b>DMO</b>	District Medical Officer
<b>DP</b>	Development Programme
<b>ERHA</b>	Eastern Regional Health Authority
<b>ERT</b>	Emergency Response Team
<b>FAHSSE</b>	Facilities, Administration and Health, Safety, Security and Environment
<b>FBO</b>	Faith-Based Organisation
<b>FCDA</b>	Family and Children Division Act
<b>HR</b>	Human Resources
<b>HRIS</b>	Human Resource Information System
<b>HSSE</b>	Health, Safety, Security and Environment
<b>IIU</b>	Investigation and Intervention Unit
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organisation
<b>IPC</b>	COVID-19 Infection, Prevention and Control Guidelines
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology
<b>JIFF</b>	Juvenile Inventory for Functioning
<b>KPI</b>	Key Performance Indicator
<b>L&amp;M</b>	Licensing and Monitoring
<b>MDA</b>	Multidisciplinary Assessment
<b>MOU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>NCRHA</b>	North Central Regional Health Authority
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>NWRHA</b>	North West Regional Health Authority
<b>OPM (GCA)</b>	Office of the Prime Minister (Gender and Child Affairs)
<b>OSHA</b>	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
<b>PAP</b>	Prospective Adoptive Parent
<b>PEDIC</b>	Psychoeducational, Diagnostic and Intervention Clinic
<b>PPE</b>	Personal Protective Equipment
<b>SEA</b>	Secondary Entrance Assessment
<b>SROAC</b>	South Regional Office and Assessment Centre
<b>SSSD</b>	Student Support Services Division
<b>TRHA</b>	Tobago Regional Health Authority
<b>TTPS</b>	The Trinidad and Tobago Police Service
<b>UNCRC</b>	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>YLSCMI</b>	Youth Level of Service Case Management Inventory



## Executive SUMMARY

At the beginning of Fiscal Year 2020-2021, the Authority saw the appointment of a new Board of Management chaired by Dr. Carol Logie. The composition of the Board of Management was increased in number from 10 to 14 persons. This change sought to ensure the strategic and effective management of the operations as well as provide a wider skill-set of professionals overseeing the organisation's delivery of services.

Fiscal 2021 also saw the Authority's Care Services adopt a Best Interest Case Management Model. This Model was implemented to drive a collaborated and seamless approach to the organisation's service delivery. It is expected that there will be more timely intervention and an increase in the number of clients receiving the requisite care, protection and rehabilitation.

The Authority has found that in this Fiscal, there was an increase in emotional abuse, compared to other years, while sexual abuse, physical abuse and neglect were the most reported types of abuse.

Moreover, based on statistics, children under the age of 13 are most vulnerable to all categories of abuse and children under one year, accounted for 59.6 percent of the reports of neglect.

The placement crisis continues to be a major challenge for the Authority with demand outstripping the existing number of placement options, as increasing numbers of children come to the Authority's attention needing urgent placement outside their home. The issue is further exacerbated as there are children presenting with various behavioural challenges which require specialised services that are not available at the Child Support Centres.

Despite the challenges of Fiscal 2021, which also included staffing, a shortfall in funding and COVID-19 outbreaks, the Authority remains steadfast in its resolve to delivering on its mandate to provide the best possible care to children and their families.

# CHAIRMAN'S Message



**Dr. Carol Logie**  
CHAIRMAN

"The work of the Children's Authority is no easy task; protecting children from harm is no easy feat but we are all committed to the work ahead of us".

The 2021 Fiscal Year saw the installation of a new Board of Management accepting their appointments with great enthusiasm. Having received an analysis of the operations and its Strategic Plan 2020-2023, the Board swiftly went to work.

Additionally, with the understanding of the challenges faced by the Authority and the citizenry that we serve, the Board of Management has sought to develop solution-oriented targets geared towards fulfilling the mandate of the Children's Authority.

Six committees were established to support the operational goals of the Authority, while ensuring oversight into the very complex nuances and challenges faced by this statutory body.

Whilst the Authority has been making great strides despite the challenges that continue to face the young organisation, it would be remiss of me not to note the negative sides to child protection; the trauma faced by children, the number of reports of abuse coming to our attention, the lack of placement confronting children who cannot stay with their birth families, the breakdown of family structures, the mounting caseload and the delayed response to persons seeking treatment, given the high caseload.

These issues have brought to my attention the needs of society and the importance of inclusion, collaboration and innovation. Therefore, this Board is working towards encompassing children and adults in the process of nation building; bringing the required services, agencies and education to them. The protection of children begins in the home, the communities they live in and with the families they were birthed into, and as such, a societal approach to child protection is required but it must begin from a point of education and knowledge. As a result, within the next Fiscal, the Authority will be embarking on several public education initiatives in partnership with several local and international agencies aimed at sensitising the caregivers of children and the general public on child protection and child abuse prevention.

While it has been a challenging year, we have made huge strides in policy development as 9 approved policies and procedures were crafted aimed at improving processes and operations both at organisational and employee levels. Further, the Board is currently reviewing the organisation's structure to enhance, strengthen and ensure relevance to the ever-changing ways of life, needs and expectations of those we serve.

Moreover, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has brought its own unique challenges, compelling the organisation to initiate new methodologies to engage clients. Such approaches with the use of technology may well become part and parcel of the new way of doing business.

If we are to effectively ensure the welfare of our future generations, we must continue to engage our vulnerable children, by fostering their resilience and holistic development.

We know that we cannot do it alone and as a result, in the next Fiscal, the Authority will be implementing its volunteer programme. We will soon issue a call to individuals, families, communities, organisations and policy makers to become part of this initiative by bringing their skills and ideas to assist in the rehabilitation of children who are brought to our attention.

The work undertaken during this Fiscal demonstrates that the Board of Management is committed to the task of child protection. We have spent the last ten months working towards good governance and improving our processes. Throughout the period we have noted the challenges facing not just the operations of the agency but also the staff who despite confronting high caseloads and high stressors, are committed to the work required to provide care, protection and rehabilitation to the children and families we serve.

The work of the Children's Authority is no easy task; protecting children from harm is no easy feat but we are all committed to the work ahead of us.

As we embark on this new Fiscal Year, I extend my gratitude to the members of the Board of Management who have taken up the baton of service to our country. To the Executive Team and staff of the Authority, I commend you all for your yeoman service to this agency and your dedication to work towards greater improvement, in spite of the stress and challenges that arise daily. I salute you. To those who have gone before us and set the foundation to build on, we will continue the work that is required to make the Authority an even more focussed, responsive and agile organisation.



**Dr. Carol Logie**  
Chairman

# DIRECTOR'S Message



**Nichola Harvey-Mitchell**  
DIRECTOR

“the Authority continues to provide ongoing direct and indirect interventions to over 850 children placed in various care arrangements”.



Financial Year October 2020 - September 2021 was filled with both challenges and successes for the Children's Authority of Trinidad and Tobago. It was also the first year of the implementation of the Authority's Strategic Plan 2020-2023.

As such, attention was placed on setting up the operational framework for and measuring the successful outcomes of the Strategic Priorities, which are as follows: -

- 1. Prevention of Child Abuse**
- 2. Responsive Child Protection**
- 3. Effective Stakeholder Collaboration**
- 4. Sustainable Institutional Strengthening**
- 5. Robust Corporate Governance**
- 6. Increased Financial Sustainability**

At the beginning of the year, the organisation like the rest of the world continued to be faced with operating within the challenges spawned by the COVID-19 pandemic. We sought to be innovative to ensure the best interest of the children and families we served. Some of the successes during the year included the continued provision of a 24-hour service, the implementation of a new annual workplan with stringent KPIs, the development of 15 strategic projects including the Backlog Project, relocation of the Head Office, the Human Resource Information System (HRIS), Call Centre Modernisation, Primero Child Protection Information Management Software (CPIMS+) and the National Child Abuse Protocol.

During the period under review, the Authority was challenged to manage a growing Children In Need of Supervision (CHINS) population (given the closure of St. Michael's School for Boys) with very limited placement options and budgetary shortfall of TT\$12.09Mn.

By the second quarter, the Authority faced one of the worst critical incidents a child protection agency can face (absconding and eventual murder of two of five boys), which led to public outcry and understandable associated negative public feedback. In June 2021, the Government appointed a Special Investigation Team headed by the Honourable Justice Judith Jones (ret.) to conduct an independent investigation into the "Abuse of Children at Children's Homes, Rehabilitation Centres and other Institutions which provide residential care for children". The findings and recommendations of this investigation are awaited.

In the interim, during this period, the organisation commenced strategic discussions on an Enterprise Risk Management model and policy in order to better manage its risk profile. Work continues in this regard alongside other strategic initiatives with the objective of improving efficiencies and enhancing performance in every area of operations.

On a positive note, the Authority, through the generosity of some of its key stakeholders, was able to secure over TT\$1.26Mn in financial sponsorship from corporate citizens including Republic Bank Ltd, Massy, First Citizens Bank and UNICEF. It successfully relocated the Head Office from Wrightson Road, Port of Spain to Kazim Tower which will realise a potential saving of TT\$1.8Mn and the redistribution of staff throughout the Authority's Regional Offices, with operations also being done remotely, where possible.

A significant initiative geared towards improvement of case management was the pilot of the Regional Case Management Model which promotes the coordination of work to address an individual child's needs in an appropriate, systematic and timely manner, through direct support and/or referrals, and in accordance with the Authority's mandate. The benefit of this Model is that it advances a more holistic approach to child protection, by promoting greater collaboration and information sharing, as well as the coordination of services within an interlinked system.

Since COVID-19 restrictions continued to restrict face-to-face meetings in the main, the Authority sought to strengthen its engagement with stakeholders by hosting 94 virtual sensitisation sessions, with 22 strategic sessions being presented by the Director. The organisation delivered 27 Facebook live sessions in collaboration with agencies and distributed social media content and the monthly case statistics to various Government and Non-Government stakeholders. The outcomes of these sessions were varied and included, the realisation of funding, training opportunities particularly from the Court, a commitment to work collaboratively in the fight against child abuse, and awareness from Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to contribute to the prevention of child abuse. As an organisation, the Authority maintained strong COVID-19 protocols and had no major OSHA related reports.

This 2020-2021 Annual Report, highlights the ongoing performance of the organisation's core operational areas of child care, protection and rehabilitation. This includes tracking and measuring the number of children in care, receipt and triaging of reports, responding to emergency cases, investigating cases, conducting assessments, providing child and family interventions, attending to Court matters, approving and monitoring Foster Care and Adoption services and licensing and monitoring Community Residences. This Report also highlights the performance of non-core areas of the Authority's operations including Finance, Human Resource, Procurement, Health, Safety and Security, Information Technology, Research, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation and Public Education and Communications.

During the period under review, the Authority received a total of 4,245 reports of child abuse and maltreatment. Unfortunately, from these reports the trend of child abuse continues, with more than 78% of perpetrators being known to the children. In addition, the Authority continues to provide ongoing direct and indirect interventions to over 850 children placed in various care arrangements - Community Residences, Child Support Centre, Foster Care, Other Homes/institutions and with Fit Persons.

The good news is that at the beginning of Financial Year 2021, the Authority had a backlog of 17,439 unassigned cases. However, with the advent of the Backlog Project in August 2020, the number of cases to be actioned now stands at 175 as at the end of the Fiscal. This was an amazing feat undertaken by the Care Team.

Similarly, with the commencement of the Regional Case Management Model in June 2021, improvements were evident in the increase in the percentage (%) of cases assigned and actioned within a month. At the end of September 2021, an average of 87% of cases were assigned from Registry to the Regional Investigation and Intervention Unit (IIU) teams versus 23% prior to the implementation of the Regional Case Management Model.

In fact, across all five (5) regions (North/East/South/Central and Tobago), an average of 80.2% of total cases received attention within the month and an average of 85% of cases were assigned and actioned by the Children's Services Associate (CSA) within the month of receiving the case, versus 25% prior to the implementation of the pilot.

What is however concerning is that caseloads are increasing to 70 per CSA, which is above the target number of 60 and way above best practice of about 20 to 30 cases. It must be noted, that given the nature of the abuse cases, that it is hardly likely that a case can be closed within one month. On average, cases stay with a Case Worker for more than one year. This makes it more challenging to serve new cases, hence the need for more case workers to be engaged and greater collaboration between other State agencies that can provide support and rehabilitation interventions to the child and family.

This challenge will continue unless the requisite staff numbers are hired to deal with the current caseloads. On the other hand, Tobago was able to assign 97% of their cases. They investigated 100% within one month and attend 100% of case conferences. Tobago has the ideal number of caseloads per CSA, which is 25, and it allows this region to meet most, if not all, of its KPIs related to investigations and interventions.

During the period under review the Authority had to manage a growing 'CHINS' (Children in Need of Supervision) population with very limited placement options and a redistribution of cases to the Child Justice Units for full case management services. This redistribution of CHINS and Child Offender cases, saw a steady decline in Court attendance, particularly for the North Court where the CHINS caseloads are very high. Yet again, this unit suffers from insufficient staff for the CHINS and Child Offender population and often times the Authority is in contempt of Court Orders since it is unable to find placement options for the CHINS and/or not fulfilling the various requests. This underscores the need for other State agencies to lend support to this population of children.

Throughout this Fiscal Year 2021, the Authority continued to grapple with the key challenges of staffing, placement, critical incidents, funding and a lack of robust technology to enable service provisioning. To date, these challenges still exist. However, the outcomes of the modernisation of the Call Centre, the strategic plan and organisation structure review, the incorporation of enterprise risk management strategies, the implementation of the Case Management Regional Model and the implementation of the Primero Child Protection Information Management Software (CPIMS+) are anticipated to assist in addressing some of these challenges to bring about some positive results.

On the non-core side of operations, at the end of the Financial Year, the Authority had a total of 272 fixed-term employees, 10 Temporary staff, 56 OJTs and 47 Independent Service Providers.

For Fiscal 2021, the Authority requested a budgetary allocation of TT\$127.4Mn, however the year-to-date estimated funding received was \$88.5Mn. Since the organisation's expenses include staffing, the

maintenance of children at four Child Support Centres across Trinidad and Tobago, outstanding debts owed to suppliers, Foster Care expenses and the provision of supplies to maintain COVID-19 health regulations, the Authority was operating under funded. While additional funding was released during the Fiscal, they were insufficient to meet the demands of a child protection agency with growing demands to provide the best possible care to children and their families.

On the Public Education and Communication side of the operations, focus was placed on initiatives that will allow CATT to realise the strategic priorities of "Increase Prevention of Child Abuse and Strengthening Stakeholder Collaboration". The teams also made efforts to promote Foster Care and Adoption awareness and conducted various communication and media activities. As a result of the combined activities, the Foster Care Unit received a total of 27 new applications from individuals to become Foster Care providers.

As we say goodbye to Financial Year 2021 and welcome Financial Year 2022, work continues on the strategic projects and initiatives that were not completed in Financial Year 2021. The focus remains on the areas identified in the Strategic Plan 2020-2023 and other new areas as dictated by the ever-changing environment in which the Authority operates.

Certainly, much more work is still needed to improve the overall efficiency of the Authority and to win back public and shareholders' trust and confidence; this can only be done through the committed, motivated and loyal staff.

As Director, I wish to thank the staff of the Authority for embracing the new forms of measuring and reporting on their effectiveness and efficiency and for continuing to deliver on their objectives, despite the resource constraints. I also wish to thank the Board of Management for their diligence and unwavering support during the year.



**Nichola Harvey-Mitchell**  
Director

# WHO WE ARE

# WHAT WE DO

## HOW WE ARE STRUCTURED

### POWERS AND FUNCTIONS

The Children's Authority of Trinidad and Tobago is a specialised agency with a broad mandate to provide care, protection and rehabilitation to children, especially those who are at risk or have been victims of abuse or neglect.

The Authority is first and foremost a creature of statute. As a result, its operations are guided by a package of children's legislation, which include the Children's Authority Act, Chap 46:10; the Children Act, 2012; the Adoption of Children Act, 2000; and the Children's Community Residences, Foster Care and Nurseries Act, 2000.

The May 2015 proclamation of these key pieces of legislation heralded a more robust child protection system in Trinidad and Tobago. It also aligned the country with international conventions and consensus documents that promote the rights of children such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

In Fiscal 2020, the Board of Management and staff of the Authority conducted an analysis of its environment and modified the Vision, Mission and Core Value statements to support the new direction of the organisation for the period 2020 - 2023. The new statements are as follows:

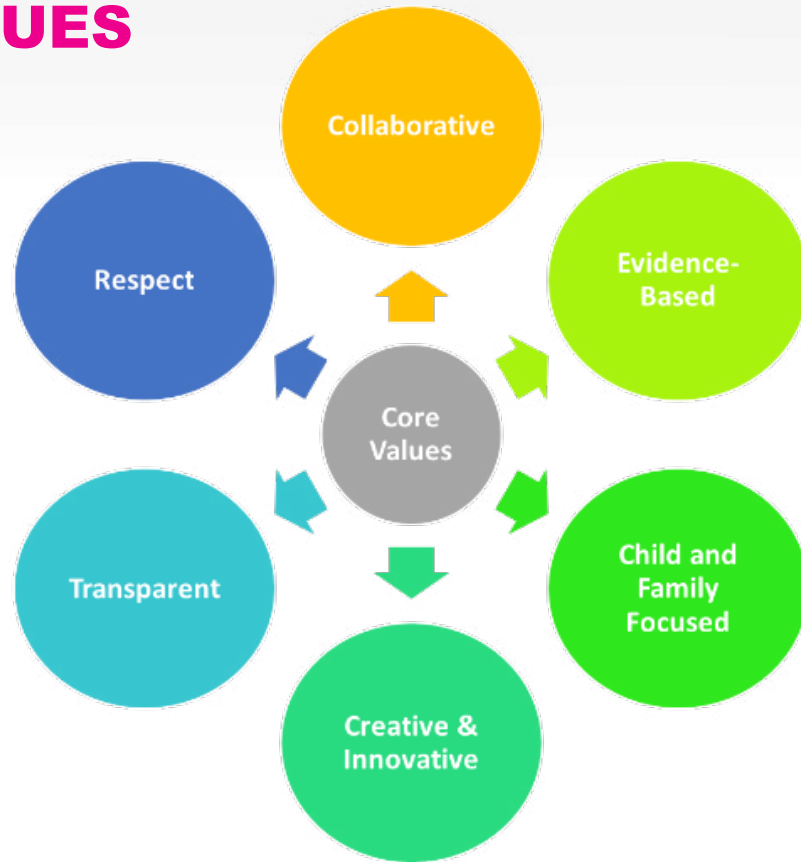
## VISION

**To Defend and Support  
Child Rights and  
Make Child Protection  
Everybody's Business.**

## MISSION

**To Promote the Best Interest  
of Children through Advocacy,  
Prevention, Intervention and  
Collaborative Strategies Based on  
Multidisciplinary Approaches**

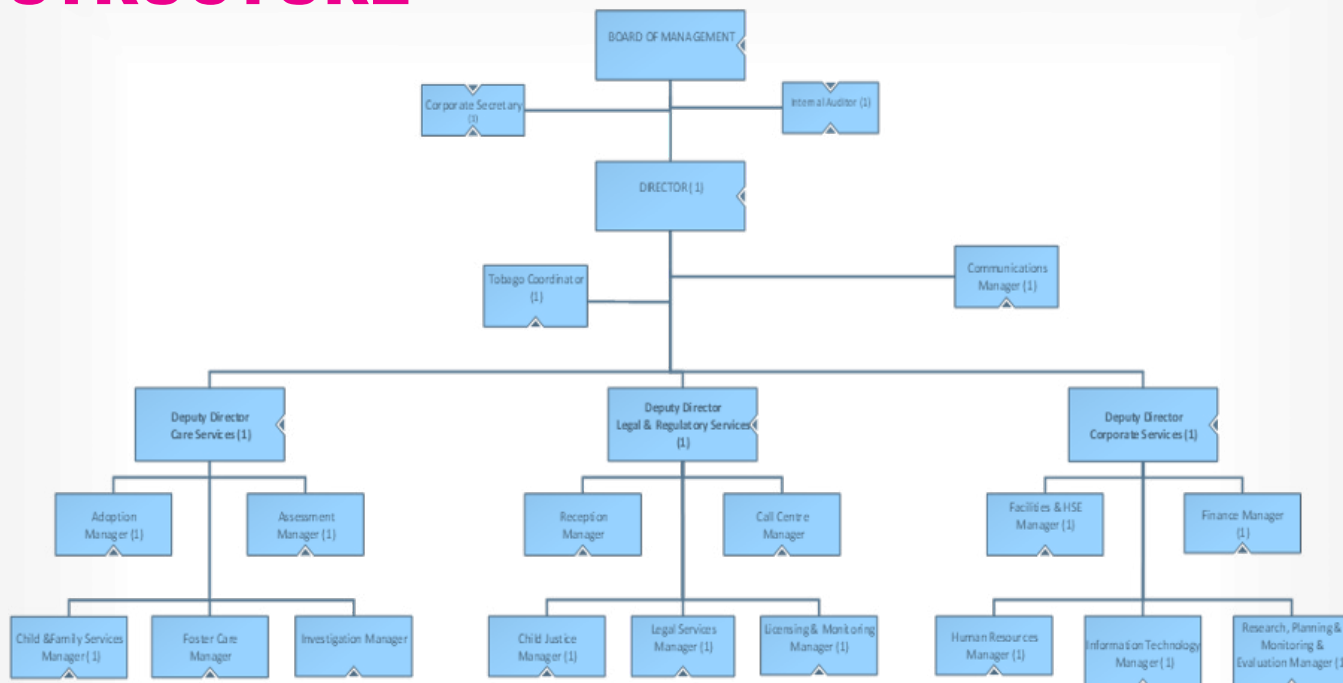
# CORE VALUES



# OPERATING PRINCIPLES



# ORGANISATION STRUCTURE



## Staff Count & Units within the Children's Authority

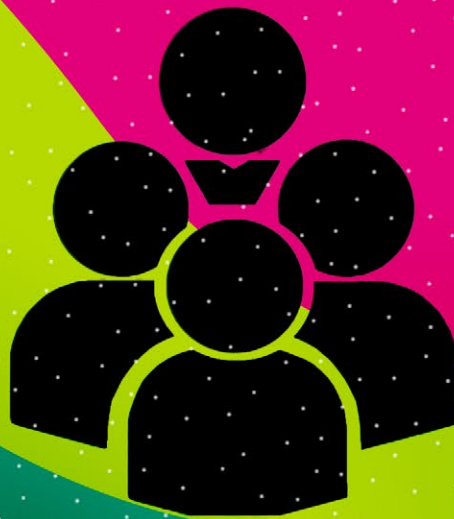


### Staff Breakdown



# CORPORATE GOVERNANCE:

## THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT AND BOARD COMMITTEES



The Children's Authority Act, Chapter 46:10 states that the Authority "shall be managed by a Board of Management (also referred to as the Board) which will be in charge of the administration of the Act.

An amendment to the Children's Authority Act, Chap. 46.10 which is stated in the Miscellaneous Provisions (Supreme Court of Judicature and Children) Act, 2018, provides that "The Board shall comprise a minimum of nine members but not more than fifteen persons appointed by the President." This increase took effect during the term of the current Board of Management.

Section 7(2) Children's Authority Act, Chap 46:10: The Board shall comprise a minimum of nine members but not more than fifteen persons appointed by the President.

(2A) Four members of the Board shall be –

- (a) A person under the age of twenty-eight years representing the youth who possesses one of the qualifications listed in section (2B) (a) to (h), appointed by the President.
- (b) A person nominated by the Tobago House of Assembly with qualifications in or related to child development, appointed by the President;
- (c) A representative of a Non-Governmental Organisation which promotes the welfare and protection of children; and
- (d) The Director of the Authority appointed under section 10, who shall be an ex officio member of the Board.

(2B) The other members of the Board shall be selected from among persons with the following qualifications and skills:

- (a) child psychology;
- (b) social work;
- (c) paediatrics;
- (d) education;
- (e) accounting;
- (f) family law;
- (g) management or administration; or
- (h) psychiatry

Three months into Fiscal 2021, the new Board of Management received their appointment. The members at the start of the Fiscal were as follows:

1. Dr. Carol Logie, Chairman
2. Mrs. Jennifer Boucaud-Blake, Deputy Chairman
3. Ms. Marcrina Peters, Member, Accounting
4. Dr. Natalie Dick, Member, Paediatrics
5. Dr. Gillian Wheeler, Tobago Representative
6. Dr. Hazel Othello, Member, Mental Health
7. Mr. Keon Cunningham, Member, Youth Representative
8. Ms. Maria Baptiste, Member
9. Mr. Rawlinson Agard, Member, Management or Administration
10. Ms. Denise Gouveia, Member, Family Law
11. Mr. Sule Atiba Joseph, Member, Social Work
12. Mr. Harrilal Seecharan, Member, Education
13. Ms. Laura Davis, Member, Social Work

During the Fiscal, Mr. Harrilal Seecharan and Dr. Hazel Othello left in May and July, 2021 respectively while Dr. Korinne Louison and Mrs. Kitty Al Hosein-Garcia joined in April and June, 2021 of the Fiscal.

Six (6) statutory Committees were created by the new Board of Management, bringing the number of Committees to eight. The Committees are as follows;

- Adoption Committee
- Foster Care and Child Protection Committee
- Human Resources Committee
- Finance, Tenders and Procurement Committee
- Audit Committee
- Governance and Children's Authority Improvement Committee
- Special Ad-Hoc Committee- Special COVID-19 Committee
- Board of Management

### Board Committees

During the period, the Board directed the affairs of the Authority via eight (8) Committees. The number of Board meetings held for Fiscal 2021 were: 16 (14 monthly meetings and 2 Special Meetings.)

The main Committees of the Board are as follows:



**The Adoption Committee** is responsible for the Adoption of children. The Committee's composition and functions are set out in Section 7A (1) of the Children's Authority Act, Chapter 46:10 (as amended), which provides, inter alia, that when a decision with respect to the adoption of a child arises, a Committee of the Board to be known as the Adoption Committee shall sit to take such decision, which must then be ratified by the Board of Management. Over the period under review, the Committee held 12 meetings.

**The Audit Committee** provides oversight of the Authority's governance, risk management and internal control practices by reporting to and advising the Board of Management on the Authority's operations in relation to compliance with laws and regulations, adherence to and adequacy of policies and procedures and overall operational effectiveness and efficiency. The Committee also appraises the efforts of the internal audit activity, the external auditors and any other assurance providers. During the period under review, the Audit Committee held six (6) meetings.

**The Finance, Tenders and Procurement Committee** is responsible for monitoring the financial status of the organisation through the reports submitted to the Board and other financial information provided to governmental bodies or the wider public. The Committee also has oversight of the Authority's system of internal controls regarding finance, accounting, legal compliance and ethics that Management and the Board have established. The Committee also closely examines the Authority's auditing, accounting and financial reporting processes. Over the period under review, the Committee continuously encouraged financial discipline and prudence, given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy. During the period under review, the Committee held nine (9) meetings.

**The Foster Care and Child Protection Committee's** mandate is to make recommendations to the Board on applications for placement on the Register of Foster

Parents, approve placement of children and appropriate Treatment Plans, address all matters concerning the treatment of children, consider applications for licences of Community Residences and Nurseries and monitor Child Support Centres. During the period under review, the Committee held twelve (12) meetings.

**The Governance & Children's Authority Improvement Committee's** mandate is to ensure the Authority has in place effective governance and a robust Governance Improvement strategy through policies and procedures that are according to best practice and to monitor and assess this strategy. The Committee also makes recommendations to the Board on acquisition, infrastructure, facilities and maintenance of physical accommodations for the Authority. It ensures that the organisation has an effective Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and monitors the effectiveness of stakeholder initiatives. The Committee also monitors, reports and recommends for use, all external funding received. During the period under review, the Committee held eleven (11) meetings.

**The Human Resources Committee** is responsible for ensuring that there is an effective Human Resources strategy in line with industry and market trends, which will enhance employee and Board effectiveness. During the period under review, the Committee held twelve (12) meetings.

#### **Ad hoc Committees**

##### **(i) Special CATT Committee on COVID-19**

This Special Committee is responsible for deepening the Authority's response measures to ensure that every area of operations is appropriately screened and any risks relative to the potential spread of COVID-19 is identified, addressed or mitigated as far as possible. The Committee is also responsible for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Authority's Business Continuity Plan. During Fiscal 2021, the Committee held twelve (12) meetings.

# BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

**DR. CAROL LOGIE**  
CHAIRMAN



**JENNIFER BOUCAUD-BLAKE**  
DEPUTY CHAIRMAN



**DR. NATALIE DICK**



**KEON CUNNINGHAM**  
YOUTH REPRESENTATIVE



**KITTY AL HOSEIN-GARCIA**



**DENISE GOUVEIA**



**DR. GILLIAN WHEELER**  
THA REPRESENTATIVE



**RAWLINSON AGARD**

**MARCRINA PETERS**

**MARIA BAPTISTE**



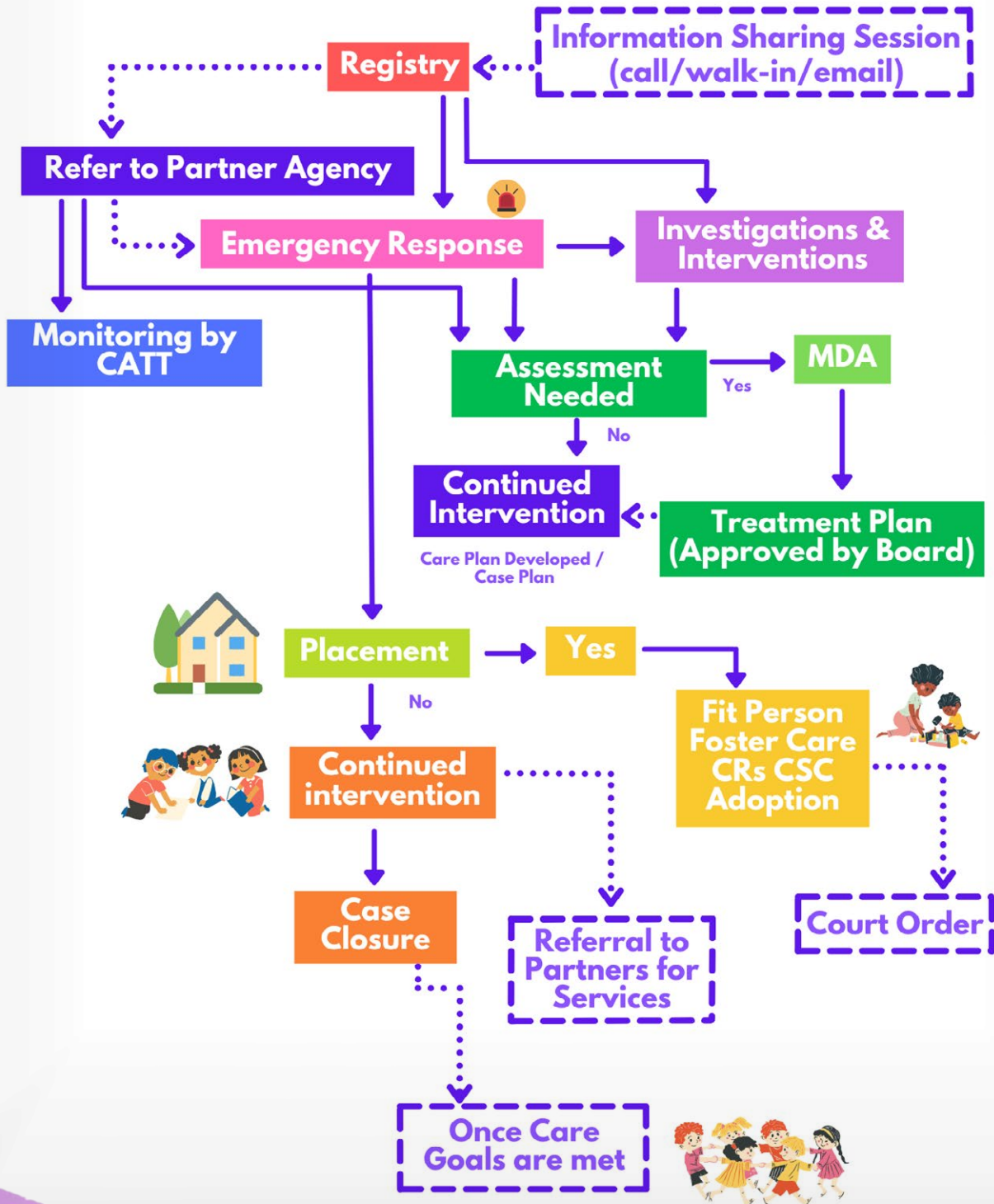
**SULE ATIBA ANTHONY JOSEPH**

**LAURA DAVIS**

**DR. KORINNE LOUISON**

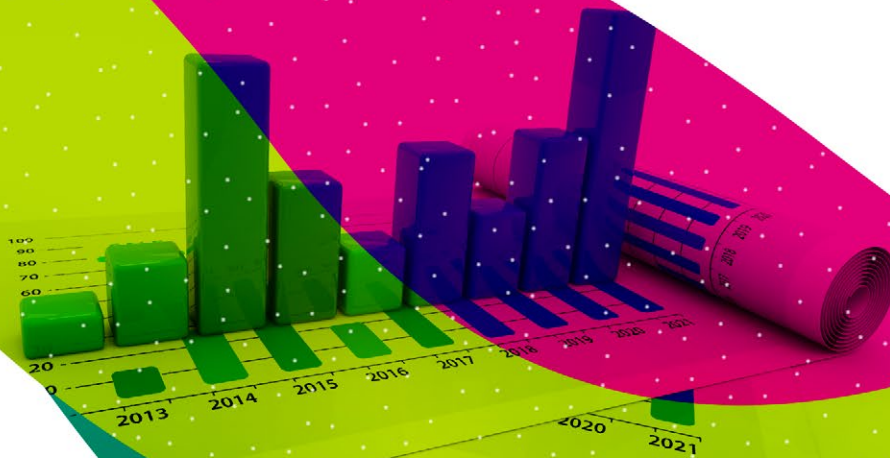


# A CHILD'S JOURNEY through the CATT's System



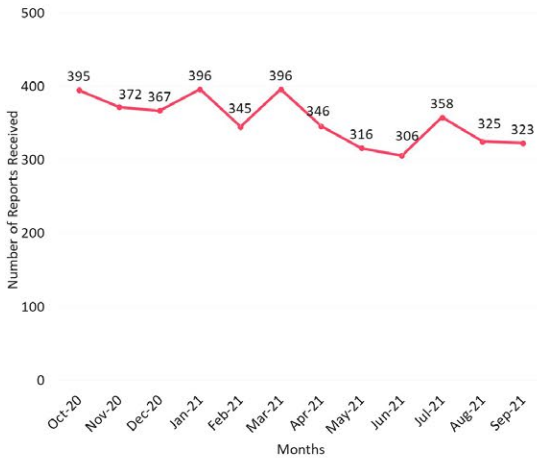
# CASELOAD ANALYSIS

For the period October 1, 2020 to  
September 30, 2021



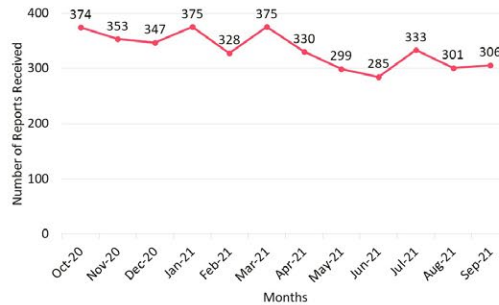


## CASE LOAD FOR FISCAL 2020-2021



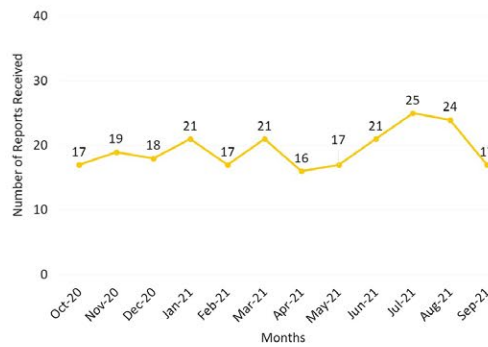
### CASE LOAD: TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

- Highest number of cases were reported during the months of January 2021 (396 reports) and March 2021 (396 reports).
- Lowest number of cases were reported during the months of June 2021 (306 reports) and May 2021 (316 reports).
- An average of 354 reports were recorded per month.



### CASE LOAD: TRINIDAD

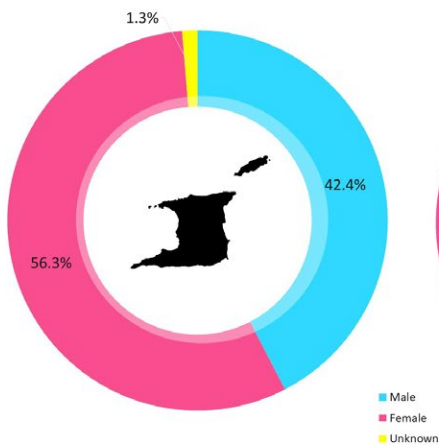
- Highest number of cases reported in Trinidad were during the months of January and March 2021 (375 reports respectively).
- Lowest number of cases reported in Trinidad was during the month of September 2021 (306 reports).
- An average of 334 reports were recorded per month.



### CASE LOAD: TOBAGO

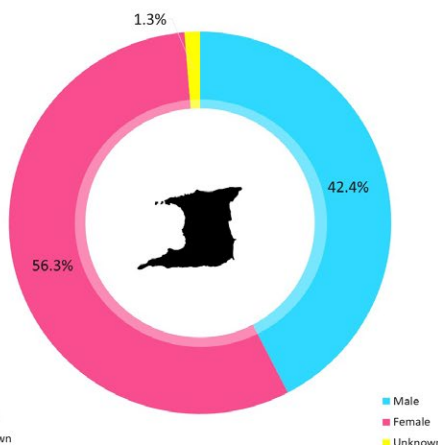
- Highest number of cases reported in Tobago were during the month of July 2021 (25 reports).
- Lowest number of cases reported in Tobago was during the month of April 2021 (16 reports).
- An average of 19 reports were recorded per month.

## SEX OF CLIENTS



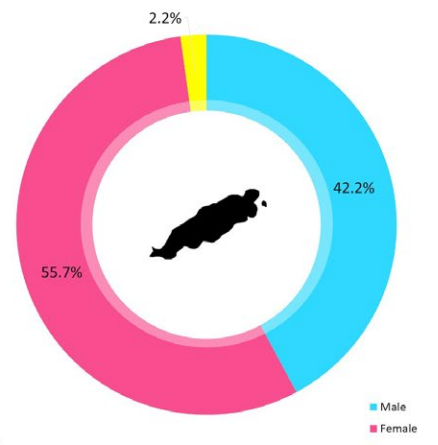
### Trinidad and Tobago

- Female clients accounted for the majority of reports received amounting to 56.3 percent while male clients accounted for 42.4 percent.
- In 1.3 percent of reports received, no sex was provided.



### Trinidad

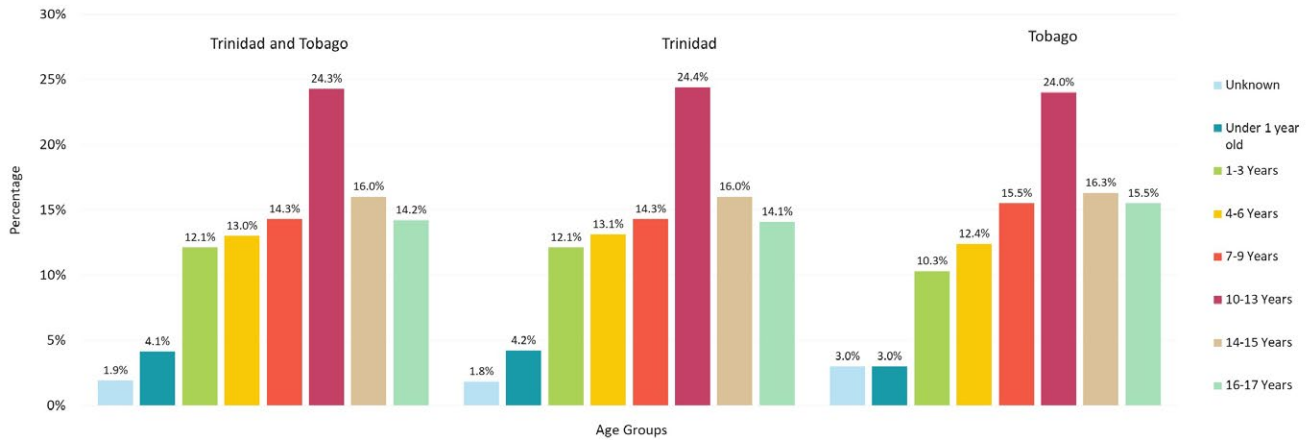
- In Trinidad, female clients accounted for the 56.3 percent of reports received as compared to 42.4 percent for male clients.
- In 1.3 percent of reports received, no sex was provided.



### Tobago

- In Tobago, female clients accounted for the 55.7 percent of reports received as compared to 42.2 percent for male clients
- In 2.2 percent of reports received, no sex was provided.

## AGE GROUPS OF CLIENTS



### Trinidad and Tobago

- The majority of clients belonged to the 10-13 year age group (24.3 percent) while children under the age of 1 year old accounted for the least number of reports (4.1 percent).

### Trinidad

- In Trinidad, the majority of clients belonged to the 10-13 year age group (24.4 percent) followed by the 14-15 year age group (16.0 percent).
- Clients under the age of 1 year old reported the least number of reports (4.2 percent).

### Tobago

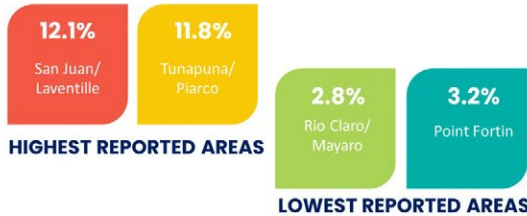
- In Tobago, the majority of clients belonged to the 10-13 year age group (24.0 percent) followed by the 14-15 year age group (16.3 percent).
- Clients under the age of 1 year old and the unknown category both reported the least number of reports (3.0 percent).

## GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF REPORTS

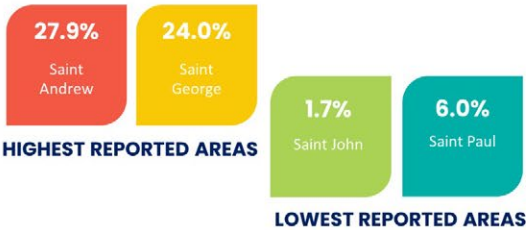


# DISAGGREGATED GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF REPORTS

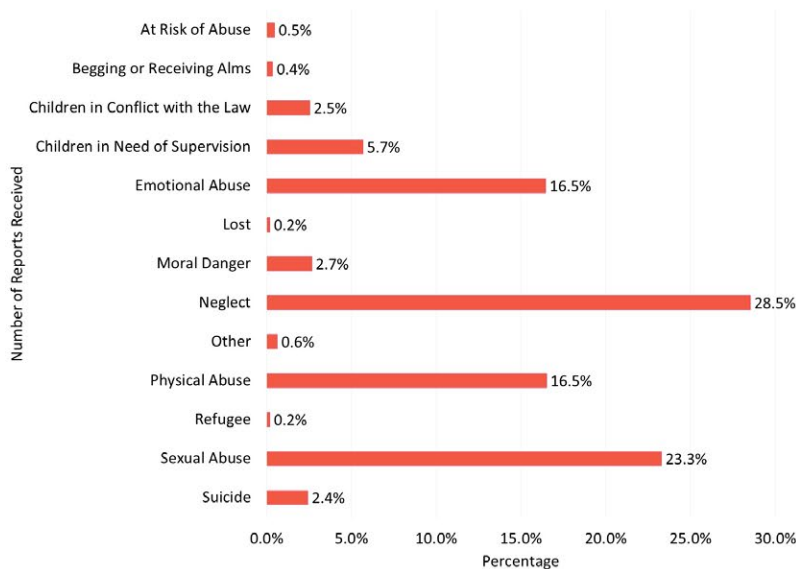
## TRINIDAD



## TOBAGO



# CHILDREN IN NEED OF CARE AND PROTECTION TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO



## HIGHEST REPORTED CATEGORIES OF CHILD ABUSE AND MALTREATMENT

Reports of neglect (28.5 percent), sexual abuse (23.3 percent), physical abuse (16.5 percent) and emotional abuse (16.5 percent) collectively amounted to 84.8 percent of reports received in Trinidad and Tobago during Fiscal 2020/2021.

Reports of sexual abuse, neglect and physical abuse have consistently been the highest reported types of abuse and maltreatment received by the Authority over the past Fiscal Years.





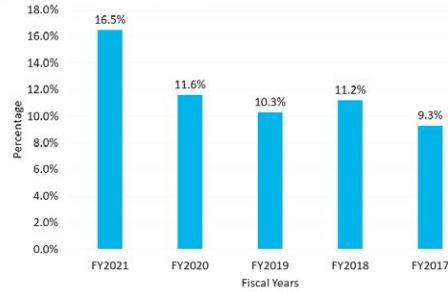
# COMPARISON OF CATEGORIES OF CARE AND PROTECTION (Y2017–Y2021)

## SEXUAL ABUSE



- Highest number of reports of child sexual abuse were reported in FY2017 accounting for 25.5 percent of reports received.
- Lowest number of reports of child sexual abuse were reported in FY2020 and FY2019 accounting for 22.7 percent of reports respectively.

## EMOTIONAL ABUSE



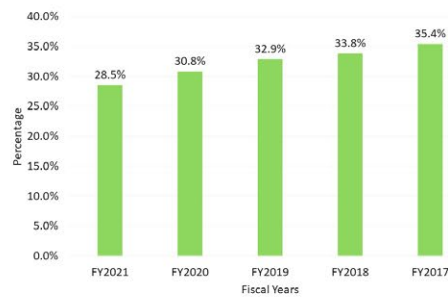
- Highest number of reports of emotional abuse were reported in FY2021 accounting for 16.5 percent of reports received.
- Lowest number of reports of emotional abuse were reported in FY2017 accounting for 9.3 percent of reports.

## PHYSICAL ABUSE



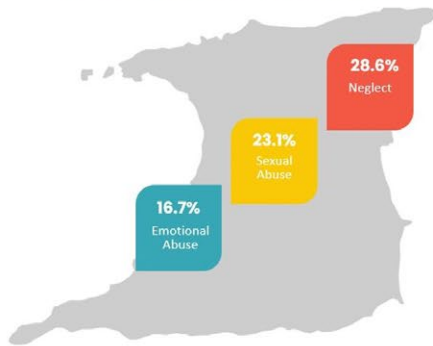
- Highest number of reports of physical abuse were reported in FY2017 and FY2021 accounting for 16.5 percent of reports respectively.
- Lowest number of reports of physical abuse were reported in FY2019 accounting for 14.5 percent of reports.

## NEGLECT

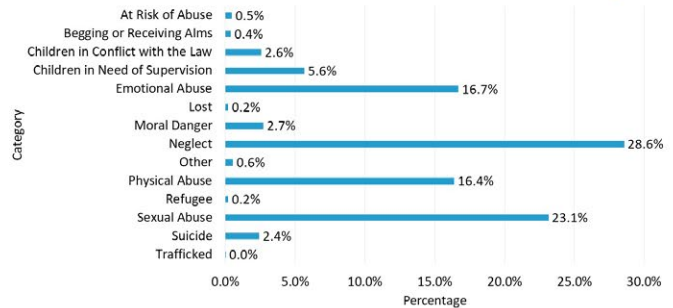


- Highest number of reports of neglect were reported in FY2017 accounting for 35.4 percent of reports received.
- Lowest number of reports of neglect were reported in FY2021 accounting for 28.5 percent of reports.

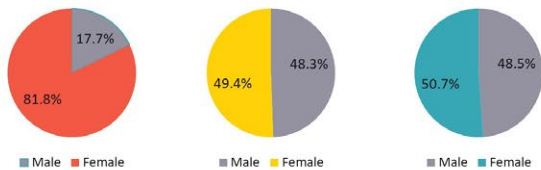
# CHILDREN IN NEED OF CARE AND PROTECTION- TRINIDAD



## NUMBER OF REPORTS RECEIVED IN TRINIDAD DURING FISCAL 2020/2021



## HIGHEST REPORTS DISAGGREGATED BY GENDER



Category of Sexual Abuse disaggregated by gender shows that the majority of clients were female.

Category of Neglect disaggregated by gender shows that the majority of clients were female closely followed by male clients.

Category of Emotional Abuse disaggregated by gender shows that the majority of clients were female closely followed by male clients.

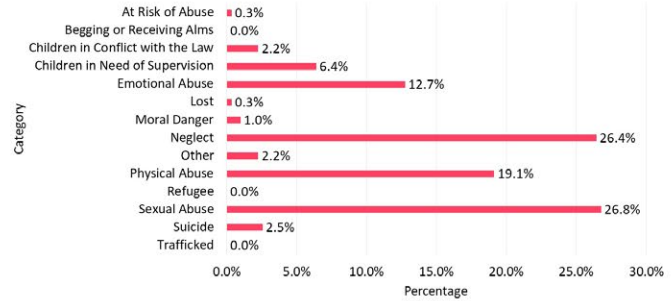
## HIGHEST REPORTS RECEIVED DISAGGREGATED BY AGE

Category of Care and Protection	Under 1 Year Old	1-3 Years	4-6 Years	7-9 Years	10-13 Years	14-15 Years	16-17 Years
Neglect	59.6%	39.1%	33.2%	37.3%	28.3%	20.8%	16.9%
Sexual Abuse	3.0%	13.9%	20.4%	19.3%	27.4%	36.8%	40.9%
Physical Abuse	12.3%	19.1%	22.3%	19.2%	19.3%	14.2%	12.0%
Emotional Abuse	21.3%	22.6%	21.2%	21.6%	17.1%	12.7%	11.8%
Children in Need of Supervision	0.4%	0%	0.1%	0%	5.2%	13.0%	17.3%
Moral Danger	3.4%	5.2%	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%	2.5%	1.4%

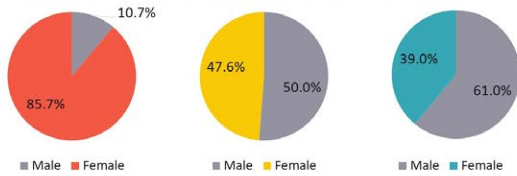
# CHILDREN IN NEED OF CARE AND PROTECTION- TOBAGO



## NUMBER OF REPORTS RECEIVED IN TOBAGO DURING FISCAL 2020/2021



## HIGHEST REPORTS DISAGGREGATED BY GENDER



Category of Sexual Abuse disaggregated by gender shows that the majority of clients were female.

Category of Neglect disaggregated by gender shows that clients were affected almost equally.

Category of Physical Abuse disaggregated by gender shows that clients were affected almost equally.

## HIGHEST REPORTS RECEIVED DISAGGREGATED BY AGE

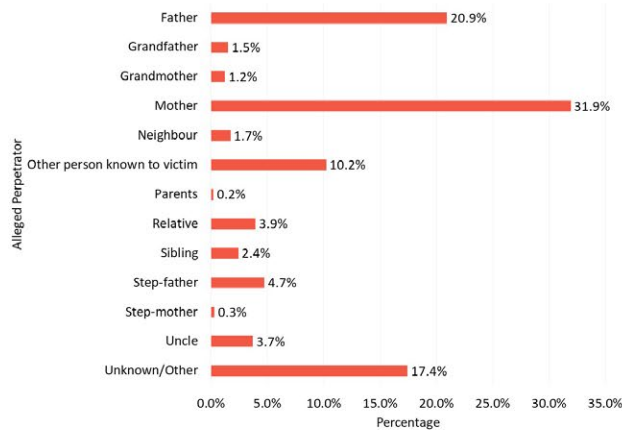
Category of Care and Protection	Under 1 Year Old	1-3 Years	4-6 Years	7-9 Years	10-13 Years	14-15 Years	16-17 Years
Sexual Abuse	0%	33.3%	22.5%	15.4%	30.9%	32.6%	47.7%
Neglect	62.5%	40.7%	35.0%	30.8%	27.9%	10.9%	15.9%
Physical Abuse	25%	14.8%	20.0%	23.1%	26.5%	21.7%	11.4%
Emotional Abuse	12.5%	11.1%	17.5%	26.9%	5.9%	10.9%	9.1%
Children in Need of Supervision	0%	0%	2.5%	1.9%	5.9%	13.0%	15.9%
Suicide	0%	0%	2.5%	1.9%	2.9%	10.9%	0%

# REPORTED ALLEGED PERPETRATOR OF ABUSE

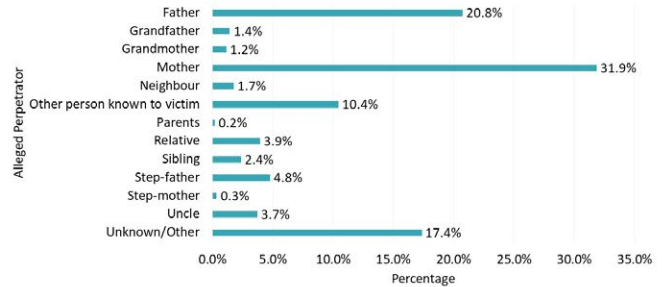
## TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

It has been noted over the past five years of operations, that mothers have consistently been identified by persons reporting cases to the Authority as the alleged perpetrator of abuse and maltreatment of children across Trinidad and Tobago.

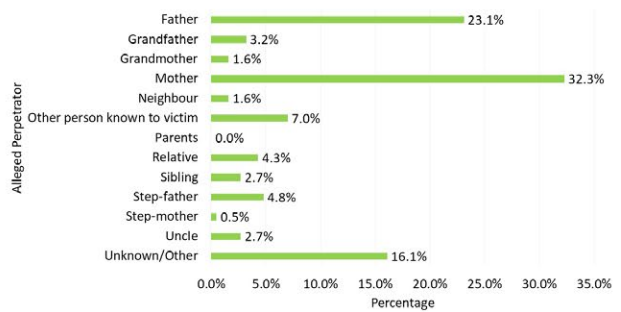
During Fiscal 2020/2021, mothers accounted for 31.9 percent of reports of alleged perpetrators followed by fathers who accounted for 20.9 percent. 17.4 percent of alleged perpetrators could not be identified.



## TRINIDAD

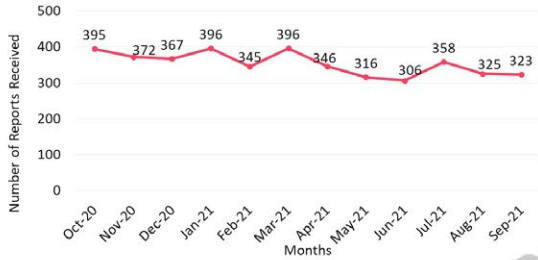


## TOBAGO

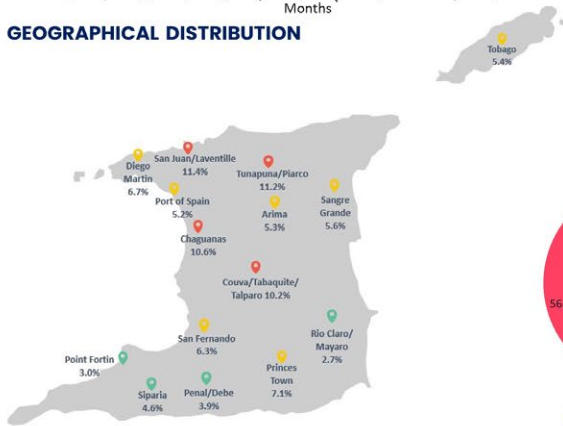


# SNAPSHOT: CHILDREN IN NEED OF CARE AND PROTECTION

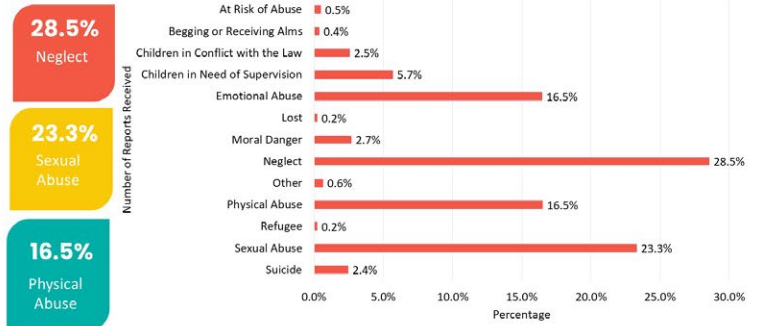
## CASE LOAD



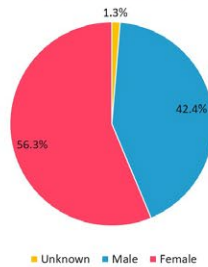
## GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION



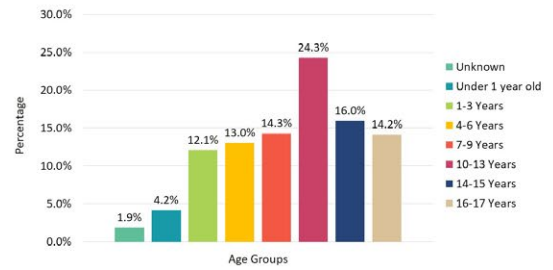
## CATEGORIES OF CHILD ABUSE AND MALTREATMENT



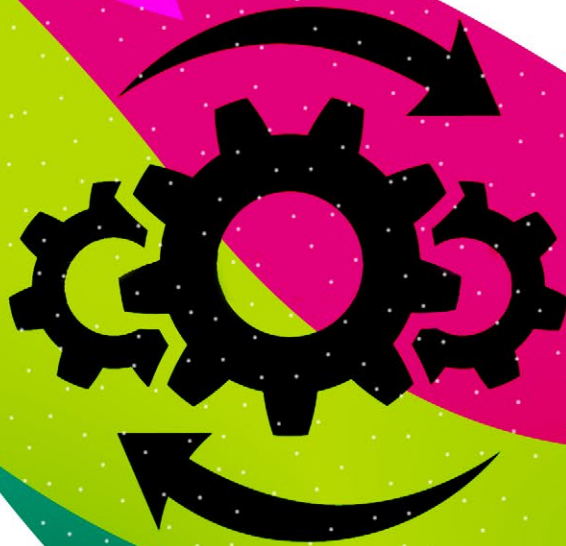
## SEX OF CLIENTS



## AGE OF CLIENTS



# OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE



# CHILD PROTECTION REGISTRY UNIT

The Child Protection Registry (CPR) of the Children's Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (CATT) has been established to receive reports of known or suspected cases of child abuse or children otherwise in need of care and protection. The Child Protection Registry Unit is governed by legislation within the Children's Authority Act, Chapter 46:10, Sections 5, 22 & 31, key sections within the Children Act, 2012 and other significant pieces of legislation.

The core functions of the Unit are to:

- I. receive and record the information reported by individuals who know or suspect that a child is being, or is in danger of being; physically, sexually or emotionally abused, abandoned or neglected, or otherwise in need of care and protection.
- II. triage reports received, assess level of risk and assign to appropriate team(s) in a timely manner for the commencement of investigation or other intervention.
- III. conduct any other coordination activities to support or aid in timely intervention being sought for very critical matters.
- IV. support, as with other teams, in the update of the client management database and maintain this repository of data; and the
- V. management of the Contact Centre operations where reports are received via email, post, walk-in and the Centre's Hotline.

During the fiscal period, the CPR Unit received approximately 4,122 cases. Each case documents child protection concern(s) for one child.

Once cases are received by the CPR Unit, they are triaged based on priority and assigned to the respective Units for investigation and or intervention.

During the Fiscal period, the CPR Unit interacted with reporters via calls, walk-ins, email and post-mail. The total of these interactions was 36,122, while the total number of calls was 32,707.

# 4,122<sup>1</sup> CASES

**DURING THE  
FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021**

## Cases assigned to each unit

**81%** Authority's Intervention and Investigation Unit

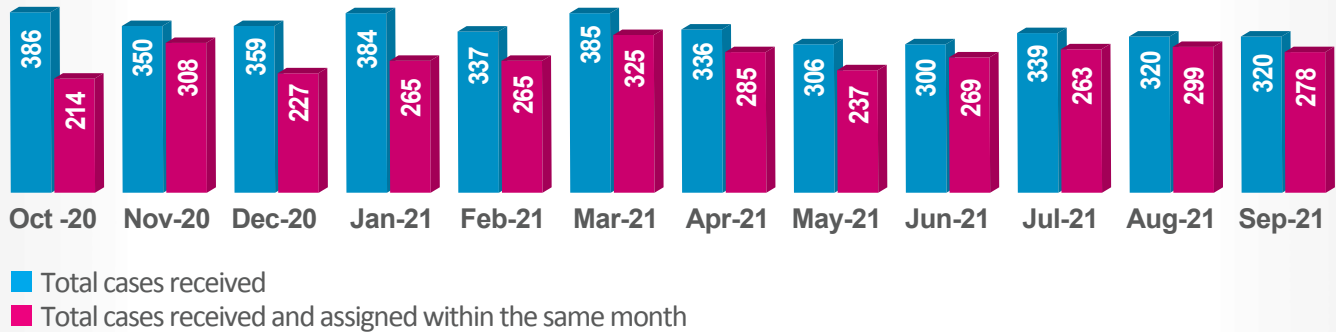
**13%** Emergency Response Team

**6%** Child Justice Unit

<sup>1</sup>The case information reported by Registry is at this time captured within a non-automated 'real-time' dashboard used to track types of calls received and generally reflects a few cases less than are actually input onto the client management database, particularly due to reports being received via internal referral channels or media reports. As such, there may be a nominal plus or minus difference between the Registry data and the actual number of cases documented within the database. For a more accurate reflection of total figures of cases received for this Fiscal period, see reporting data from the Research, Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation Unit's Caseload Analysis.

The Figure below shows the number of cases for each month that were assigned during the Fiscal period.

## ASSIGNMENT OF CASES WITHIN THE SAME MONTH RECEIVED OCTOBER 2020 - SEPTEMBER 2021



### Future Focus:

#### Outbound Operations of the Contact Centre

Over the next Fiscal, the Unit will seek to implement an Outbound Operations of the Contact Centre. The aim is to have a team focused on external communications via the appropriate mediums, depending on the stakeholder, to action/case manage low and no-risk cases, refer these to the relevant external agencies for support and engage in follow-up activities. The ultimate goal is timelier intervention and closure of cases.

#### Snapshot of Cases

##### Report of Sexual Abuse

The father of a female child reported that his daughter is being sexually abused by her [female] guardian. The father informed that a close friend of the alleged perpetrator called him and informed of sexual touching of the child's genitals and the child being exposed to pornography. According to the father, his daughter when questioned did share information that was consistent with sexually inappropriate behaviour. The father added that the child talks about sex in a manner that is beyond her age.

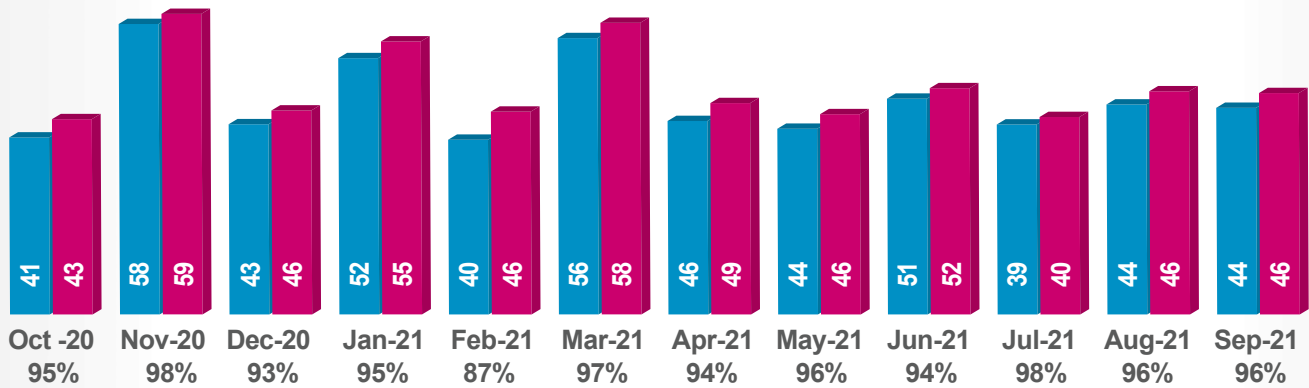
##### Report of Sexual Abuse

A partner agency reported the sexual abuse of siblings, perpetrated by their father. The children's mother admitted that when the older child was much younger, she disclosed that she had been abused by the father. However, the mother said at that time she had asked the child not to divulge the abuse to anyone, since she and the children's father/alleged perpetrator had recently married. The mother however reported the abuse of her youngest daughter to police after she saw a red substance in the toilet bowl after the child had used the toilet. On checking the child, the mother discovered that the child was bleeding.

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE UNIT

The Emergency Response Team (ERT) remains resolute in its role to achieve the Authority’s mandate by the execution of its duties to children in imminent danger. During the reporting period, the ERT responded to a total of five hundred and ninety (590) cases of children in imminent danger. Of this total, ninety-six (96) cases resulted in the removal of children to safer environments.

During this reporting period – September, 2021, ERT responded to 44 or **96%** out a total of 46 cases assigned within a 24hr time frame.



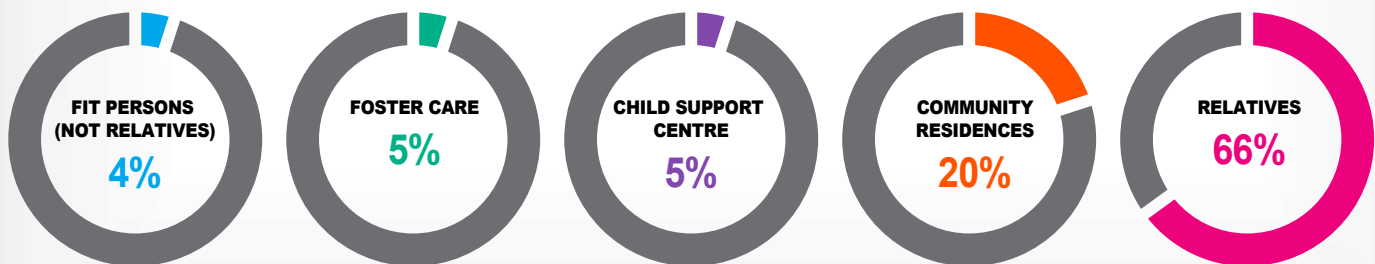
■ 24-hour response  
 ■ Cases assigned

ERT was able to respond in a timely manner to all cases of maltreatment of children. In instances where it was found that children were in imminent danger or it is likely that they would be in imminent danger, they were removed to a place of safety. Places of Safety are defined in the Children Act as a Reception Centre, Community Residence or a place appointed by the Authority which can include a Child Support Centre, family members, relatives, Fit Person or Foster Care.

### Placement of Children Received into Care

Although placement is a challenge for the Authority, the Emergency Response Team was able to find accommodation for children received into care with competent relatives, Foster Care, Community Residences, Fit Persons and at the Authority’s Places of Safety also known as Child Support Centres. Of the 96 children, 66 percent were placed with relatives, 20 percent at Community Residences, 5 percent at the Authority’s Child Support Centres and with Foster Care Parents and 4 percent with Fit Persons (not relatives).

## PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN RECEIVED INTO CARE



## Referrals

The Emergency Response Team (ERT) has been able to make a number of referrals both internally and externally. These referrals were necessary to improve client situations.

External referrals were made to schools to inform them of the change in guardianship of the children; to the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services for grants and to other stakeholders for counselling and other interventions. The external referral breakdown is as follows: Schools – 9; Ministry of Social Development and Family Services – 1; Other stakeholders – 3 (Rape Crisis Society – 1; Hospitals – 2)

Internal referrals were made to Units within the Authority for further intervention and monitoring. The breakdown is as follows: Child and Family Services Unit/ Investigation and Intervention Unit - 84; Legal - 66 and Assessment - 28.

## Snapshot of Cases

The Emergency Response Team has had many success stories during this reporting period. Three, however, are considered noteworthy based on the intervention of the team in the lives of the families:

1. A family was successfully reintegrated after spending a number of years in a cult-like setting. The children have adjusted well to their new environment and are thriving.
2. A child who experienced physical abuse was initially placed with her sister. However, there was placement breakdown, and the child was placed with her maternal uncle. The home of her maternal uncle has been a stable and supportive environment, where the child has settled down and is comfortable.
3. A boy who has been in the child care system for some time due to his father's mental health breakdowns, was lacking care and guardianship. After moving from numerous relatives who stated that they were not able to care for him, the child was placed with a Fit Person whom he knew since pre-school. The

Authority was able to provide support through counselling sessions and other psycho-social interventions to ensure rehabilitation of the child and transition into his new environment. Since that placement, the child has been smiling again and is thriving in his new environment which has provided him with stability, support and care.

## Success Story

### Wrap Around Services and Stakeholder Collaboration Towards Transition

A male child was received into care in 2017 due to child protection concerns that affected him and his siblings. He remained at a Children's Home for approximately four (4) years, where he was able to receive therapeutic intervention paid for by the Authority. He completed CXC and received a passing grade, as well as engaged in different training programmes. One such programme was a Barbering Course in which he excelled and received a scholarship from the Children's Home to participate in additional classes from the tutor. The Children's Home also provided life skills support in preparation for his transition to independent living.

Unfortunately, when he attained the age of eighteen (18), reintegration with his biological family was not possible. As a result, transition placement was sought and he was successfully transitioned to a facility where he would be able to receive the support of Case Workers, and additional psychosocial intervention to assist with his transition to adulthood. Furthermore, the Transition Facility was able to assist him in continuing Barbering School, which afforded him employment.

Ongoing support and intervention were also provided to the child's mother, who was referred for grants. She also received therapeutic intervention and parenting training sessions paid for by the Authority, transportation reimbursement to attend appointments and direct monitoring and psychoeducation by the Case Worker who was assigned to the other children in the family. As a result, one of the siblings was reintegrated with her and that placement has been stable for several years.



## THE INVESTIGATION UNIT

The Investigation Unit is responsible for investigating care and protection matters. During the period October 2020 to May 2021, a total of three thousand, one hundred and forty-one cases (3,141) of maltreatment against children were assigned to the Unit by the Authority's Registry. The cases related to various risk categories, which included sexual abuse, neglect, lacking care and guardianship and physical abuse, Children in need of Supervision/beyond control behaviour, children begging for alms and suicidal ideation.

The most prevalent types of abuse cases assigned for investigation were sexual abuse matters followed by neglect and physical abuse, while begging alms and suicidal ideation were lower on the continuum of cases reported and investigated. Out of the 3,141 cases reported, 1,612 cases were investigated by the Unit; out of those, 1,319 were investigated and closed.

The referral of clients for immediate intervention was also part of the Unit's operation. This was facilitated in instances when children were found requiring urgent intervention. The Unit referred 427 children to external stakeholders, including the National Family Services Division of the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services, the Division of Health, Wellness and Family Development, the Child Guidance Clinic, the Rape Crisis Society, the Social Welfare Division of the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services, and the Student Support Services Division of the Ministry of Education.

Therapeutic intervention, psychological assessment, academic monitoring and parent skills training were among the interventions required for clients by various stakeholders.

Once a child is found to be in imminent danger, the Emergency Response Team (ERT) will remove the child from his or her home. Similarly, during the investigation process, if Case Workers assess that a child is in

imminent danger the Investigation Unit will remove the child, and place the child in a secure environment.

During this period, 29 children were identified as requiring secure placement and were placed in either Foster Care, a Community Residence, in a caring family environment or with Fit Persons.

### Success Story

#### The Case of Nine Siblings

Nine siblings lacking care and guardianship were brought to the attention of the Authority following reports that they were often seen peddling random items on the street while their parents remained unemployed and dependent on monies collected by the children. The case was investigated and substantiated by the Authority, which found significant care and protection issues, as the children resided in a dilapidated one-room structure with their parents. Living conditions were unsanitary, the family lacked basic amenities, and the children's educational needs were neglected as they did not attend school. The eldest child expressed a desire to attend school since she had only attended Primary School due to the family's financial hardship.

Intervention by the Case Worker linked the clients to an NGO; which pledged to provide the family with their physical needs while CATT continued its monitoring and intervention to ensure capacity building. While working with the NGO, the family received support from various stakeholders who were alerted to the family's need. As a result, the family's home was rebuilt into a concrete structure and outfitted with the basic amenities such as: electricity, a pipe-borne water supply and furniture. The children received electronic devices and have been attending school virtually. A generous stakeholder is providing educational support to the eldest child who received an electronic device and is awaiting enrollment in a skills-training programme of her choice.

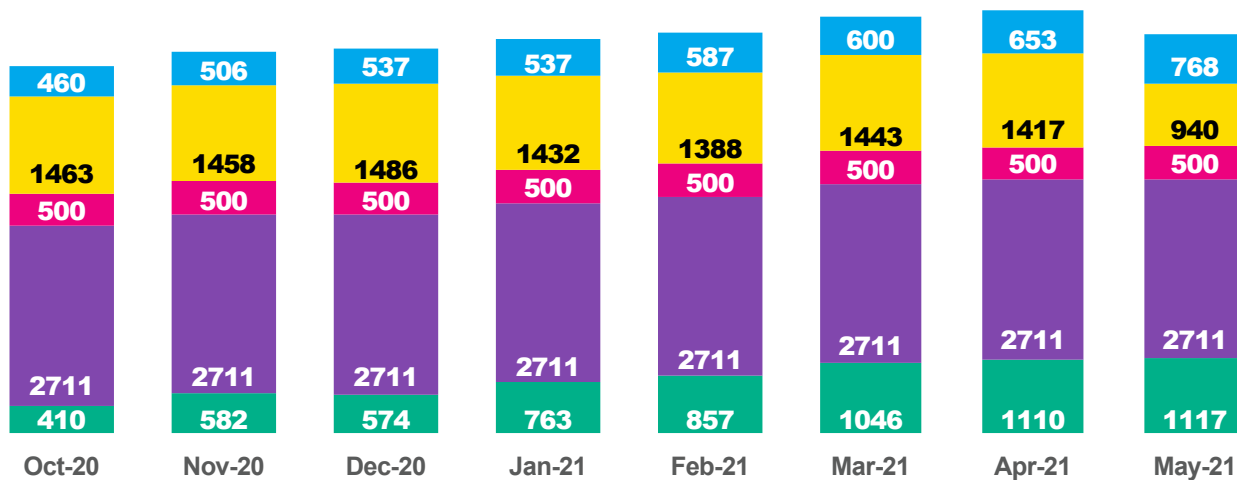
**For the period October 2020 to May 2021 the Investigation Unit operated as a single Unit. The data below represents the following:**

Category	Amount
Number of Cases investigated:	1,612
Number of Cases Closed with current period	1,319
Number of Referrals - external	427
Reports of maltreatment against children	3,141
Number of children removed from imminent danger	29

## CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES UNIT (CFSU)

The Child and Family Services Unit (CFSU) provides a range of services to children and their families, which aid in their rehabilitation and reunification. These services include support with family reintegration, transitional living, services for children who exhibit challenging behaviours, crisis intervention, referrals to external service providers, support of children in group care, monitoring of children who have been placed under a Supervision Order by the Court and monitoring of children placed in families requiring intensive support. The Unit also provides a variety of psycho-social interventions for children in need of care and protection and their families. The **Figure** below provides a breakdown of all cases within the Unit for the period October 2020 to May 2021.

### OVERVIEW OF CASES REFERRED TO CFSU CATEGORISED ACCORDING TO STATUS FOR PERIOD OCTOBER 2020 TO MAY 2021



- Cases closed
- Cases assigned to CSAs
- Cases assigned to Tele-social workers
- Cases in backlog project
- Cases unassigned within the unit (reoccurring)

The **Figure** represents cases received by CFSU from other internal Units of the Authority such as Investigations, Child Protection Registry, Licensing and Monitoring, Child Justice and Assessment.

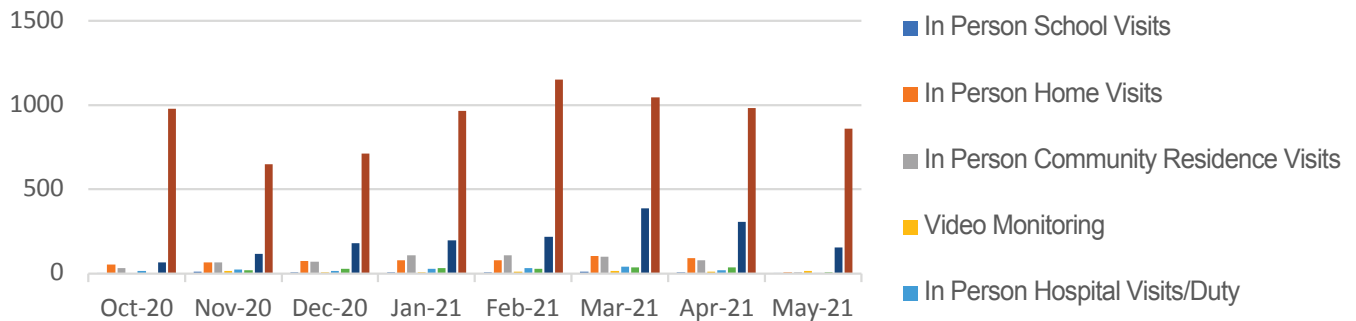
These cases were forwarded to CFSU for case management where services such as direct and indirect intervention, monitoring and reporting to the Courts were required. The rate of referral of new cases to the Unit surpassed the rate of closure of cases. This resulted in an extremely large caseload (over 100 cases) for each Children's Services Associate (CSA) within the Unit.

For the period under review, cases which were deemed of high priority and high-risk were assigned to CSAs for case management, as there was insufficient staffing to allow for 100% assignment of all cases. This resulted in a backlog of cases over time specifically for low and medium priority cases. During the reporting period, these backlogged cases were transferred to the Authority's Backlog Reduction Programme to be addressed.

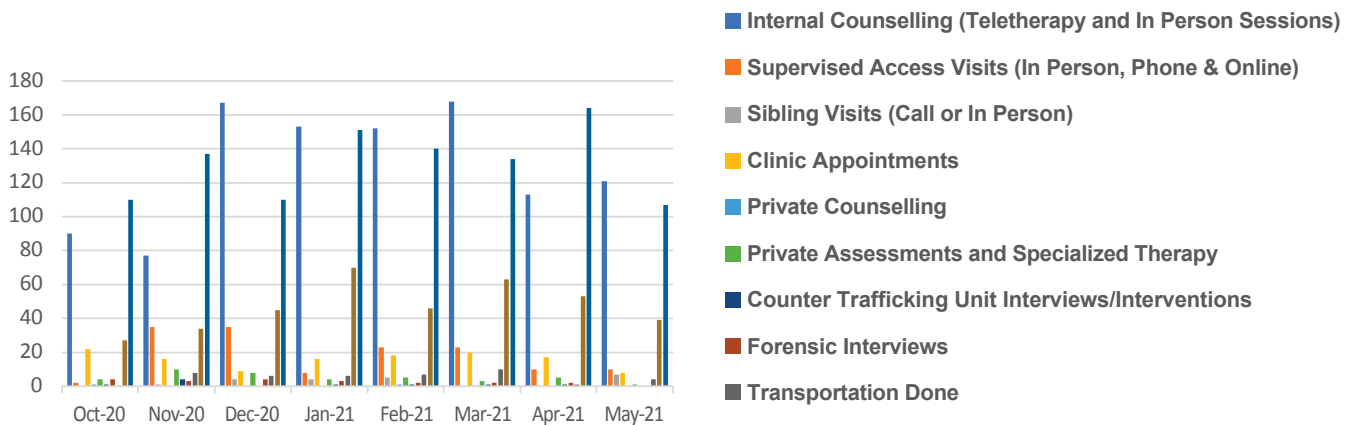
The **Table** below and subsequent **Figures** present data on interventions conducted with clients under the purview of CFSU for the period October 2020 to May 2021.

Type of Intervention (Monitoring)	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21
In Person School Visits	3	12	7	6	6	13	8	2
In Person Home Visits	55	66	76	81	79	104	90	9
In Person Community Residence Visits	34	65	69	107	107	101	79	6
Video Monitoring	0	14	7	8	10	16	13	14
In-Person Hospital Visits/Duty	15	24	15	30	35	43	19	4
Other In-Person Visits	0	20	28	33	28	39	39	7
Interviews with Clients (In-Person, Field, Office & Phone)	65	118	179	199	218	389	306	154
Monitoring Phone Calls	980	650	711	964	1150	1,046	983	859

### MONITORING INTERVENTIONS



### NON-MONITORING INTERVENTIONS



Type of Intervention (Non-Monitoring)	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21
Internal Counselling (Tele-therapy and In-Person Sessions)	90	77	167	153	152	168	113	121
Supervised Access Visits (In-Person, Phone & Online)	2	35	35	8	23	23	10	10
Sibling Visits (Call or In-Person)	0	1	4	4	5	0	0	7
Clinic Appointments	22	16	9	16	18	20	17	8
Private Counselling	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Private Assessments and Specialised Therapy	4	10	8	4	5	3	5	1
Counter Trafficking Unit Interviews/Interventions	1	4	0	1	1	1	1	0
Forensic Interviews	4	3	4	3	2	2	2	0
Transportation Done	0	8	6	6	7	10	1	4
Letters/Referrals Issued	27	34	45	70	46	63	53	39
Court Reports	110	137	110	151	140	134	164	107

## SHIFT TO NEW CASE MANAGEMENT MODEL

In May 2021, the Investigation and Intervention Unit (IIU) was formed, following the merger of the Investigation and Child and Family Services Units. This was as a result of the Authority's transition to a new Best Interest Regional Case Management Model. The IIU was divided into five zones, North, East, Central and South in Trinidad and Tobago. The Model allows for one Case Worker to be assigned to a case to conduct the investigation, follow-up, case management and interventions.

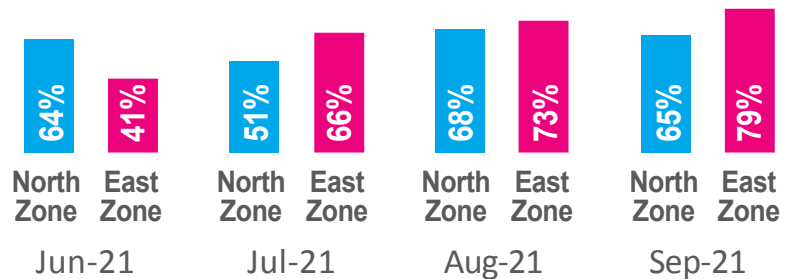
This new Case Management Model is designed to drive a collaborative and seamless approach to service delivery by the Authority, while also streamlining the investigation and interventions conducted for cases. It is expected that this approach would facilitate more timely rates of intervention and increase the number of cases receiving attention throughout the organisation.

The IIU's Key Performance Indicator (KPI) mandated that at least 60 percent of all cases assigned monthly should be either investigated, receive intervention and/or be monitored.

### CASES RECEIVING INTERVENTION, MONITORING AND/OR INTERVENTIONS

#### IIU NORTH, EAST ZONES

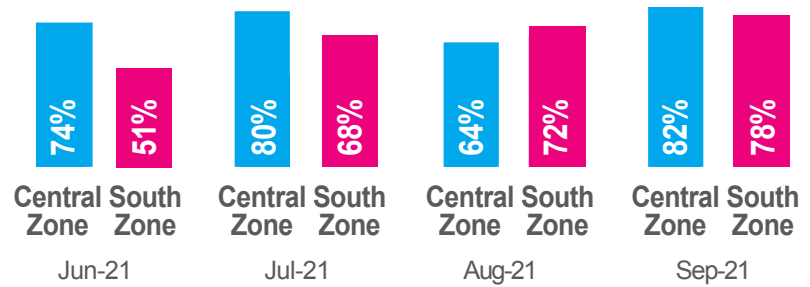
#### Percentage of Cases Receiving Investigation/Monitoring/Interventions



Percentage of Assigned Cases Receiving Investigation/Monitoring/Intervention June to September 2021					
		Cases Receiving Investigation/Monitoring/Interventions	Cases Not Receiving Investigation/Monitoring/Interventions	Percentage of Cases Receiving Investigation/Monitoring/Interventions	Percentage of Cases Not Receiving Investigation/Monitoring/Interventions
North	June	204	117	63.5	36.5%
East		161	230	41.2%	58.8%
North	July	211	205	51%	49%
East		277	145	66%	34%
North	August	342	160	68%	32%
East		367	137	73%	27%
North	September	352	189	65%	35%
East		439	118	79%	21%

## IIU CENTRAL, SOUTH ZONES

### Percentage of Cases Receiving Investigation/Monitoring/Interventions

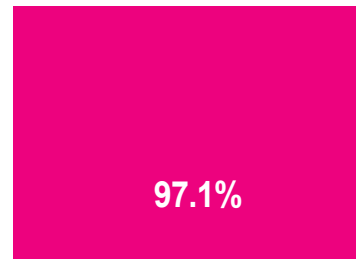


	Cases Receiving Investigation/Monitoring/Interventions	Cases Not Receiving Investigation/Monitoring/Interventions	Percentage of Cases Receiving Investigation/Monitoring/Interventions	Percentage of Cases Not Receiving Investigation/Monitoring/Interventions
June South	193	186	51%	49%
June Central	150	52	74%	26%
July Central 2021	306	246	80%	20%
July South 2021	318	145	68%	31%
August Central 2021	218	120	64%	36%
August South 2021	384	150	72%	28%
September Central 2021	293	63	82%	18%
September South 2021	427	122	78%	22%

## TOBAGO ZONE

Cases Assigned	Cases Investigated	Cases Closed	External Referrals	Reports of Maltreatment	Reports of Imminent Danger
May (15)	May (14)	May (15)			6
June (24)	June (14)	June (6)			
July (21)	July (18)	July (19)			
August (11)	August (11)	August (6)			
September (32)	September (21)	September (12)			
<b>103</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>6</b>

## Percentage of Cases Receiving Investigation/Monitoring/Interventions



Tobago Zone

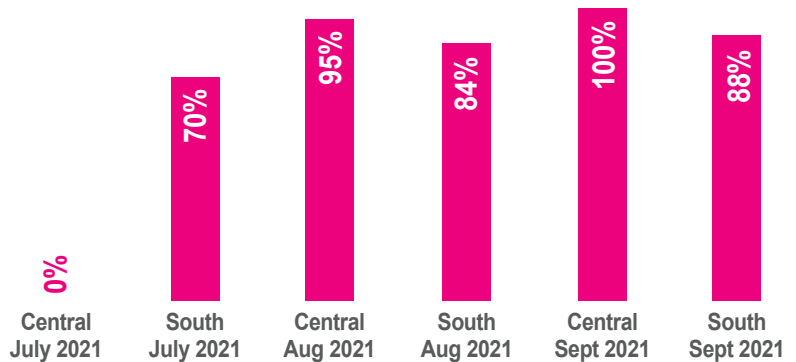
	Cases Receiving Investigation/Monitoring/Interventions	Cases Not Receiving Investigation/Monitoring/Interventions	Percentage of Cases Receiving Investigation/Monitoring/Interventions	Percentage of Cases Not Receiving Investigation/Monitoring/Interventions
<b>Tobago</b>	135	4	97.12%	2.87%

Some cases were brought forward to the new IIU, Tobago from the former CFSU hence, they were already investigated but being closed by IIU, Tobago.

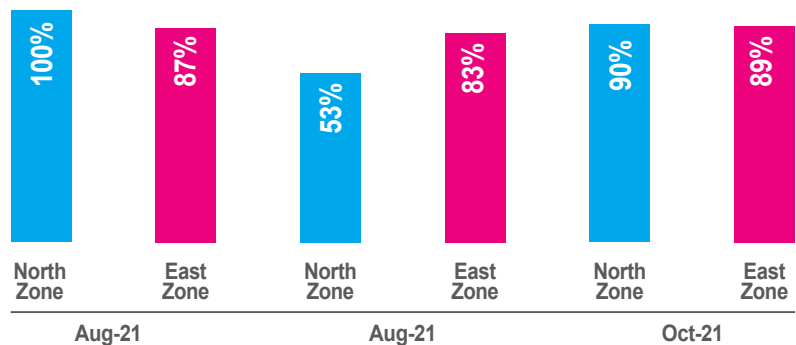
### CASE PLANS

#### CENTRAL, SOUTH ZONES

50% of case plans completed within one month of completion of investigation phase



Percentage of case plans completed within one month of completing investigation stage



## NORTH, EAST ZONES

### Snapshot of Cases

#### Team navigating challenges via collaboration

Two sisters engaged the attention of the Authority after they reported sexual and physical abuse. The Investigating Officer attached to the Child Protection Unit received instructions to arrest the mother, stepfather and step-grandfather. However, the mother had other children in her care and police were hesitant to remove the children without the assistance of the Authority. A case conference and planning session was conducted to co-ordinate the exercise. Case Workers and a Caregiver were identified to facilitate the removal of the children and arrangements were made with CPU to obtain an unmarked bus to transport the children. CATT's staff were advised that it was imperative to locate family members as placement was only sourced for one of the siblings. The team, with the assistance from police, was able to locate and conduct assessments at the residence of various relatives and placement was found for all siblings on the same day, thereby averting the need to place the children at Community Residences.

#### Supervised Access

A sibling group was removed from the care of their family after a report of neglect. One child was placed in the care of a Fit Person while the other siblings were placed in a Community Residence. As a result, the children had two separate Case Workers. Since the Court ordered that the children have weekly supervised access, their Case Workers developed a strategy to share the responsibility of facilitating Zoom meetings every Friday, due to COVID-19 restrictions. The Fit Person and the Community Residence were provided with the link and the Case Workers alternated the supervised access thus allowing for sibling bonds to be maintained.

## Success Story

### Managing a Challenging Client

Two children were removed from the care of their mother in 2018, based on reports that the children were at risk in her care. The report stated that there were concerns about the mother's mental health since she often displayed erratic behaviours and used drugs. In fact, the mother admitted to using marijuana during her pregnancy and while breast feeding. An initial medical evaluation conducted at eight (8) months, which included a urine drug test, confirmed cannabis exposure. One child was placed at a Community Residence and the other was placed in Foster Care for several months before being placed in the care of his biological father. Unfortunately, that placement has not been stable.

Initially, the children's mother was verbally and physically abusive to staff of the Authority. Through repeated efforts by Case Workers, rapport was built with the children's mother who became more cooperative with the interventions recommended by the Children Court and CATT. These included individual therapy and weekly supervised access visits with the children. The mother also made improvements to the physical structure of her home and secured a job, in preparation for the children's return. In 2020, the Court ordered that both children be returned to the care of their mother, where they remain to date. During continued monitoring of the family, the children appear to be nurtured and well. The Authority's team continues to conduct regular monitoring of the family to ensure the children are well cared for by their mother.



## ASSESSMENT

Once a child has been referred for assessment or forensic services, the Assessment Unit is activated. Clinical assessments are conducted by a multidisciplinary team, which includes a medical doctor and a psychologist and the findings of the assessments contribute to a Treatment Plan that outlines the most suitable placement and treatment recommendations for a child. The Assessment Unit may also coordinate Forensic Interviews and Forensic Medical Examinations for children who require them, as part of the Police investigation into a criminal offence allegedly committed against a child.

### **Provide care, protection and rehabilitation of children**

The following outlines a snapshot of caseload within the Unit for the period October 2020 to September 2021:

#### **Multidisciplinary Assessments (MDAs)**

117 new cases were referred to the Unit during the year. These cases and some that remained from the prior Fiscal Year were actioned, resulting in 158 MDAs being conducted during the reporting period. This comprised 769 clinical interviews, 397 psychological assessments and 142 medical examinations. 115 children, who previously were medically examined obtained a medical review. Additionally, 71 children who were being moved into a placement option were referred for medical screenings, which they received. This is regarded as an achievement as 158 children in need of care and protection benefitted from holistic assessments of their medical, psychological and familial needs. This is a 14% increase in the number of completed MDAs compared to the previous year. Timeframes for initiating these MDAs were also reduced from 3.5 months in the prior year to 1.5 months in this reporting period.

In addition, 217 Treatment Plans were completed for children who received MDAs over the 2020-2021 reporting period as well as from the prior Fiscal Year. This means that 217 children have individualised, targeted plans outlining the most suitable placement, rehabilitative goals and interventions for them and their families. This is a 64% increase in the number of completed Treatment Plans, compared to the prior reporting period.

These improvements were achieved despite multiple staff constraints within the Unit. Service delivery was optimised due to close management of assessment schedules and report deadlines, closer liaison with

internal and external caseworkers so as to avoid duplication of work, and training of stakeholders on the criteria to be met for cases referred for MDA. The latter resulted in a smaller number of cases which legitimately required an MDA being referred to the Authority.

#### **Forensic Medical Examinations**

Forensic Medical Examinations are full head-to-toe examinations whereby evidence is gathered and treatment, as needed, is provided to children who may be victims of physical and/or sexual abuse and who are the subject of a police investigation.

333 Forensic Medical Examinations were requested by Police for the year. Of these, 222 Forensic Medicals were conducted, with 58 scheduled for completion in the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2022 and 53 were not completed due to no-shows by clients or cancellations.

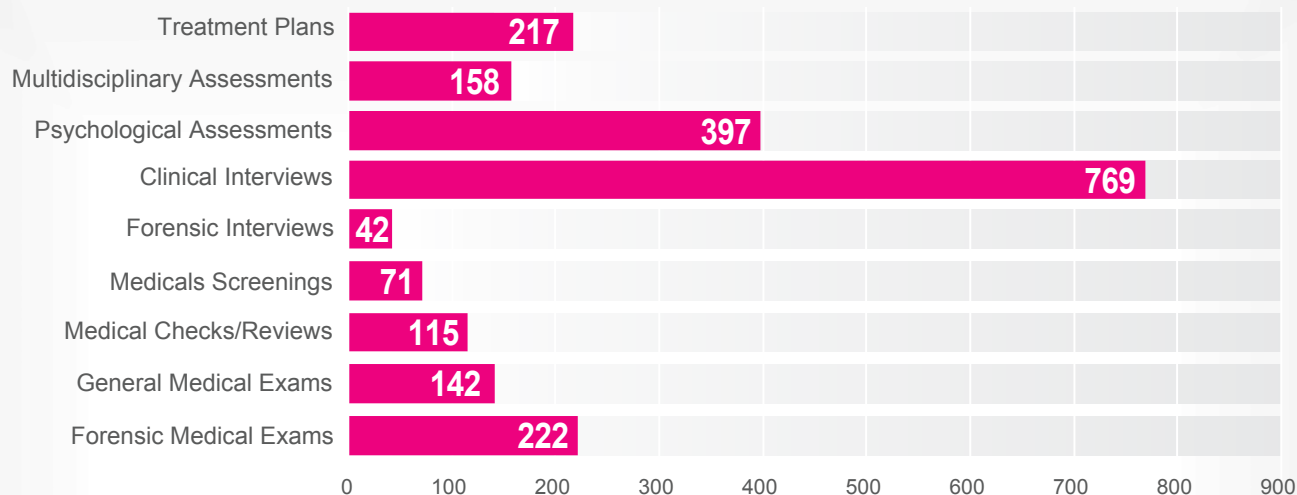
The completion of 222 examinations is regarded as quite an achievement as this was accomplished by only 5 Medical Doctors on staff at the Mt. Hope Assessment Centre, which is the only Centre with an operational medical function, based on the operationalised Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the North Central Regional Health Authority (NCRHA). This enabled the collection of medical evidence to support the criminal investigations into cases of child abuse and maltreatment, thereby increasing the chances of apprehending alleged perpetrators and bringing justice to child victims and their families.

#### **Forensic Interviews**

Forensic interviews are semi-structured, non-suggestive, legally defensible, child-friendly and developmentally- appropriate interviews used to gather a child's detailed account of events that he or she may have experienced or witnessed. This interview done in conjunction with the Police is used to gather a statement for the purpose of criminal investigations into an offence allegedly committed against a child.

39 Forensic Interviews were requested by Police for the year. Of these, 19 were conducted and 20 are scheduled to be completed in Financial Year 2022. 23 Forensic Interviews from the prior year were also conducted. As such, a total of 42 Forensic Interviews were conducted. This enabled the collection of Police statements to support the criminal investigations into cases of child abuse and maltreatment, thereby increasing the chances of apprehending alleged perpetrators and bringing justice to child victims and their families.

## Output by Assessment for Fiscal 2021



## Snapshot of Cases

### Emotional Abuse

A male child was referred for assessment due to rule-breaking, absconding from home, highly sexualised behaviours in public, a violent relationship with his parents, and being a victim of emotional abuse on account of his family's non-acceptance of his homosexual orientation; all of which resulted in his mother placing him before the Court and his receipt into State care.

### Sexual Abuse Claims

A female child was referred for assessment due to her vacillating claims that she was sexually abused by her stepfather. The child alleged that the abuse was witnessed by her brother, but vehemently denied by their mother and stepfather.

### Success Story

#### Reintegration Despite Tragedy

This sibling group was under the supervision of both CFSU and Foster Care. Three older children who lived with an aunt were monitored by CFSU while the youngest child was in Foster Care.

Due to sexual and physical abuse perpetrated by their father, the children were received into care. The CFSU and Foster Care Teams worked closely with the mother to ensure that she was receiving intervention, and that she had access to the children. Her husband, who was the father of the youngest child was incarcerated. However, the father who had been released from prison, subsequently murdered the children's mother.

The Authority had to remove the three older children from the care of their aunt but they were reintegrated along with their youngest brother in the care of another relative. Monitoring continues and the children have

been enrolled in school and are doing well since the case's closure in June 2021.

### Stable after experiencing years of abuse

A female child was referred for assessment due to alleged physical abuse by her father. During the assessment, the child revealed that since the age of ten (10) years, she was physically, emotionally and verbally abused by her father. She recalled being beaten with a leather belt on multiple occasions, receiving between six to eighteen lashes at a time depending on his mood, as well as being beaten with a dog's chain. She disclosed being knocked unconscious on one occasion and her father dislocating his own arm due to the force he used while beating her.

The child reported sustaining bruises and lacerations during the beatings, and that her father frequently cursed, shouted and threatened to kill her while he was beating her. She further revealed that after her father discovered that she had kissed a boy when she was thirteen (13) years old, he beat her badly and threatened to "make her his personal prostitute." The child noted that she was skilled at hiding the abuse, so for years nobody was aware of what was taking place, until a concerned citizen reported the abuse and she was removed from her father's care and placed with a relative.

Clinicians were able to conduct assessments which revealed diagnoses of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, Child Neglect, Child Physical Abuse, and Child Psychological Abuse. The child's Treatment Plan endorsed placement with the relative who provides her with a safe, stable and nurturing environment in which she has settled.

The child is receiving Therapeutic Intervention to process her emotions and life experiences.

## FOSTER CARE

The Foster Care Unit is responsible for the management of the Foster Care system. Once placement occurs with a Foster Care provider, the Foster Care team monitors the children in their care as well as provides support to the foster parents. Throughout this process, the Unit continues to work towards permanency planning for all children in care, where appropriate, possible and in the best interests of the child.

At the end of Fiscal 2021, there were 83 children in Foster Care. For the period, 35 new children were placed in Foster Care, including several emergency short term placements of children. Eleven (11) children were reintegrated with their birth families or placed into family environments. During the period under review, there were 23 respite arrangements which were made by foster families for brief periods.

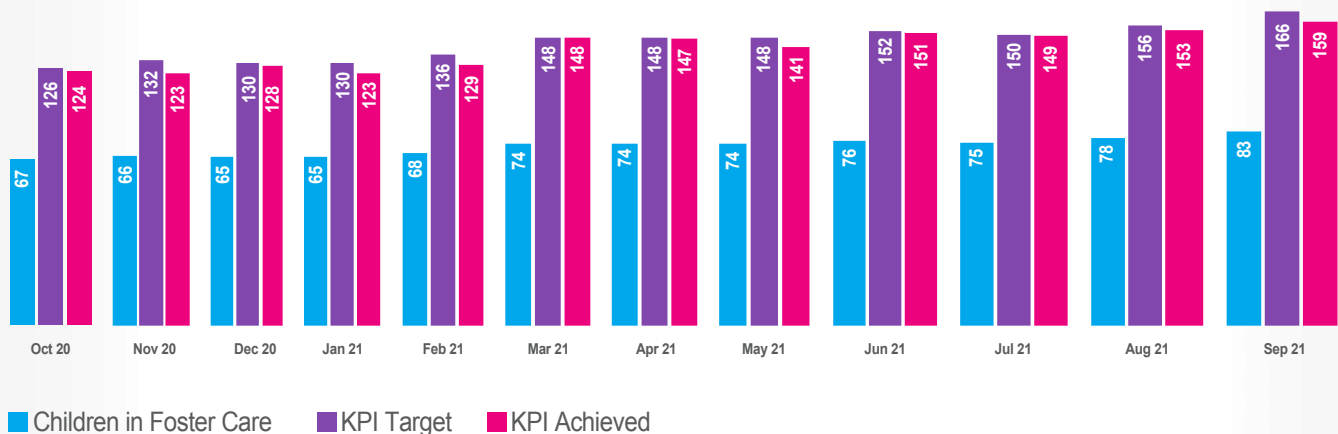
The Foster Care Unit made 41 referrals for interventions from partner agencies for children and their families of origin – this ranged from psychological support, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, assistance with housing, and parenting training. Due to a lack of specialist therapeutic intervention available within the public sector, waiting periods were sometimes protracted to access additional support for children and their families.

During the Fiscal, approximately 74 internal placement requests forms were received by the Foster Care Unit. Placement requests are received from all Units within the Authority, while external referrals for placement of a child would come through Registry or the Investigation and Intervention Unit.

### Monitoring

Monitoring of the children in Foster Care by the Foster Care Unit may take many different forms – especially in light of the pandemic restrictions. These may be conducted face-to-face, via telephone or virtually. Monitoring also takes place when the team facilitates transportation for therapeutic intervention and medical appointments. For the period, the team conducted 505 home visits, 18 school visits, 418 supervised access visits with birth families, as well as 3,177 telephone monitoring calls with foster parents.

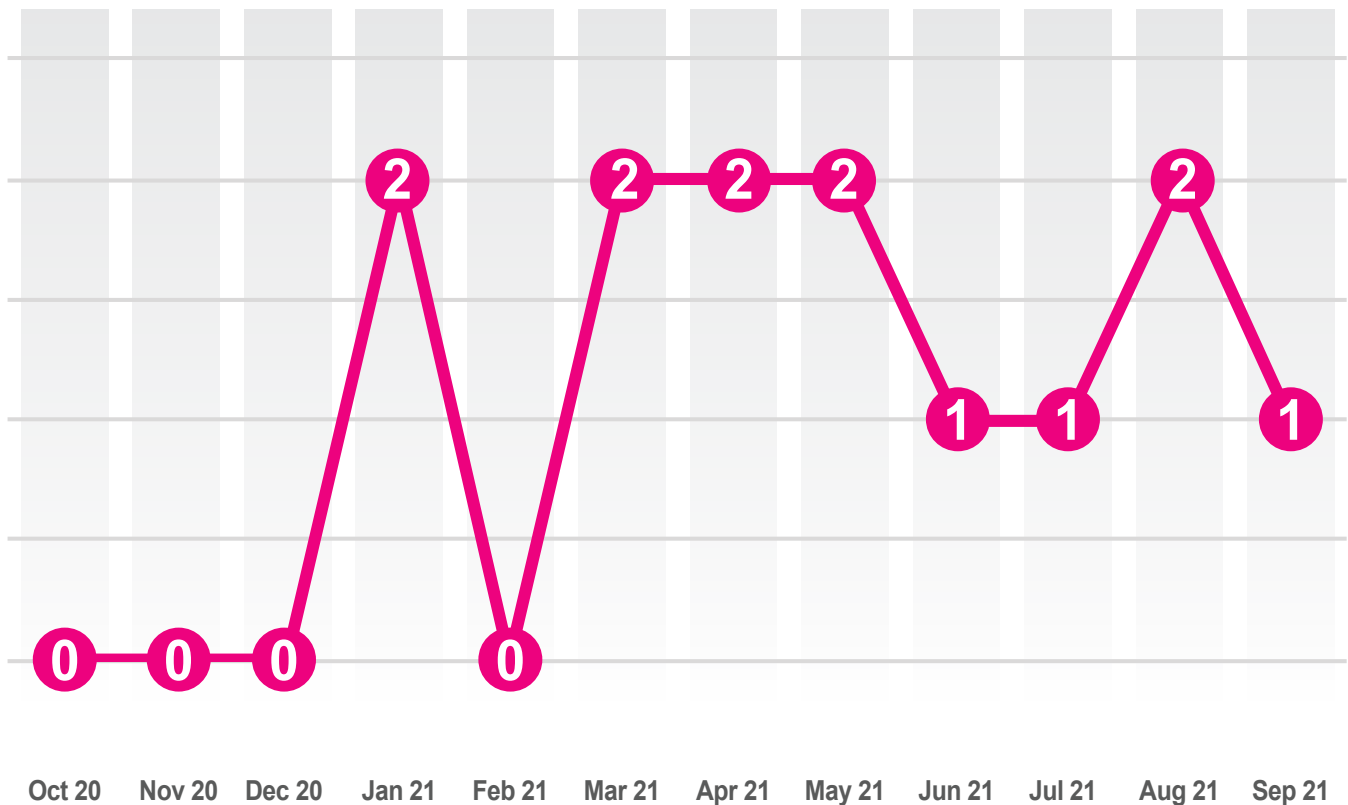
### Monitoring of Children in Foster Care



### Number of applications for Foster Care

The management of the Foster Care system also involves the assessment and approval of new foster parents to provide temporary alternative care options for children in need of care and protection. During Fiscal 2021, 84 expressions of interest in Foster Care were received via phone or email, but only 25 application forms were received. In response to the completed application forms, the Foster Care Unit initiated the assessment process. As such, the team conducted 16 home assessments, 21 in-depth interviews, 21 psychological assessments, 21 background checks, and 38 references checks. In total, 13 foster parents were approved for the period under review. In conducting recruitment efforts to encourage persons to become Foster Care providers, 38 sensitisation sessions were facilitated, including virtual outreach sessions to various NGOs and faith-based organisations (FBOs), as well as the facilitation of media interviews. The Unit also conducted eight (8) training sessions for new applicants and existing foster care providers. At the end of Fiscal 2021, 33 applications were at varying stages of being assessed.

## Approvals of New Applicants



### Disaggregation of Tobago cases

At the end of Fiscal 2021, there were 5 approved Foster Care providers in Tobago and the Foster Care Unit had placed 7 children in Foster Care in the sister isle. Only one of these children was successfully reintegrated with their birth family.

For the period under review, there were two (2) newly approved Foster Care providers in Tobago.

### Success Stories

#### Child in Foster Care for 13 years successfully transitioned to independent living –

Two minors were placed in Foster Care in 2018 due to severe neglect. According to reports, the children were left unsupervised at their home with insufficient food for long periods. Over the years, the girl had a history of sexual assault and engaged in inappropriate and at-risk behaviours while in Foster Care.

In light of these behaviours, the child experienced three incidents of placement breakdown. The Foster Care Unit was able to mediate, where possible and offer support such as ongoing therapeutic intervention and strengthening of the relationship between the child and her birth mother. Whilst in Foster Care, the child was also able to engage in positive activities such as Tae Kwan Do and dance, since she was very passionate and driven in these activities.

She was also registered for a beauty course and was preparing to sit CSEC in June 2021. As she approached the age of 18 years, the assigned Case Worker was able to develop a transition plan, as well as put the necessary arrangements in place to enable this, such as obtaining an ID card, opening a bank account, exploring potential living options and obtaining resources required for independent living (furniture, household items, etc.). In April 2021, the girl was able to successfully transition to independent living with the support of her birth mother.

### Reunification of 3 siblings in Foster Care

In November 2020, three siblings were referred by the Police to the Authority following sexual and physical abuse, and educational neglect.

The children had been brought to the Police by their mother, and due to the need for emergency placement, the children were separated among two foster homes - the baby was placed with one foster provider, and the two older siblings were placed together with a family member. The Investigations team continued to explore potential family options for the children, and eventually they were reintegrated with an uncle in December 2020. However, in February 2021, the children were once again brought to the attention of the Authority, and the baby was placed in the previous foster home. However, due to a lack of available Foster Care placement options, the older siblings were located at a Community Residence. In September 2021, the two older siblings were successfully reunited with their younger sister in the same foster home.

## ADOPTION

There are three major stakeholders involved in the Adoption process:

- The Prospective Adoptive Parent
- The Adoptee
- The Birth Parent

There is a thorough screening process which aims to determine the suitability of the Prospective Adoptive Parent (PAP) to appropriately respond to the social, emotional, physical and educational needs of a child.

The Adoption process managed by the Authority may include the following steps depending on the type of adoption being sought:

- Information Session
- Application Process (submission of relevant forms and documents)
- Psychosocial Assessment and Background Check
- Notification of Approval
- Matching Process
- Briefing Session to select adoptee
- Interaction Session with Adoptee and Prospective Adoptive Parents
- Probationary Period
- Application for Adoption Order
- Adoption Finalised

During Fiscal Year 2021, approximately six (6) children came to the attention of the Adoption Unit. These children included referrals from other Units, where options of placement such as reintegration or placement with a Fit Person were explored, birth parents came to the Unit expressing an interest in placing their child for adoption or children were abandoned at the hospitals and brought to the attention of the Adoption Unit.

### Placement of Children

Approximately sixteen (16) adoption cases were completed by the Unit with recommendations to the Court to grant an Adoption Order in the best interest of the children. These adoptions were approved and

granted and the children are currently in permanent homes. Out of these sixteen adoptions, four (4) children were placed by the Children's Authority (Closed Adoptions) and twelve (12) were Open Adoptions or a Kinship Adoption.

### Monitoring of Children in Community Residences

Once a child has been brought to the attention of the Adoption Committee with a recommendation to free that child for adoption, and the child is freed by the Court, the child is monitored by the Case Workers attached to the Adoption Unit. These children are placed temporarily in either a Community Residence or with a foster carer.

Children for adoption are assigned to a respective Children's Services Associate (CSA) and are monitored on a monthly basis, with the following information presented to the Adoption Committee for each child: the reason for child's placement for Adoption, social, emotional, developmental milestones, and the child's educational, medical and feeding habits.

### Monitoring of Children with Prospective Adoptive Parents

Once a prospective adoptee and Prospective Adoptive Parents (PAPs) have completed the requisite ten (10) week interaction sessions without any concerns, the next step is to place the child into the care of the PAPs.

During the period under review, six (6) children were placed in the care of the PAPs and are being monitored throughout the six-month period by their respective CSA. Feedback from the monitoring sessions are presented to the Adoption Committee. They include a Home Visit to the PAPs residence where a thorough interview is conducted with both the PAP and the prospective adoptee. If the child has been enrolled in a daycare or school, these respective persons are also interviewed. At the end of the Fiscal, the Unit is managing 52 approved PAPs on the list of suitable persons, five (5) children are available for adoption (these are children who were freed by the Court for adoption and can be matched with persons on the suitable list) and the six (6) children who are currently being monitored during the 6-month probationary period.

## ADOPTION UNIT

No. of Applications	No. of PAPs	No. of children ready for adoption	No. of children adopted in 2021	Average time for open and closed adoption	No. of children on probation
271	52	5	14	Closed: timeframe indeterminate Open: approximately 1 year	8

### Success Stories

#### Sibling Group of Three Adopted

In the 2021 Fiscal Year, Adoption Orders were granted for two (2) sets of sibling groups; one group was placed by the Authority and the other was a 'Kinship' Adoption.

The first sibling group comprised 3 children. The children had spent most of their lives in Community Residences and came to the attention of the Adoption Unit as a referral from the then Child and Family Services Unit. Before matching the children and commencing the interaction sessions, each child was interviewed by a CSA to determine whether or not they had a desire to live together, with a family. The children were spoken to individually and all expressed positive sentiments. The children were subsequently matched with a couple who were willing to accept older children and also children who presented with learning disabilities. The children and the PAP underwent the 10-week face-to-face interaction sessions which were monitored by the Unit. Upon successful completion, the children were placed into the couple's care for a probationary period of six months, which progressed smoothly.

The children continue to voice their happiness at being able to live "in a house" and have a family. Upon successful completion of the probationary period, the Adoption Unit and by extension the Adoption Committee approved the recommendation for an Adoption Order to be granted. This was done in October, 2020.

#### Sibling Group of Four Adopted

This was a 'Kinship' Adoption, as four (4) siblings were adopted by their relatives. The children subsequently migrated to the United States. The Adoption Order was granted in 2021.

## CHILD SUPPORT CENTRE

The Children's Authority Act, Section 14 stipulates that "the Authority shall maintain Assessment, Support Centres, and Reception Centres," and that "a Reception Centre shall be responsible for the temporary care of children received by the Authority".

Section 3 of the Children Act 2012 defines a Place of Safety as a Reception Centre established under Section 14 of the Children's Authority Act, a Community Residence or any place appointed by the Authority to be a Place of Safety for the purpose of the Act and redefines these as places that adequately provide and care for children requiring emergency accommodation for a period not exceeding 12 weeks. The Authority's Child Support Centres were established to provide emergency and short-term placements to facilitate the removal of children to a location that is secure, child-friendly and professionally staffed.

The Authority manages four (4) Child Support Centres (CSCs) which seek to provide short-term residential accommodation for children in need of care and protection as well as children who are deemed by the Court to be Children in need of Supervision (CHINS).

In an effort to provide rehabilitative care to the children who reside at the Centres, 1,500 individual psychosocial sessions were conducted. These were followed by 237 psychosocial interviews which seek to help children cope with placement, develop socio-emotional skills, and assist the Case Worker in keeping abreast of the child's development as well as problem-solve any

internal or external challenges. These exercises often take place in a group setting.

Clients in need of counselling or psychotherapy were also supported and 736 psychological treatment sessions were facilitated.

As it relates to family contact, 139 visits were made possible between a child and his or her family and there was a total of 1,998 calls to respective parents, guardians or potential Fit Persons.

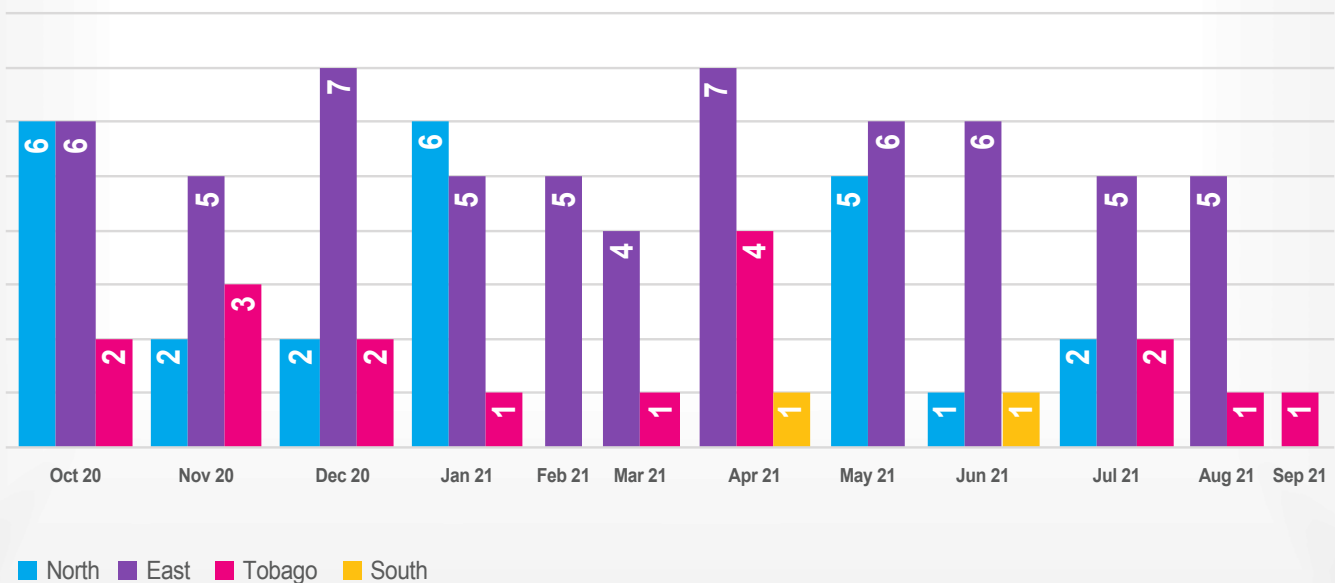
### Discharges

The Figure below shows the number of children discharged from the Child Support Centres during the period October 2020 to September 2021. During the period, a total of 111 children were admitted at the CSCs and 110 children were discharged into the care of suitable Fit Persons, parents, Community Residences, and foster carers.

However, when the Fiscal began in October 2020, the CSCs had 45 children in care but by the end of Fiscal 2021, a total of 46 children remained at the CSCs.

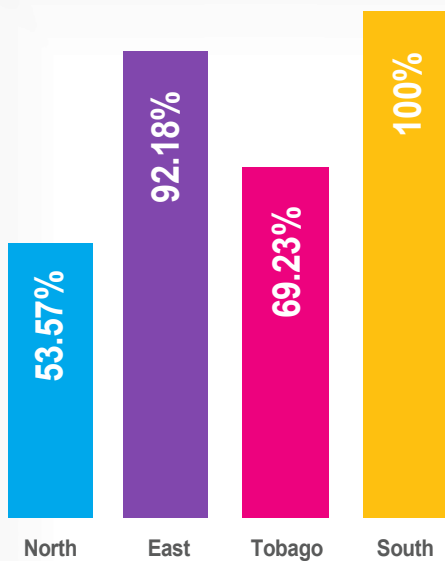
Given the lack of residential facilities for children with challenging behaviours the Authority has had to place all children with varying risks levels at the same facility. The CSCs are designed to provide support and rehabilitation in a residential community and are not outfitted as a jail/detention centre. However, an absconding incident involving five boys in March 2021 requires the organisation to make key changes to its operations, which is still a work in progress.

## Number of Discharges Oct 2020 - Sept 2021





## Number of Care Plans Completed



### Care Plans at CSCs

At the CSCs, Care Plans are created to serve as a roadmap regarding the best way to provide for a child's needs. They include demographic information, a list of persons involved in the care planning process, short-term recommendations/interventions, inclusive of goals to meet the following needs of the child:

- i. Physical
- ii. Educational
- iii. Medical (immunisation, medication, chronic illness, dental, optical and auditory care, reports on disability, sexual reproductive health)
- iv. Spiritual
- v. Emotional/Psychosocial
- vi. Psychological (highlighting the need for psychiatric assessment)
- vii. Environmental/Placement
- viii. Behavioural challenges

Moreover, the Care Plan consists of information on the child's case history detailing the reason the child was deemed in imminent danger and removed from his/her home, the type of Court Order the Authority has for the child, and a list of approved persons in the child's support system.



### Number of Care Plans from Oct 2020 to Sep 2021

Typically, Care Plans are completed within two weeks to one month of the child being admitted to a CSC. Information to create the Care Plan is collated from investigative reports, case notes completed by the previous Case Worker, and approved Treatment Plans.

During the period under review, CSC North completed 15 Care Plans out of the 28 children admitted, CSC East completed 59 out of the 64 children admitted, CSC Tobago completed nine out of the 13 children admitted, and CSC South completed six for the six children that were admitted.

### Challenges

The Authority continues to note an increase in the number of children with mental health diagnoses who require long-term psychiatric care. In many instances there is a lack of placement options at Community Residences or opportunities for reintegration with family, which significantly affects the length of time children remain at the Centres. This is certainly worrying for the Authority as institutionalised care is not in the best interest of the development of a child. The Authority will continue to advocate for increased intervention services for children in care.

During the period under review, the Child Support Centres made significant progress in areas of staffing, policies, training, and extra-curricular activities for the residents.

### Successes

- All residents registered in school are engaged in their respective online educational programmes. Residents who are not registered in school were engaged by a tutor or enrolled in the Adult Literacy Tutors Association (ALTA) Programme.
- A laptop/computer drive was conducted to facilitate online schooling for residents at the CSCs. Twenty (20) desktops were donated by Heritage Petroleum Company Limited, and under the Ministry of Education's laptop programme, the Office of the Prime Minister (Gender and Child Affairs) donated 10 laptops.
- Two residents were successfully signed up for CSEC Social Studies.
- Five residents who sat the Secondary Entrance Assessment (SEA) examinations were successfully placed.
- Re-admission of a resident into a tertiary institution.

## CHILD JUSTICE UNIT

During the Fiscal Year under review, the Child Justice Unit (CJU) continued to support Children in Conflict with the Law (CCL) and Children in Need of Supervision (CHINS) at the attention of the Children Court in North, South and Tobago. The CJU bore responsibility for processing Court Orders, completing assessments and attending Court on behalf of the Authority.

In June 2020, the Child Justice Unit assumed Case Management responsibilities for the CHINS and continued Order Management for Children in Conflict with the Law (CCL). By June 2021, the Team officially assumed Case Management responsibilities for four hundred and sixty (460) CHINS with full responsibility for an additional 52 cases, bringing the total to five hundred and twelve (512) cases before the team’s attention, by the end of the reporting period.

It must be noted that cases come to the attention of CJU via Court Order. An adult (usually the child’s parent or guardian) makes an application to the Court because of challenging behavioural presentations of their child. The Court would seek interventions and expertise to manage the child’s circumstances through Court Orders.

All cases are assigned internally for casework. Where a child may benefit from services provided by other parties, CJU would assist the family by making referrals. The Court would also regularly make Orders for the support of other stakeholders e.g. Probation Service, St. Ann’s Children’s Ward and the Court Social Services Unit. These agencies would collaboratively assist the child and family along with CJU based on the instructions of the Court.

A critical function of providing timely response to child protection matters requires the Authority to ensure requests for interventions are addressed timely. During the reporting period, the Child Justice Unit received, reviewed and dispatched over 2,500 Orders for CHINS and CCL so that urgent intervention could be provided. Orders addressed to the Authority from the Children Court carry instructions for urgent assessments, investigations, monitoring, placement, case conferencing, Care Plans and referrals.

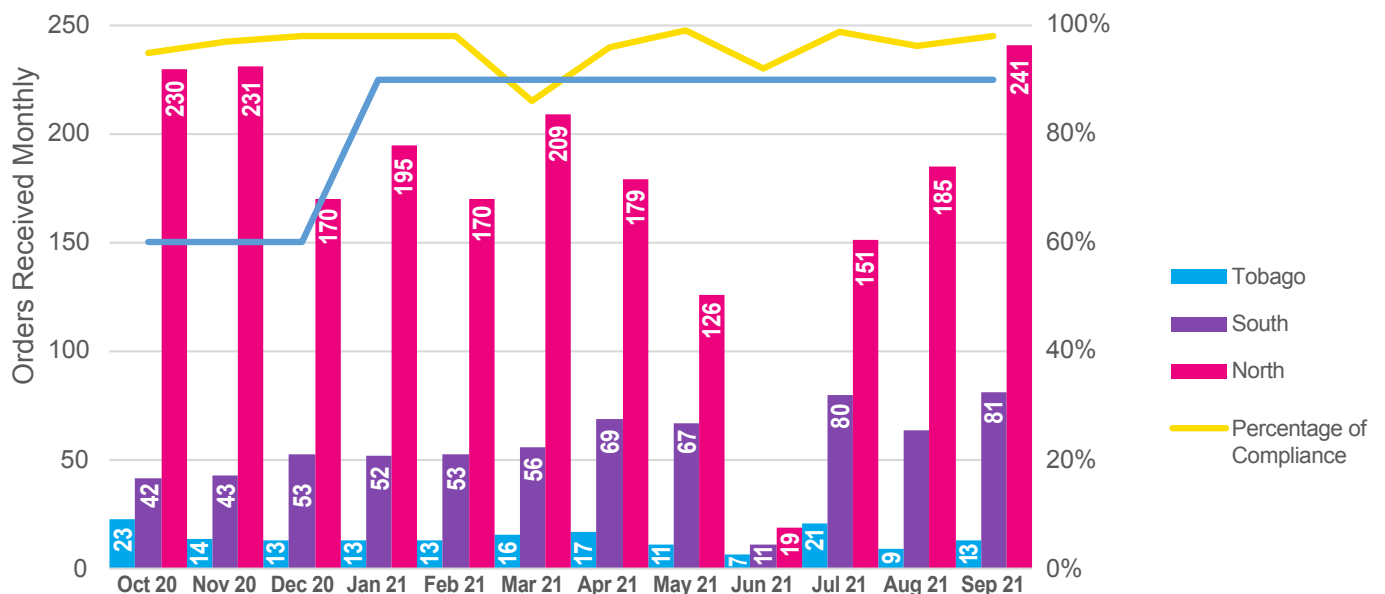
The Children Court often leans on the expertise of the Authority to determine the next steps for children at its attention. The Child Justice Unit representatives attend Court frequently to provide guidance to the Court on matters before its attention, in particular for Children in Need of Supervision. Team members would attend Court, represent the child’s interest, make recommendation for strategies aimed at intervention and behaviour modification for minors in Conflict with the Law and CHINS, and clarify decisions regarding a child’s placement and their child protection needs. During the period, the team attend over 1,300 matters.

Following urgent Children Court matters for CHINS, the Authority is mandated to transport minors for a medical and to their placement location. The team during the Fiscal complied with 80 percent of urgent Court requests.

In addition to sending over 700 Court lettered correspondence for the Fiscal Year, the team submitted 200 reports and hosted over 3,000 virtual follow-up sessions with clients.

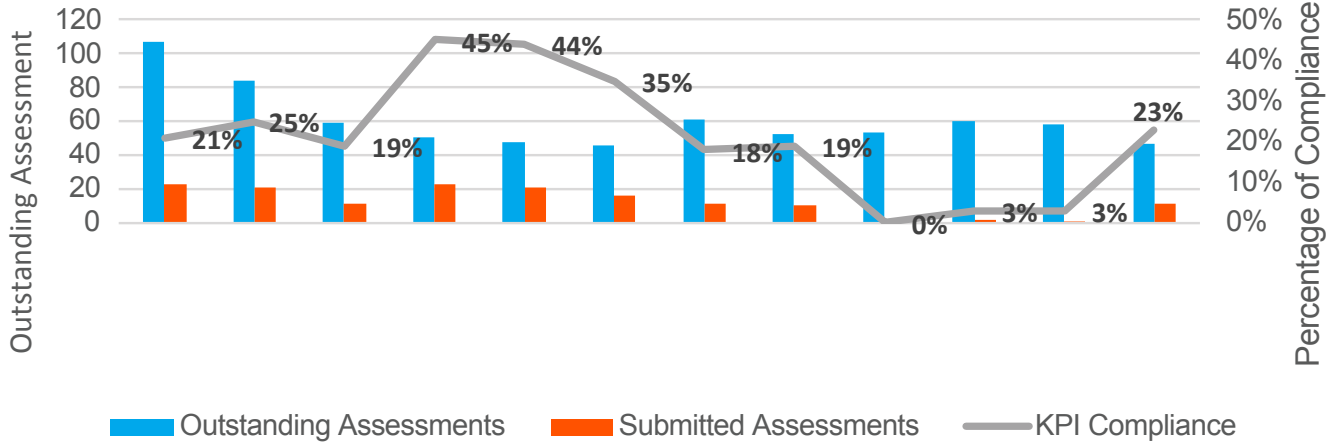
### Court Orders - Processing of 90% of Court Orders received for a given month

Orders Received and Percentage Compliance for processing of Orders October 2020 - September 2021



10% reduction of all outstanding CJU assessment JIFF, YLSCMI & YLSCMI 2.0

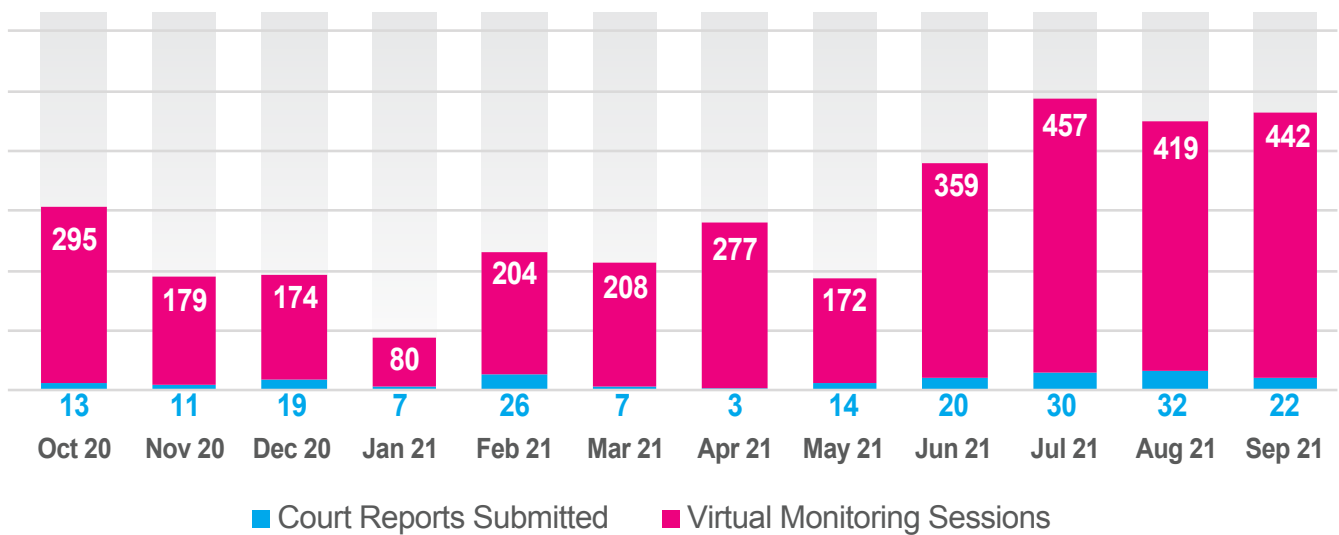
### Reduction in outstanding Court ordered Assessments October 2020-September 2021



The Unit's goal on reducing only 10% of outstanding assessments was due to the number of staff within the department. The graph depicts the unit being able to surpass its 10% reduction during the period December 2020 to June 2021. However, when the Unit began the transition to case manage the Children in Need of Supervision (CHINS) Population, there was a reduction in completing outstanding assessments.

### Case Management Responsibilities

### Case Mangement Responsibilities October 2020-September 2021

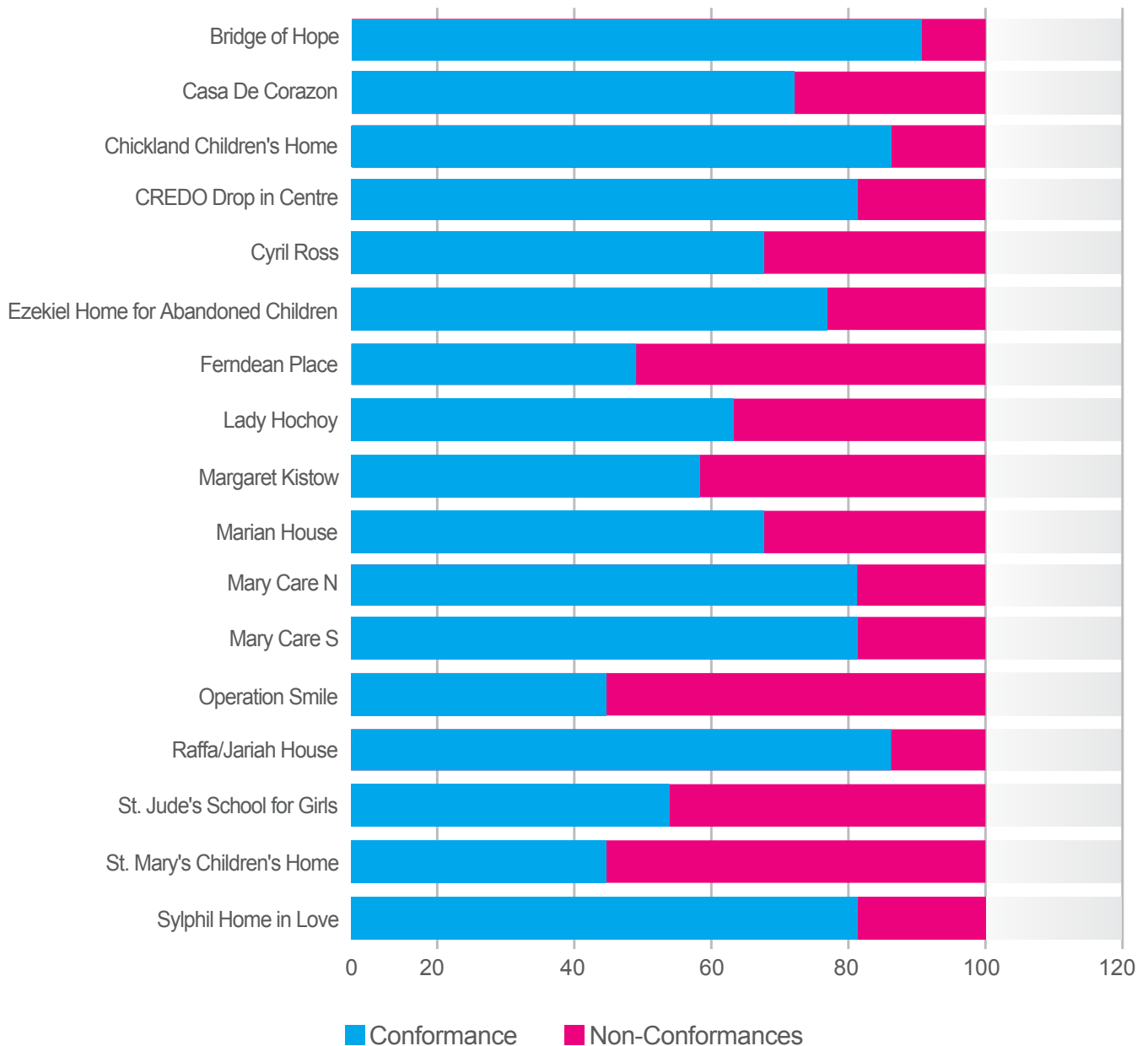


## LICENSING AND MONITORING

The Licensing and Monitoring (L&M) Unit, during the period October 2020- September 2021 continued its duties as the regulatory and monitoring arm of the Authority for Children's Homes. The Unit focused on the issuance and revocation of residence licences to Children's Homes as well as the monitoring of all Homes and designated rehabilitation centres.

During the Fiscal Year, three Children's Homes - El Shaddai Restoration Home, the Community Residence in Lambeau and Joshua Home for Boys - achieved licensure. These licences were issued from quarter two, when a Board was appointed to the Authority that could issue such approvals.

### Status of Licensing (17 Homes)



The Unit successfully transitioned 10 residents from Cecilia's Children's Home following an investigation into its operations in December 2020. The findings necessitated the removal of all the children from the Home. Upon finalisation of the Police investigation, a determination will be made regarding the Home's licence.

During the period under review, 265 children were successfully admitted into Children's Homes and 22 residents attained adulthood. The children placed into residential care comprised four categories: children received into care due to child protection concerns following investigations by ERT and IIU; placement breakdowns with Fit Persons and foster parents; CHINS placed into the care of the Authority by the Court; and foreign nationals, who were victims of human trafficking or part of families intercepted by the Immigration Division for illegal entry into Trinidad and Tobago. By the end of the Fiscal, 622 children were receiving care and accommodation at Children's Homes.

The Unit was instrumental in coordinating with the Ministry of Health for the provision of influenza immunisation for residents in Homes in October 2020. In June 2021, the Unit coordinated with the Line-Ministry and the Ministry of Health to successfully vaccinate 270 employees at Community Residences against COVID-19. Additionally, with the availability of the Pfizer vaccine in August, the I&M Unit continues to collaborate with the Homes to ensure that all residents aged 12 and above obtain parental consent to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. At the end of September 2021, 94 of the 305 children eligible for the vaccine had received their shot.

The Unit continued to engage the Homes at quarterly meetings, where discussions took place on action plans to achieve licences, service providers for programmes for residents, COVID-19 Infection, Prevention and Control (IPC) protocols as well as the vaccination of residents and staff.

In January 2021, two sensitisation sessions were conducted in Tobago. One session addressed the Children's Community Residences (Children's Homes) Regulations 2018 with members of the Facilities Review Team of the Division of Health, Wellness and Family Development (DHWFD), while the second session was held with the Managers and caregivers of the three Tobago Homes on Managing Difficult Behaviours in Children as well as the regulatory legislation. L&M has also conducted meetings with potential corporate sponsors for projects at Children's Homes.

To maintain the safety of the residents and staff of Community Residences during periods of national increase in COVID-19 cases, monitoring was conducted through phone calls and virtual sessions. Complaint visits that could be addressed via phone or video call were also conducted. However, in comparison to in-person visits, these approaches presented some limitations to information gathering.

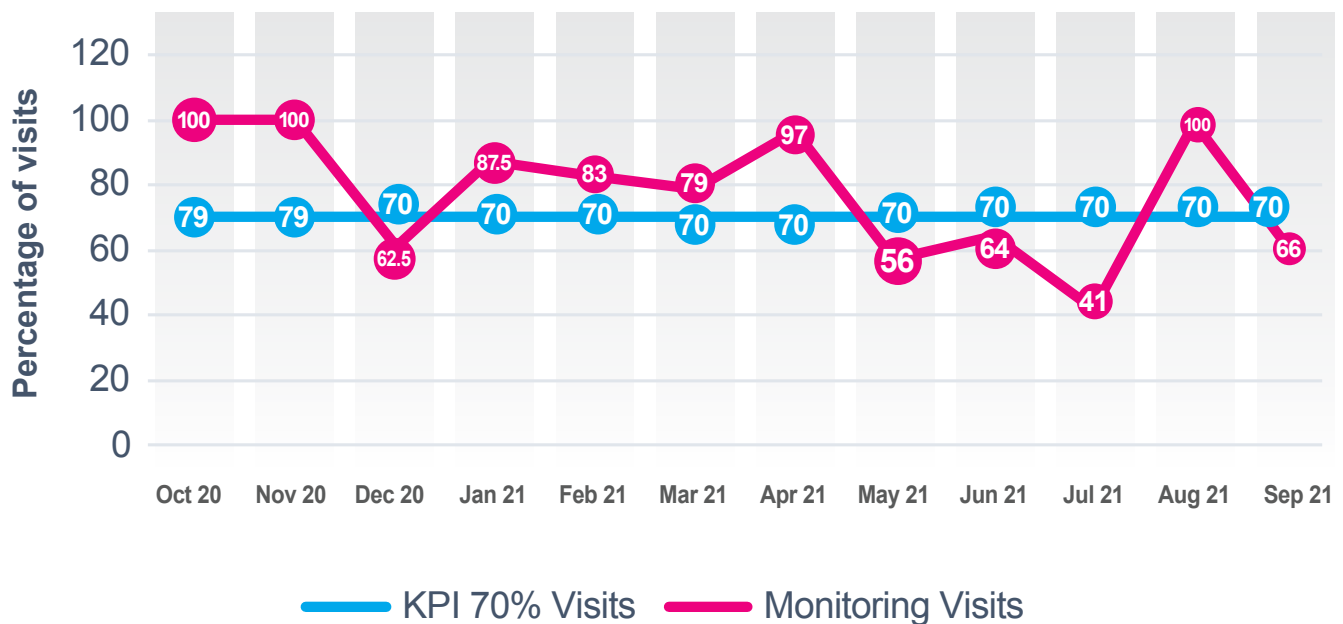
#### **Licensure of Community Residences and Homes**

The COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted the licensing progress of the Homes as services such as food badges, certification by public health and Fire Services and Police Certificates of Character were at times placed on hold. Employees of the Homes also encountered delays in receiving the general medicals typically provided in the public health sector. The documents from these agencies are mandatory licensing requirements. Some Homes met 90% of licensing requirements but were unable to be licensed because of these outstanding documents. As a result, 17 Homes remained unlicensed, having met on average 70% of the licensing requirements.

## Placement Crisis

The lack of appropriate placement options for residents reaching adulthood, male CHINS, children with disabilities and children with poor mental health continues to be a major challenge to the Authority. This resulted in some of the children being placed at Children's Homes that are not designed to meet the complex needs of the children. The Authority continues to engage its Line-Ministry, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Youth Development and National Service and the Ministry of National Security towards the establishment of transition facilities as well as appropriate residential facilities that can provide specialised care.

## Monitoring Visits for CRs and CSCs



The COVID-19 pandemic created another challenge in securing placements. In order to reduce the risk of exposure to the general population at a Home, a child being received into care had to be screened. The Authority was able to engage the Eastern Regional Health Authority (ERHA), the North West Regional Health Authority (NWRHA) and the Tobago Regional Health Authority (TRHA) to test children being received into care.

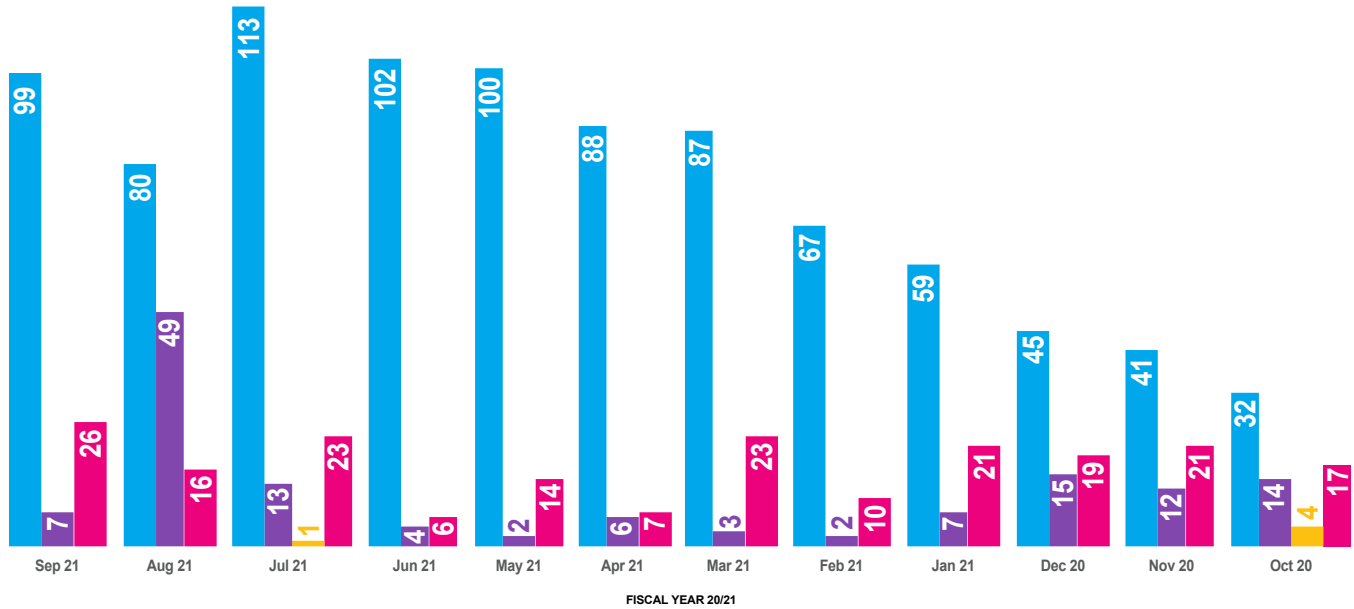
The Authority continues to engage the Ministry of Health for the establishment of quarantine spaces for children being received into care and for isolation of residents of Homes who become COVID-19 positive.

In adherence to the Ministry of Health's COVID-19 Infection, Prevention and Control (IPC) Guidelines, physical visits were conducted on an as-needed-basis. Frequent monitoring calls, virtual walkthroughs and

video interviews with staff and residents were instituted. With the lifting of nationwide restrictions, physical monitoring visits recommenced from November 2020. However, by April 2021, due to the nationwide uptake in COVID-19 cases, physical visits ceased and resumed in August 2021. All Homes continue to be monitored, with visits conducted at an average of 85 percent.

While the Homes have been maintaining the IPC protocols, there have been incidents of COVID-19 exposure to staff, which occurred in multiple Homes. They experienced periodic staff shortages, when staff were placed on quarantine by the County Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) following primary and secondary exposure to COVID-19 positive persons in the community.

## PLACEMENT REQUESTS



■ Total Requests Outstanding  
■ Number of Children Placed/No longer need placement  
■ Transfer Requests  
■ C&P/ChINS Requests

Throughout this Fiscal, residents of Homes continued to receive educational programmes through online classes conducted by various schools. Staff adjustments for the new role of supervising residents with extended device usage were a challenge. Additionally, for most of the Fiscal, Homes were not able to receive enough devices for residents. The Authority and the Homes continue to engage school principals for resident access to devices through the Ministry of Education. Some students with social challenges adapted well to the online classes whilst some with special needs were negatively impacted by the absence of face-to-face engagement. The online classes and school package systems also afforded an increase in educational opportunities for pregnant adolescents and young mothers in care. The Authority endorses the continuation of these systems for children in the future, where physical school attendance may not be feasible.

During the period under review, the L&M Unit received ten (10) complaints regarding the care of children at Children's Homes. Investigations were conducted on each of the complaints, with five allegations found to be substantiated. Allegations of physical abuse, verbal abuse and food restrictions were also investigated and found to be unsubstantiated. Managers of the Homes were able to institute corrective measures on these matters.

### Nursery Gap Analysis Project

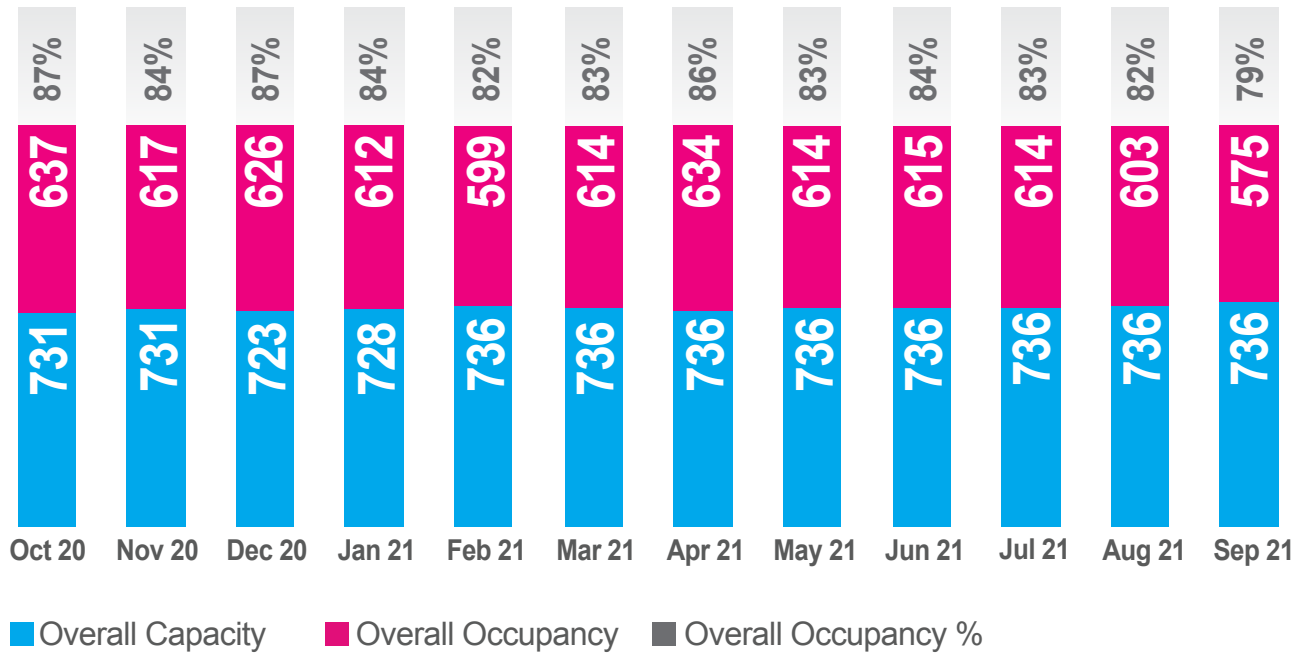
Following the national shutdown of nurseries and day-care centres in April 2020, the Nursery Gap Analysis Project remained suspended during the first and second quarters of Fiscal 2020-2021. With limited resources, the Licensing and Monitoring Unit conducted the collation and analysis of the information collected from the field visits in 2020.

The Gap Analysis identified 27 proposed licensing requirements for nurseries, under the broad areas identified in the draft Nurseries Regulations 2015. The Nursery Gap Analysis supports recommendations for legislative reform for the removal of the regulation of nurseries from the Children's Authority. It recommends the regulation of nurseries under the ambit of legislation related to the education of children in Trinidad and Tobago. The Nursery Gap Analysis data showed that over 70% of facilities incorporated some form of educational component with only 15% of facilities providing child minding services only. The composition was further reflected in the businesses registered with the Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs, with 53% of facilities registered as a Nursery and Pre School while only 14% registered strictly as a Nursery. Additionally, the provision of educational programming in these facilities should be encouraged, as part of the overall national policy on child development.



The Authority also conducted a comprehensive review of the current draft Nursery Regulations 2015, as well as Sections 42 to 52A of the Children's Community Residences, Foster Care and Nurseries (CCRFN) Act and other related legislation.

### Occupancy and Capacity of Children's Homes in Trinidad and Tobago



## LEGAL SERVICES

The Legal Services Unit provides legal advice and guidance to all of the Units of the Authority, the Executive and the Board of Management. The work of the Unit include:

- The attorneys attend hearings representing the Authority
- Draft and make applications to the Court
- Provide corporate services
- Conduct presentations on behalf of the Authority in conjunction with other Units to external stakeholders
- Provide internal legislative training to staff
- Assist in legislative review and amendments
- Assist in the development of policies and protocols brought to its attention
- Represent the Authority in litigation matters
- Assist and provide legal support based on internal requests, and
- Attend case conferences and internal and external meetings

The cases that are dealt with by the Legal Services Unit are predominantly Wardship and Care proceedings;

- Freeing Order cases where children are made available for adoption
- Adoption cases
- Litigation cases where legal action is taken against the Authority

- Cases where the Court requires the attendance of a representative from the Authority or a legal representative from the Authority for CHINS related matters, referred cases that involve private custody applications or trials, and Domestic Violence cases
- Representation of the Authority in trials, habeas corpus and judicial review proceedings, which form part of the litigation cases.

However, in some of the cases external Counsel may be obtained, court attendance can be before any level of the Courts in Trinidad and Tobago.

For the Fiscal Year under review, a total of 129 matters were assigned to the Legal Services Unit following submissions of the relevant reports from the relevant Units within the Authority so as to enable filing and preparation of cases. A breakdown of these matters are as follows;

- **87 Care Matters** were assigned (per child statistics)
- **7 Adoption Matters** were assigned (per child statistics)
- **35 CHINS Matters** were assigned (per child statistics)

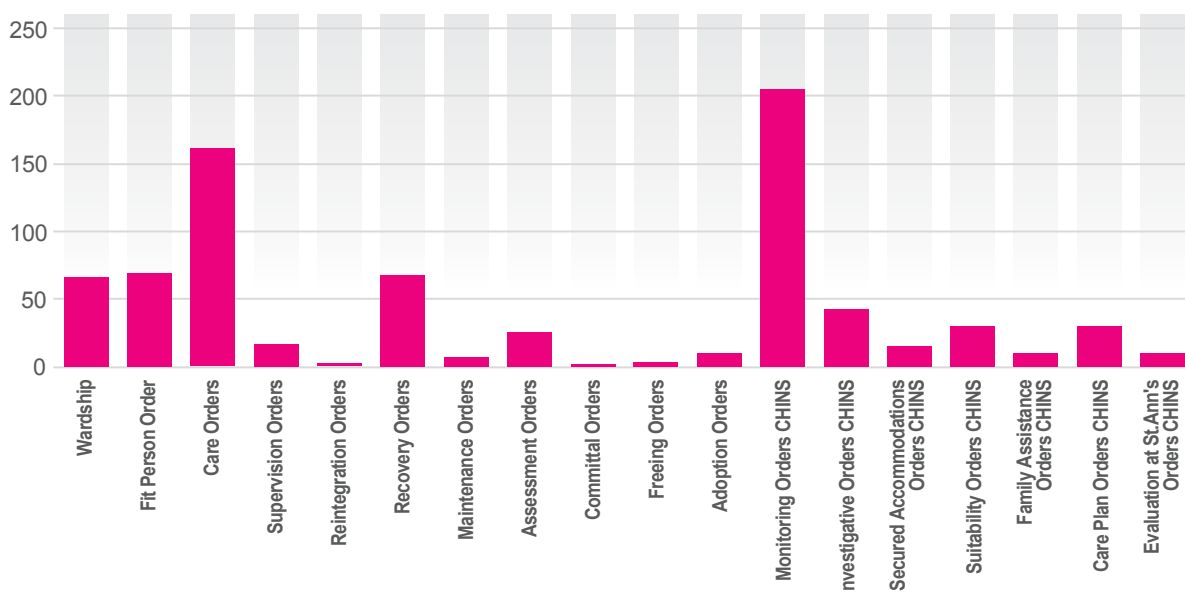
Forty-nine (49) matters were determined by the Legal Services Unit; inclusive of three (3) Care Matters, four (4) Adoption Matters and forty-two (42) CHINS Matters. The Table below provides a breakdown of the statistics.

Assigned Matters	Number of Determined Matters	Number of Assigned Care Matters	Number of Determined Care Matters	Number of Assigned Adoption Matters	Number of Determined Adoption Matters	Number of Assigned CHINS Matters	Number of Determined CHINS Matters
129	49	87	3	7	4	35	42

### Notable Success

Orders received by the Legal Services Unit for the Annual Year October 1st, 2020 to September 30th, 2021.

### Orders Obtained by the Legal Department for the Period October 1st 2020 - September 30th 2021



Types of Order	Amount Received
Wardship Orders	67
Fit Person Orders	70
Care Orders	161
Supervision Orders	17
Reintegration Orders	3
Recovery Orders	68
Maintenance Orders	7
Assessment Orders	6
Committal Orders	1
Freeing Orders	3
Adoption Orders	10
Monitoring Orders (CHINS)	205
Investigative Orders (CHINS)	43
Secured Accommodation Orders (CHINS)	15
Suitability Orders (CHINS)	30
Family Assistance Orders (CHINS)	10
Care Plan Orders (CHINS)	30
Evaluation at St. Ann's Orders (CHINS)	10
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF ORDERS</b>	<b>776</b>

- The Legal Services Unit in collaboration with the Adoption Unit successfully obtained ten (10) Adoption Orders.
- Successfully obtained three (3) Reintegration Orders from the Courts.

**(Note that the list of Court Orders encompasses Orders obtained for ongoing cases prior to October 2020 and those within the Fiscal Year 2020 -2021). A total of 776 Orders were actioned by the Unit for the Fiscal.**



## **ACHIEVEMENT OF Strategic Priorities**

### **ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE**

**Strategic Priority 1 – Increased Prevention of Child Abuse**

**Strategic Priority 2 – Responsive and Timely Child Protection**

**Strategic Priority 3 – Effective Stakeholder Collaboration**

**Strategic Priority 4 – Sustainable Institutional Strengthening;**

**Impact of COVID-19 on Operations, Adjustments, Risks etc**

**Strategic Priority 5 – Robust Corporate Governance**

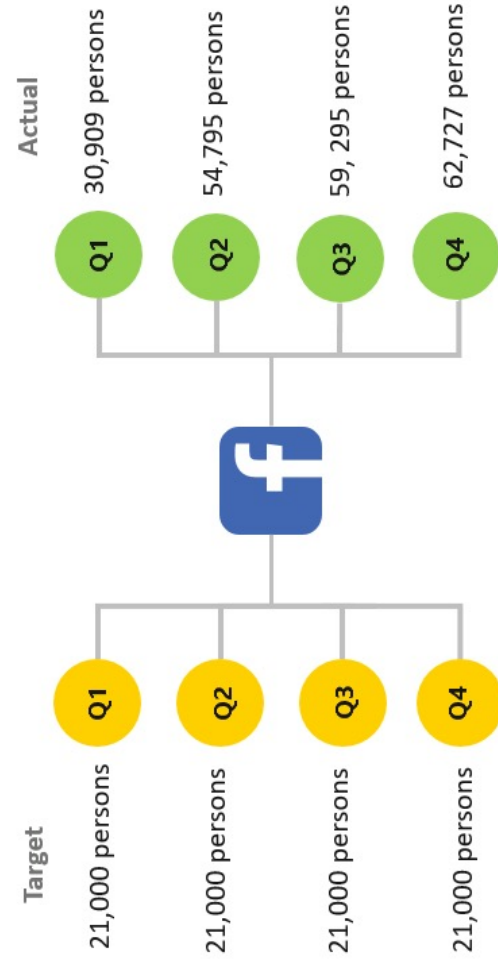
**Strategic Priority 6 – Increased Financial Sustainability**

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY ONE: INCREASED PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE

**Indicator:** Reduce incidences of child abuse in Trinidad and Tobago



**Indicator:** Number of persons reached through Facebook Live per Quarter



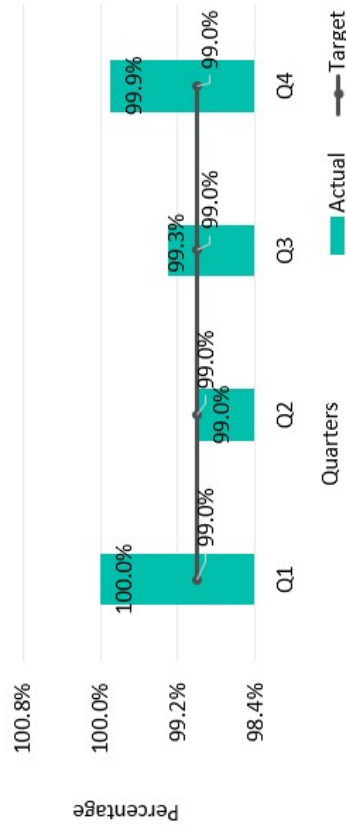
**Indicator:** Number of sensitisations conducted with Teachers, Care Givers, Religious Leaders/Community/ NGOs



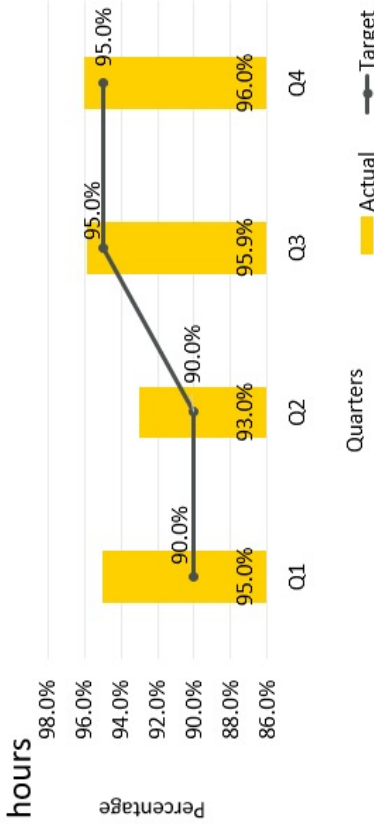
### OUTCOMES

# STRATEGIC PRIORITY TWO: RESPONSIVE & TIMELY CHILD PROTECTION

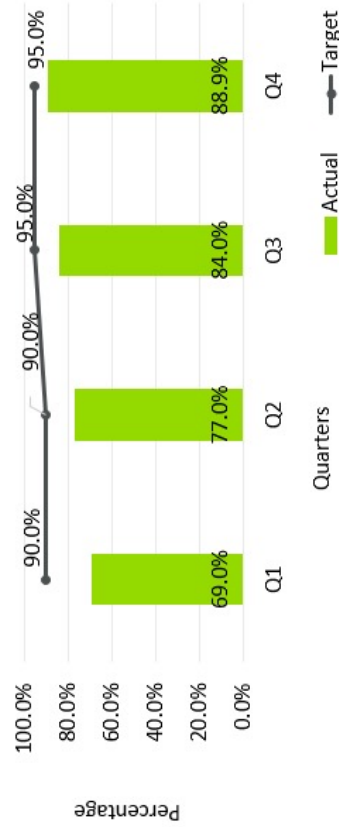
**Indicator:** Percentage uptime of Hotline Call Centre



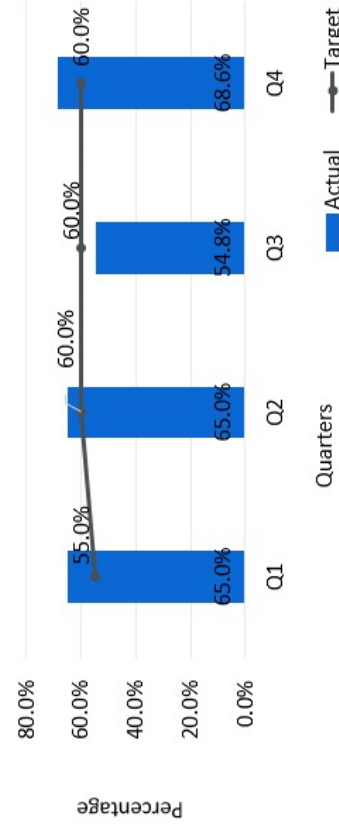
**Indicator:** percentage of emergencies responded to within 24 hours



**Indicator:** Percentage of cases assigned to various units



**Indicator:** Percentage of cases receiving monitoring (referral cases)

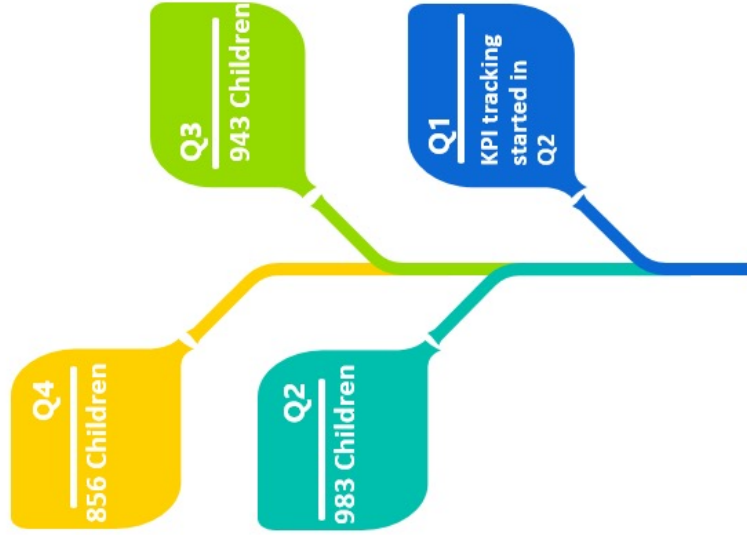


# STRATEGIC PRIORITY TWO: RESPONSIVE & TIMELY CHILD PROTECTION

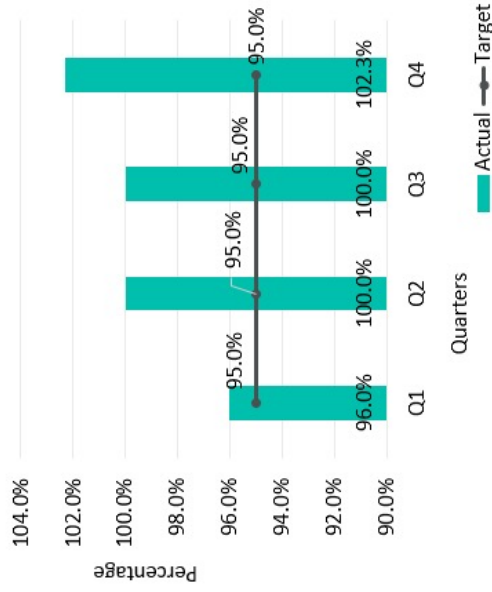
**Indicator:** Number of children in Foster Care reintegrated into their families

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Target	3	3	3	3
Actual	4	3	2	1

**Indicator:** Number of children placed and receiving active care



**Indicator:** Percentage of Foster Care Visits conducted per child



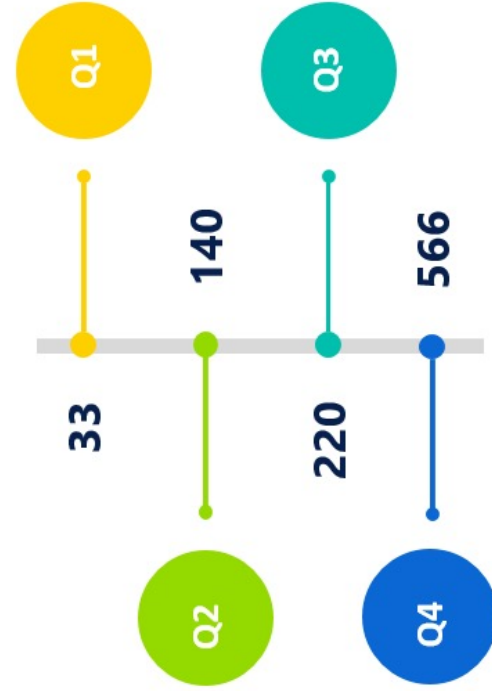
## STRATEGIC PRIORITY THREE: EFFECTIVE STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION

**Indicator:** Pursue MOUs with additional strategic partners

**Indicator:** Initiate collaborative case conferences with all stakeholders

**Indicator:** Partner with 4 NGOs to provide care and protection services free of charge

	TARGET	ACTUAL
Q1	0	0
Q2	0	0
Q3	1	1
Q4	1	0



	ACTUAL
Q1	10
Q2	10
Q3	10
Q4	11



# STRATEGIC PRIORITY FOUR: SUSTAINABLE INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING



**Indicator:** Number of training hours (FY2020-2021)  
**1,903 hrs**



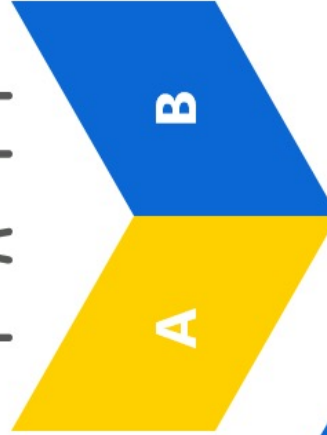
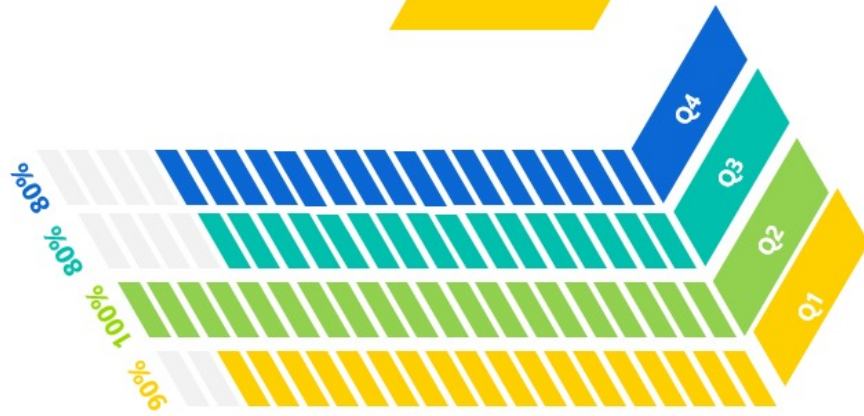
**Indicator:** Training Cost (FY2020-2021)  
**\$11,206.88**



**Indicator:** Number of days lost due to absenteeism (FY2020-2021)  
**2,505 days**

# STRATEGIC PRIORITY FIVE: ROBUST CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

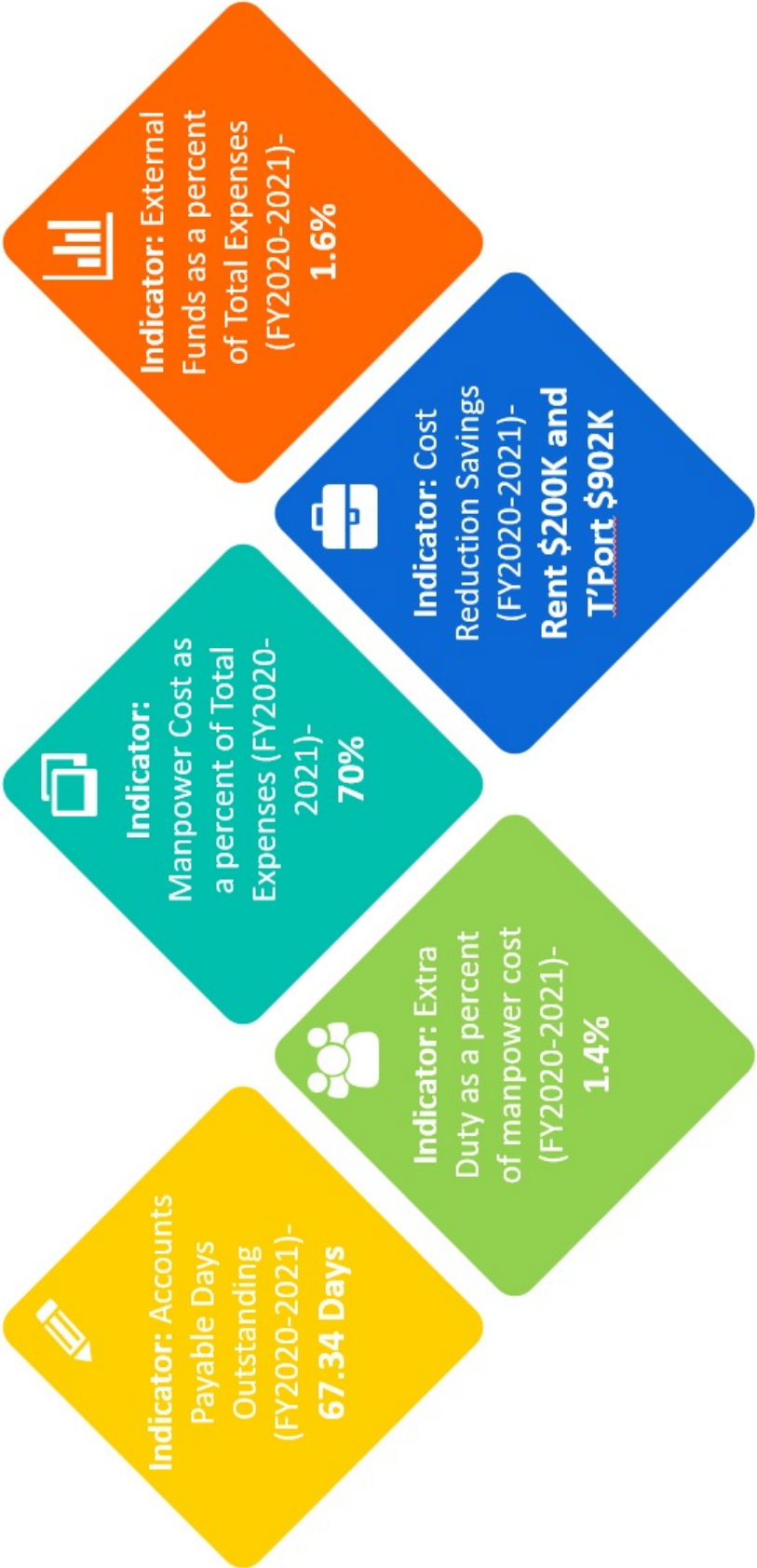
**Indicator:** Submission of Statutory requirements for financial and Board reports within established timeframes



**Indicator:** Number of key organisational policies approved and implemented throughout CATT

Quarter	TARGET	ACTUAL
Q1	0	0
Q2	4	2
Q3	6	1
Q4	6	6

# STRATEGIC PRIORITY SIX: INCREASED FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY



## Strategic **PROJECTS**

### **Relocation of Head Office**

After spending over ten (10) years at Wrightson Road, Port of Spain, on June 1st, 2021, the Authority officially relocated its Head Office to Kazim Tower, Corner Dere Street and Queen's Park West, Port of Spain.

The relocation which was coordinated and executed by the Facilities, Administrative and Health, Safety, Security and Environmental Unit (FAHSSE) entailed the movement of over 100 staff and outfitting Kazim Tower to facilitate the needs of staff and clients, coordinating all IT infrastructure, data lines, Telecoms and PC systems with minimal downtime – all during a State of Emergency.

The project is a major achievement for the Authority since it was completed under budget and resulted in cost savings of \$1.8M per annum, which will allow the organisation to further serve the children who come to its attention.

At the new location, the public has access to walk-in services and facilities are available for therapy and intervention sessions with children and their families.

The relocation did not affect the Authority's satellite offices and Assessment Centres located throughout Trinidad and Tobago and contact numbers remain the same: 627-0748, 627-8597 as well as the Hotline 996 or 800-2014.

### **National Inter-Agency Child Abuse Protocol**

A key aspect of a strong child protection system requires a county to have standard operating procedures and protocols for child protection across all sectors. This will provide practitioners with practical guidance on how to prevent and respond to violence, abuse and neglect of children.

In November 2020, the Authority, together with other relevant stakeholders, and through the support of UNICEF, initiated the development of the Trinidad and Tobago National Inter-Agency Child Abuse Protocol.

The Protocol presents a formalised and streamlined multi-agency approach to effectively treat with reports of child abuse and maltreatment within Trinidad and Tobago.

The overarching aim of the protocol is to map the process from the onset of a child who has been exposed to abuse and/or maltreatment, to how that child interacts with and receives treatment from the various child service agencies across the country. By extension, the project seeks to ensure the continuous collaboration across all child protection agencies through the provision of the child protection standards on reporting and investigating child abuse and maltreatment. The first draft of the Protocol was shared with stakeholders in September 2021 for their review and feedback.

### **Backlog Reduction**

The Registry Unit, which operates on a 24-hour basis, is the central repository for all reports received by the Authority. The Unit receives, documents, triages and forwards for investigation, reports of children deemed to be in need of care and protection. Cases, depending on their level of risk, are referred to other Units for action and follow-up.

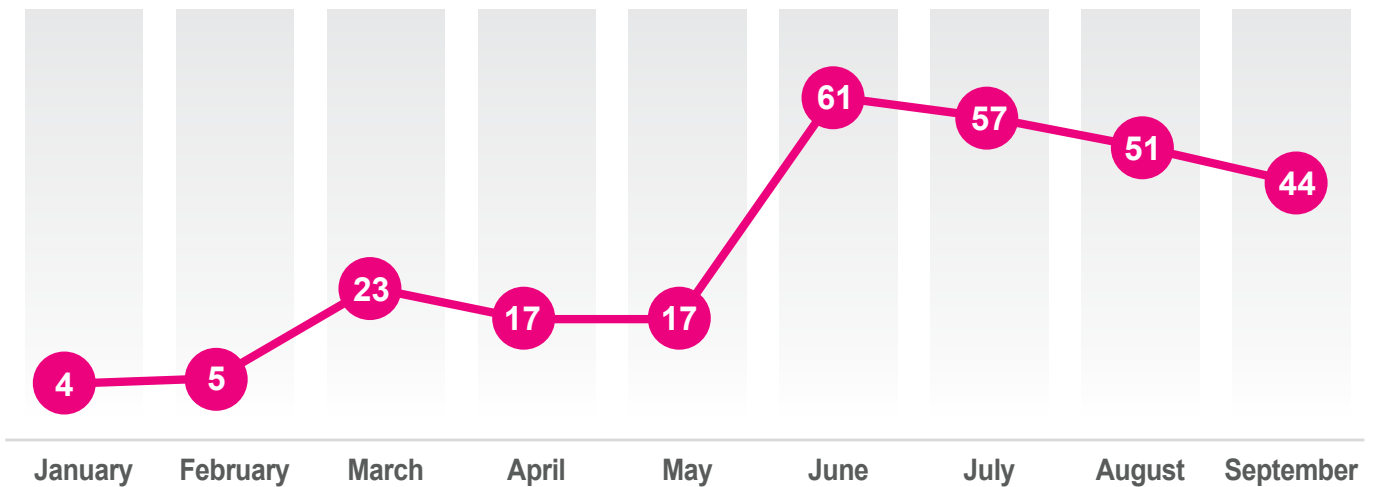
Due to a myriad of challenges however, there was a backlog of unassigned cases across all Units within the Authority. Therefore, in August 2020, the Authority began a project to reduce the backlog of cases to ensure the review and necessary actions were taken to provide care, protection and rehabilitation of children. By the end of Fiscal 2021, the organisation was able to eliminate the backlog of unassigned cases which were estimated to be approximately 17,349.

In the Annual Report for the period 2019-2020, it was stated that there were 16,000 backlog cases. However, after a comprehensive review, the total backlog of unassigned cases was actually identified as 17,349.

## Human Resource Information System (HRIS)

The Human Resources (HR) Unit was able to fully implement its new HRIS Programme which will benefit employees who will now be able to access all information pertaining to their leave and make request for job letters, among other things. Virtual training was coordinated and delivered by the HR Unit during the months of January, March and May 2021.

### Staff Usage of HRIS



Upon completion of the training, user accounts were prepared for each employee. An overview of login activity revealed that there has been an increased usage of the system among staff between January to September 2021.

## Computerised Management System

- **Case Management** – CATT is currently working with UNICEF to implement the PRIMERO Child Protection Information Management System. This is an extensive project which impacts all functional Units and involves the migration of data from CATT's legacy system. The project is approximately 70% complete. At the beginning of the next Fiscal, the Information Technology team intends to extract and format the data for the case management system and work towards the project's implementation by June 2022.
- **Contact Centre** – This project was initiated to implement a hybrid Call Centre for the Registry Unit, hosted with a local Cloud provider. There were delays in the completion of this project in the first instance due to the Head Office relocation and in the second instance, the solution provider encountered problems accessing foreign exchange to procure the required equipment. The project is now back in train and expected to be completed in the first quarter of Fiscal 2022. Some expected benefits include the ability of the Contact Centre agents to work from home without any downtime and minimised log-on delays, as a result of the hybrid solution of the system.

# FINANCE

For Fiscal 2021, the Authority made a budget request for TT\$127.4Mn, however a recurrent funding of TT\$69.67Mn was allocated to cover core expenses as well as Foster Care and Adoption expenses. Based on its current staffing and other operating commitments, the Authority projected a significant recurrent funding shortfall in Fiscal 2021, compounded by outstanding debts to suppliers brought over from the prior Fiscal Year.

Consequently, the Office of the Prime Minister was petitioned regarding the Authority's dire financial constraints and the request was approved. Additional funding of TT\$13.919Mn was released in March 2021 to facilitate clearing off the debts brought over from the prior Fiscal Year. A second request was also made to cover projected expenses for the current Fiscal Year which was also approved. Additional funding for the amount of TT\$11.289Mn was released in September 2021 to assist with current year recurrent expenses. The additional funding resulted in a revised Recurrent Estimates for 2021 of \$74.8Mn. Recurrent expenditure and commitments as at 30th September, 2021 amounted to \$85.3Mn, exceeding the budget by 14%. This funding shortfall also resulted in the Authority having outstanding Accounts Payable of approximately \$4.9Mn as at the end of Fiscal 2021.

The Authority received an approved budget allocation of \$0.257Mn in Fiscal Year 2021 to cover Adoption expenses. The original budget request was made for TT\$0.833Mn and no additional funding was approved in the 2021 Mid-Term Review. The full amount was received by September 30th 2021. Expenditure for the year ended September 30th 2021 amounted to TT\$ 0.169Mn, which was underspent during the year by 34%.

With respect to Foster Care expenses, the Authority received an approved budget allocation of TT\$1.7Mn in Fiscal Year 2021. No additional funding was approved at the 2021 Mid-Term Review. The full allocation was received for this allocation by end of Fiscal Year September 30th 2021. Expenditure and commitments for the year ended September 30th 2021 amounted to TT\$2.3Mn, which exceeded the allocated budget for the year by 35%.

## **Development Programme (DP) Income and Expenditure - Fiscal 2021**

DP funding of \$1.0Mn was allocated to the Authority in Fiscal 2021 - a decrease of TT\$3.6Mn compared to Fiscal 2020. This TT\$1M allocation was to continue the DP projects that were planned for the prior Fiscal Year 2020, since the planned DP project activity for Fiscal 2020 was put on hold.

- **Children's Authority Act, Chapter 46:10, Section 48: Financial control and Auditing**

The audit of the Authority's financial statements for the Financial Year ended 30th September, 2018 was conducted by the Auditor General in the third quarter of Fiscal 2019. This audit was completed and the signed audited financials were submitted to the Auditor General in October 2019. With respect to the Financial Year ended September 30th 2019 and September 30th 2020, the Auditor General did not appoint an auditor during the Fiscal, however discussions with the Auditor General's Office revealed that 2019 and 2020 financial statements will be audited in the second quarter of Fiscal 2022.

- **Children's Authority Act, Chapter 46:10, Section 49(1):** Preparation of financial statements for Annual Report

The Authority's unaudited financial statements for the Financial Year ended 30th September, 2021 were completed and are appended to this Report.

#### **Budget Estimates – Fiscal 2022**

For the 2022 Fiscal Year, the Authority has approved estimates for a total of TT\$69.816Mn, however the projected expenditure amounts to TT\$92.6Mn., which is a shortfall of TT\$22.8Mn.

The approved budget allocation is as follows; Foster Care TT\$1.7Mn, Adoption TT\$0.3Mn and recurrent funding TT\$67.816Mn.

#### **Received Funding**

During the last Fiscal, the Authority was granted funds to offset expenses relating to the COVID-19 virus. The total received during that period amounted to TT\$316K.

This Fiscal saw an increase in grants from other donors - UNICEF funded two projects for the Authority'; the National Child Abuse Protocol project in the amount of TT\$85K and the Backlog Project in the amount of TT\$299K.

First Citizens Bank funded a project to outfit three of the Authority's Child Reception Centres; East, North and Tobago in the amount of TT\$135K.

The last donation received during the Fiscal came from Republic Bank Limited in the amount of TT\$800K for the purchase of two buses, a twelve (12) seater and a twenty-five (25) seater. These buses are to be used to conduct outreaches and public education exercises in both Trinidad and in Tobago.

## INTERNAL AUDIT

Section 48(1) of the Children's Authority Act requires that the Authority maintain an adequate system of Internal Auditing. In order therefore to ensure compliance with this legal requirement the Internal Audit Function was established.

Internal Auditing is an independent, objective, assurance and consulting activity, designed to add value and improve an organisation's operations. The internal audit activity seeks to assist the organisation in accomplishing its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes.

The Internal Audit function is guided by the Internal Audit Charter, and has functional reporting to both the Chairman of the Board of Management as well as the Chairman of the Audit Committee and administrative reporting to the Executive Director of the Authority.

During the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year, Internal Audit undertook a number of activities in furtherance to the establishment of the Internal Audit Function at the Authority. Chief among these activities included the identification and documentation of the significant business processes and associated controls within the respective audit Units across the Authority's audit universe. Other significant deliverables of the Unit over the Fiscal period included:

- The performance of a detailed risk assessment by business process across all audit Units;
- The development and subsequent approval of a risk-based audit plan;
- The completion of four planned audits these being:
  - o The Audit into the Administration of petty cash across the Authority
  - o Process Audit into the operations of the Registry Unit
  - o Process Audit into the operations of the Emergence Response Team
  - o Process Audit into the operations of the Investigations Unit

- The completion of two on demand audits these being:
  - o An investigation into the operations of the Authority's Child Support Centers – with special emphasis on the North location and;
  - o A Review of the Systemic Conditions surrounding the Authority's Child Support System.

Internal Audit recognises that while the findings emerging from the Audits conducted have not been all good, they certainly have not been all negative. Some areas of strength included the Internal Control Environment surrounding the administration of Petty Cash as no material exceptions were noted in the audit of the petty cash floats nor were there any significant breaches of controls within the petty cash administration business process.

Additionally, the process audits conducted into the operations of the Registry, ERT and Investigation Units revealed that the business processes contained within these Units were, for the most part, properly designed and sequenced. These audits also highlighted that there was a strong adherence to controls based on the results of the controls compliance testing performed over the respective Units.

Despite these favorable findings however, the internal audit activity is fully cognisant of the fact that there is room for improvement in other areas of the Authority's operations and remains committed to supporting the Board of Management and the Executive in realising such improvements by providing independent, objective assurance and advisory services over the Authority's risk management, control and governance processes.



## Looking **AHEAD**

As the Authority looks forward to Financial Year 2022, it keeps in mind several challenges that have beset it during this Fiscal, including the absconding of residents and allegations of abuse at its Child Support Centres. Matters such as these call for introspection and a purposeful reassessment of the adequacy of the organisation's policies, practices, programmes and resources dedicated to the protection of our children. Moreover, they do not reflect the fabric of the Authority's values and aspiration. Looking ahead, the Authority will take action towards improved organisational delivery and performance across the varied range of services and functions it offers.

A key component of this thrust is the review of the Strategic Plan 2020-2023, which began on Thursday 19th August 2021 and will continue to be a key focus area. This exercise allows for the visioning of the future Authority as a Child Protection Agency that is more agile, streamlined and responsive to the needs of its valued clientele. Additionally, this will be done within the context of changes in client base, increased public expectations, organisational introspection and resource availability. Once the new structure receives Cabinet approval, it will allow for the optimal level of staffing, which is critical to the effective functioning of the Authority. The expectation is that the outcome of such review will contribute directly to the overall goal of child protection, greater alignment with the National Child Policy 2020-2030 and an enhanced performance of the Authority in its statutory role of guardian of all children.

We are all aware of the maxim that "it takes a village to raise a child" and the COVID-19 pandemic, which has dominated the medical and social fabric of our society for the past two years has certainly underscored this reality. While the Authority is responsible for the care, protection and rehabilitation of the nation's children, it is recognised that an all-encompassing approach is required which involves the co-operation of families

and key stakeholders. It is imperative that the Authority continues to integrate its process within its network of stakeholders. The Authority is therefore committed to further the development of Effective Stakeholder Collaboration in order to build a strong alliance for child protection in Trinidad and Tobago. To this end, the National Inter-Agency Child Abuse Protocol will be finalised and rolled-out to the national community. The Protocol maps the process via which a child, who has been exposed to abuse and/or maltreatment interacts with and receives treatment from the various child agencies, across the country. Additionally, the Authority will seek to secure, review and operationalise Memoranda of Understanding with key stakeholders, including the Regional Health Authority, in order to further optimise the service delivery to shared clients.

The Authority will seek to engage the community - local and international - towards improving the lives of children and their families by rolling-out a volunteer programme. This will set the basis of volunteerism within various aspects of our care and rehabilitation services, through participation in appropriate programmes and activities.

The organisation will also seek to reach a wider cross-section of the society, particularly communities and families that cannot be accessed via online and other social media platforms, to increase public awareness on the protection of children from abuse. It is hoped that through a sustained community outreach exercise, there will be reduced instances of child abuse and incidents that cause harm to children. The public will be educated on how they can recognise potential threats to a child's safety and prevent them. The Authority intends to implement behaviour change communication campaigns against cultural norms of child sexual abuse, neglect and corporal punishment that endanger the rights and protection of children.

Further, the provision of appropriate, systematic and timely interventions for children and their families, rests on an effective Case Management Model. Accordingly, the review of the operationalisation of the Best Interest Case Management Model as adapted to the Authority's context, will be undertaken. While the Model was rolled out in the latter half of the year under review, the

coming year will see a review of the results achieved thus far, and the commitment is to adjust it as required to ensure that it works to expand implementation with interventions provided at multiple levels - the individual, family, community, and society – to ensure the best interest of the child and family.

The use of technology in advancing the mandate of the Authority is very important. The UNICEF-supported Primero Child Protection Information Management Software (CPIMS+) application will be implemented to offer a modern approach to data management with tools that facilitate: case management, incident-monitoring and family tracing and reunification. This tool will support the Authority's core service delivery model, legal mandate and the increasing number of cases that come to its attention. It will ensure an improvement in the delivery of service across the child protection system, which will continue to be customer-focused.

Key to the efficiencies being sought, will be the further enhancement of staff competencies through training opportunities. These will ensure the Authority's team is exposed to modern best practices, as well as, use of technology for interventions especially in light of the requirement to facilitate increased virtual service delivery in response to the COVID-19 public health restrictions. Critical to an optimal service delivery will be continued focus on employee wellness and wellbeing through the promotion of a culture of care for self and others. The drive towards policy review, a research agenda and developments to support the evolving demands and services of the Authority will also be maintained.

The Authority notes the current financial challenges and with this in mind, the Authority will continue to review its cost structure to identify opportunities to augment its budget and seek additional external funding opportunities under Section 46 of the Children's

Authority Act, Chap 46:10. Effective child protection requires adequate funding for sustainability and greater achievement of the Authority's mandate.

The global COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 demonstrated the importance of adequate risk management for the Authority. Risk management continues to be an increasingly important business-driver of strategic decisions and in Fiscal 2022 the Authority will embark on an enterprise-wide approach to risk management, that considers the potential impact of risks on all processes, activities, stakeholders, clients and services. Implementing this comprehensive approach will provide benefits by way of improvements in the efficiency of operations, effectiveness of tactics and the efficacy of the strategy of the organisation.

In 2022, the Authority will seek to consolidate its current Child Support Centres located in Trinidad. This consolidation will provide more suitable accommodation for all children that come into the care of the Authority, and will enhance multidisciplinary intervention programmes for children, that will treat with the modalities of the multi-intelligence of various risk levels of children. This initiative is aligned with the Government's 2030 Vision which seeks to ensure that, "service delivery will be improved to better serve the needs of vulnerable groups." Similarly, steps will also be taken to relocate the CSC in Tobago with a focus on providing a fit-for-purpose facility which addresses the need for specialised placement options for children with behavioural challenges and Children in Need of Supervision (CHINS).

While the list of activities identified above is not exhaustive, the aim of the Authority is to continue to deliver on its vision "to defend and support child rights and make child protection everybody's business".

# UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 September 2021



**CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO,  
CHILDREN AUTHORITY FUND**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2021**

(Expressed in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars)

	Notes	2021 \$	2020 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Investments	4	584,534	451,349
Cash in hand and at bank	5	5,358,556	4,055,452
Receivables and prepayments	6	833,657	813,926
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>6,776,747</b>	<b>5,320,727</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, Plant and Equipment	7	12,037,605	14,296,974
Intangible Asset	8	196,294	261,726
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>12,233,899</b>	<b>14,558,700</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>19,010,646</b>	<b>19,879,427</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Payables and accruals	9	11,994,070	16,692,108
Deferred government grants	10	2,803,611	2,997,351
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>14,797,681</b>	<b>19,689,459</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Deferred government grants	10	9,430,288	11,561,348
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>24,227,969</b>	<b>31,250,807</b>
<b>RESERVES</b>			
Accumulated fund		(5,217,323)	(11,371,380)
<b>TOTAL RESERVES AND LIABILITIES</b>		<b>19,010,646</b>	<b>19,879,427</b>

Approved by the Board on \_\_\_\_\_ and signed on its behalf by:

**Chairman:**

**Member:**

The accompanying notes on pages 4 to 16 form an integral part of these financial statements

**CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO,  
CHILDREN AUTHORITY FUND**

**STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME AND ACCUMULATED FUND  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2021**

(Expressed in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars)

	Notes	2021 \$	2020 \$
<b>Government grants</b>	11	<b>91,057,700</b>	<b>70,228,419</b>
Other income	13	1,328,471	347,702
Project expenses	14	(956,450)	(187,332)
Operating expenses	12	(81,397,164)	(78,638,324)
Depreciation & Amortization	7 + 8	(2,803,611)	(2,997,351)
Loss on disposal of property, plant and equipment	15	(1,069,099)	(2,510)
Finance cost	16	(5,796)	(7,617)
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR</b>		<b><u>6,154,051</u></b>	<b><u>(11,257,199)</u></b>
<b>ACCUMULATED FUND</b>			
Balance at beginning of year as previously stated		(11,371,380)	(114,181)
Prior Year Adjustment		-	-
(Deficit)/Surplus for the year		<u>6,154,051</u>	<u>(11,257,199)</u>
<b>BALANCE AT END OF YEAR</b>		<b><u>\$ (5,217,329)</u></b>	<b><u>(11,371,380)</u></b>

The accompanying notes on pages 4 to 16 form an integral part of these financial statements.

**CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO,  
CHILDREN AUTHORITY FUND**

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2021

(Expressed in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars)

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
(Deficit)/Surplus for the year	6,154,051	\$ (11,257,199)
Adjustments to reconcile net income to net cash		
Provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation	2,738,179	2,930,634
Amortization	65,431	66,716
Write off of intangible asset	-	-
Disposal of property, plant and equipment	1,069,099	176,816
Prior year adjustment	-	-
Changes to operating assets and liabilities:		
(Increase)/Decrease in receivables and prepayments	(19,731)	1,726,100
Increase/(Decrease) in accounts payable and accruals	(4,698,038)	8,896,377
<b>NET CASH PROVIDED BY/(USED IN) OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>5,308,993</b>	<b>2,539,445</b>
<b>INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(1,547,903)	(3,834,111)
<b>NET CASH USED IN INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>(1,547,903)</b>	<b>(3,834,111)</b>
<b>FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Movement in deferred government grants	(2,324,800)	659,940
<b>NET CASH PROVIDED BY FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>(2,324,800)</b>	<b>659,940</b>
<b>(DECREASE) IN CASH</b>	<b>1,436,289</b>	<b>(634,725)</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	4,506,801	5,141,527
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT END OF YEAR</b>	<b>5,943,090</b>	<b>4,506,801</b>

The accompanying notes on pages 4 to 16 form an integral part of these financial statements.

**CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO,  
CHILDREN AUTHORITY FUND**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2021  
(Expressed in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars)

**1. Reporting entity**

The Children's Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (the Authority) was established in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago under the guidelines stated in the Children's Authority Act, No. 64 of 2000 and the amendments in the Children's Authority (Amendment) Act, No. 14 of 2008. The Authority has been set up to fulfil the objectives of the Act which are to promote the well-being of all children in Trinidad and Tobago; provide care and protection for vulnerable children; and comply with certain obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Authority is managed by a Board of Management, which is appointed by the President. The Board shall include Members who possess professional qualifications and skills in child psychology, child psychiatry, social work, paediatrics and education, accounting and family law.

**2. Basis of preparation**

(i) Statement of compliance

The financial statements of the Authority have been prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards ("IFRS") as issued by the International Accounting Standards Board and effective for the year ended 30 September 2021.

(ii) Functional and presentation currency

Items included in the financial statements are measured using the currency of the primary economic environment in which the Authority operates ('the functional currency'). The financial statements are presented in Trinidad and Tobago dollars which is the Authority's functional and presentation currency.

(iii) Use of estimates and judgements

The preparation of the financial statements in conformity with IFRS requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of accounting policies and the reported amounts of assets, liabilities, income and expenses. Actual results may differ from these estimates. Estimates along with their underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognized in the period in which the estimates are revised and in any future periods affected.

**CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO,  
CHILDREN AUTHORITY FUND**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2021 – (Continued)

(Expressed in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars)

**3. Significant accounting policies**

The significant accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented unless otherwise stated.

(i) Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, plant and equipment are stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation. Historical cost includes expenditure that is directly attributable to the acquisition of the items.

Subsequent costs are included in the asset's carrying amount or are recognized as a separate asset, as appropriate, only when it is probable that future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the Authority and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. All other costs for repairs and maintenance are charged to the statement of comprehensive income during the financial period in which they are incurred.

Depreciation is calculated using the following rates and methods to allocate the cost to their residual values over their estimated useful lives:

Reducing balance method:

Computer equipment	- 33.3%
Software	- 25%
Furniture and fixtures	- 10%
Office equipment	- 20%
Security equipment	- 20%
Medical equipment	- 20%
Motor vehicles	- 20%

Straight line method:

Leasehold improvements	- Over 12 years
------------------------	-----------------

The assets' residual value and useful lives are reviewed and adjusted, if appropriate, at each statement of financial position date.

Assets are reviewed for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying amount may not be recoverable. An asset's carrying amount is written down immediately to its recoverable amount if the asset's carrying amount is greater than the estimated recoverable amount. The amount recoverable is the higher of the asset's fair value less cost to sell and of the value in use.

Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing proceeds with the carrying amount. These are included in the statement of comprehensive income.



**CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO,  
CHILDREN AUTHORITY FUND**

(ii) Intangible Assets - Computer Software

Acquired computer software are capitalised on the basis of the costs incurred to acquire and bring to use the specific software. These costs are amortised over their useful lives of three (3) years. Costs associated with maintaining computer software programmes are recognised as an expense as incurred.

(iii) Financial Assets

Classification

The Authority classifies its financial assets into the following categories: loans and receivables and available-for-sale. The classification is determined by management at the initial recognition and depends on the purpose for which the assets were acquired.

(a) Loans and receivables

Loans and receivables are non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market. These are included in current assets, except for maturities greater than 12 months after the statement of financial position date. These are classified as non-current assets and are carried at amortized cost using the effective interest method.

(b) Available for sale financial instruments

Available for sale financial assets comprise financial instruments in unquoted equity. These are included in non-current assets unless Management intends to dispose of the investments within 12 months of the reporting date.

(c) Recognition and Measurement

Loans and receivables as well as available for sale financial instruments are initially recognised at fair value plus any directly attributable transaction costs. Subsequent to initial recognition, loans and receivables are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less any impairment losses, while available for sale financial instruments are recorded at cost less impairment

Financial assets are derecognised when the rights to receive cash flows from them have expired or where they have been transferred and the Authority has also transferred substantially all risks and rewards of ownership.

(iv) Cash and Cash Equivalents

In the statement of cash flows, cash and cash equivalents includes cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less and cheques issued but not yet presented at financial institutions.

**CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO,  
CHILDREN AUTHORITY FUND**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2021 – (Continued)

(Expressed in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars)

**3. Significant accounting policies (Continued)**

(v) Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the Authority has a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of past events; it is more likely than not that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation and the amount has been reliably estimated.

Where there are a number of similar obligations as a whole, a provision is recognised even if the likelihood of an outflow with respect to any one item included in the service class of obligations may be small.

Provisions are measured at the present value of management's best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the obligation at the end of the reporting period.

(vi) Revenue Recognition

Interest income is measured using the effective interest method on the accrual basis.

(vii) Government Grants

Grants from the government are recognised at their fair value where there is a reasonable assurance that the grant will be received and the Authority will comply with all attached conditions.

Grants received where the Authority has yet to comply with all attached conditions are recognised as a liability in the statement of financial position and released to income when all attached conditions have been complied with.

Grants related to the acquisition of property, plant and equipment are treated as deferred grants and recognised in the statement of comprehensive income over the life of the assets.

Grants related to compensation for non-capital expenditure are recognised in the statement of comprehensive income in the period it is received or receivable.

**CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO,  
CHILDREN AUTHORITY FUND**

**4. Investments**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	\$	\$
First Citizens Bank- Abercrombie Fund	298,655	166,114
Unit Trust Money Market Fund	285,879	285,235
	<u>584,534</u>	<u>451,349</u>

**5. Cash in hand and at bank**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	\$	\$
First Citizens Bank CA Account	5,171,411	3,799,171
First Citizens External Grants Funding	145,354	219,375
Petty Cash	41,792	36,907
	<u>5,358,556</u>	<u>4,055,452</u>

**6. Receivables and prepayments**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	\$	\$
Receivables	215,859	289,468
Security deposits	474,632	318,896
Prepayments	143,166	203,353
	<u>833,657</u>	<u>811,717</u>

**CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO,  
CHILDREN AUTHORITY FUND**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2021 – (Continued)

(Expressed in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars)

**7. Property, Plant & Equipment**

	Computer Equipment	Furniture and Fixtures	Office Equipment	Medical Equipment	Security Equipment	Motor Vehicles	Leasehold Improvements	Total
<b>Cost</b>								
At beginning of year	7,305,735	3,396,015	779,229	1,713,039	922,373	2,700,113	12,680,719	29,497,223
Disposals	-	(30,785)	-	-	-	-	(6,089,180)	(6,119,965)
Additions	575,517	72,583	17,744	-	-	757,200	124,869	1,547,912
At end of year	7,881,251	3,437,812	796,974	1,713,039	922,373	3,457,313	6,716,406	24,925,168
<b>Accumulated Depreciation</b>								
At beginning of year	4,390,803	1,496,492	441,940	1,013,161	461,315	1,358,524	6,038,015	15,200,249
Disposals	-	(15,845)	-	-	-	-	(5,035,020)	(5,050,865)
Current year charge	1,066,862	193,462	68,997	139,975	92,212	244,202	932,470	2,738,179
At end of year	5,457,664	1,674,108	510,936	1,153,137	553,526	1,602,727	1,935,464	12,887,563
<b>Net Book Value 2020</b>	<b>2,914,932</b>	<b>1,899,523</b>	<b>337,289</b>	<b>699,878</b>	<b>461,058</b>	<b>1,341,589</b>	<b>6,642,704</b>	<b>14,296,974</b>
<b>Net Book Value 2021</b>	<b>2,423,587</b>	<b>1,763,704</b>	<b>286,038</b>	<b>559,901</b>	<b>368,847</b>	<b>1,854,586</b>	<b>4,780,943</b>	<b>12,037,606</b>

**CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO,  
CHILDREN AUTHORITY FUND**

**8. Intangible Assets**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Cost</b>		
At beginning of year	740,239	592,459
Disposals	-	-
Additions	-	147,780
At end of year	<u>740,239</u>	<u>740,239</u>
<b>Accumulated Amortization</b>		
At beginning of year	478,514	411,797
Disposals	-	-
Additions	65,431	66,717
At end of year	<u>543,945</u>	<u>478,514</u>
Opening Net Book Value	261,726	180,662
Closing Net Book Value	<u>196,294</u>	<u>261,726</u>

**9. Payables and Accruals**

Sundry payables	4,853,062	8,888,283
Other Liabilities	36,644	3,832,719
Accruals	7,104,365	3,971,106
	<u>11,994,070</u>	<u>16,692,108</u>

**10. Deferred Government grants**

**Year Ended September 30, 2021**

Balance at beginning of year	14,558,699	13,898,758
Grants received for capital expenditure	1,547,912	3,834,111
Transfers to statement of comprehensive income	(2,803,611)	(2,997,351)
Disposals	(1,069,099)	(176,819)
Net transfer to government grants	<u>2,324,798</u>	<u>659,941</u>
Balance at end of year	<u>12,233,900</u>	<u>14,558,699</u>

The government grants have been presented in the Statement of Financial Position under both Current and Non-Current Liabilities.

Non-Current Liability	9,430,289	11,561,348
Current Liability	2,803,611	2,997,351
	<u>12,233,900</u>	<u>14,558,699</u>

The accounting approach for the recognition of grants is the income approach under which the grant is recognized in the Statement of Comprehensive Income over one or more period.

**CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO,  
CHILDREN AUTHORITY FUND**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2021 – (Continued)  
(Expressed in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars)

**11. Government grants**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Recurrent expenditure grant	88,732,900	70,888,274
Development expenditure grant	-	-
Transfer from deferred government grants	2,324,798	(659,940)
	<u>91,057,698</u>	<u>70,228,334</u>

**12. Operating expenses**

Operating expenses include the following:

Salaries	45,085,389	43,688,459
Directors' fees	774,783	713,540
Gratuity	5,553,602	4,281,206
Accommodation cost	5,834,898	5,859,035
Number of employees at year end	272	278

**13. Other income**

Interest Received	4,043	14,234
Donations Received	43,218	5,000
External Grants Received	1,219,413	315,900
Other Income	61,797	12,568
	<u>1,328,471</u>	<u>347,702</u>

**CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO,  
CHILDREN AUTHORITY FUND**

<b>14. Project expenses</b>	<b>2021 \$</b>	<b>202 \$</b>
Research Expenses	199,744	139,774
Facilities & HSSE	13,810	7,020
Finance	-	-
Human Resources	-	-
Information Technology	351,455	40,538
Adoption	37,434	-
Backlog Project- Care	354,007	-
	<u>956,470</u>	<u>187,332</u>
<b>15. Loss on asset disposal</b>		
Loss on Disposal of broken F & F	14,940	1,130
Loss on Disposal of Leasehold Improvements	1,054,159	1,380
	<u>1,069,099</u>	<u>2,510</u>
<b>16. Finance Cost</b>		
Bank Charges	5,796	7,617
Penalties and Interest	-	-
	<u>5,796</u>	<u>7,617</u>

**17. Financial instruments**

- (i) Fair Values – The carrying amounts of short-term financial assets and liabilities comprising cash in hand and at bank, investments, receivables and prepayments and payables and accruals are a reasonable estimate of their fair values because of the short maturity of these instruments.
- (ii) Credit Risk – The Authority has no significant concentration of credit risk.

**18. Retirement benefits – gratuity payments**

- (i) As at September 30th 2021 the sum of \$4.5 million is outstanding as gratuity payments owed to staff members. These related to staff members whose contracts came to an end during the fiscal year.

**19. Contingent Liability - Litigation**

The Authority is currently dealing with litigation matters which may generate liabilities depending on the outcome of the legal proceedings. With regard to standard legal cases the Authority's insurance policy, which covers Employers Liability, may be sufficient to cover the majority of legal costs.

**CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO,  
CHILDREN AUTHORITY FUND**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2021 – (Continued)

(Expressed in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars)

**20. Related party transactions – Compensation of Directors and Key Management Personnel**

Compensation of persons with responsibility for key positions in planning, directing and control functions of the Authority including executive officers (key management personnel) consist of the following:

	<b>Year ended 30 September</b>	
	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
Employee benefits: Board of Directors	767,314	614,244
: Executive Officers	\$1,437,443	1,186,462

**21. Lease Commitments**

All of the leases currently held by the Authority relates to rental of properties for use of Office spaces, Assessment and Child Support Centers throughout Trinidad and Tobago.

Lease terms are negotiated on an individual basis.

As at September 30th 2021 the lease expenditure incurred for the year totaled \$5,834,898.



## APPENDIX 1:

### LIST OF KEY TERMS

#### Adoption Order

An Adoption Order is made for the purpose of authorising the applicant to adopt a child. The Court will need to be satisfied that the welfare and best interest of the child will be promoted by the adoption and the applicant is found to be a fit person to provide care and has the ability to raise, maintain and educate the child. An adoption order when granted legally makes the Applicant the parent of the child and that person has all rights and obligations that a biological parent has. The application is made pursuant to section 18 of the Adoption of Children Act, Chapter 46:03 and must be supported by a recommendation from the Authority.

#### Affidavit

An Affidavit is a written statement of truth and facts. It is signed by a person who is swearing to the statements contained in the document. The affidavit is usually used as evidence in Court.

#### Care Order

A Care Order is made for the purpose of placing a child under the care of the Authority or a Community Residence. This Order is usually pursued where, upon investigation, the Authority is of the view that the child is in need of care and protection and it would be in the best interest of the child to be received into care by the Authority. The application is made pursuant to section 25(c) of the Children's Authority Act, Chapter 46:10.

#### Care Plan

A Care Plan is a written plan of the child's assessment needs. It highlights the social, mental, emotional, spiritual, physical, and medical needs of the child and the supports required in these domains for accomplishing these goals. It is a detailed outline of the specific requirements needed, and in essence, implements the recommendations of the treatment plan. In our setting, this will be done by external social workers (and sometimes by internal social workers based on request and or demand) assigned to the child or family, and will be guided by the treatment plan sent from the Assessment Centre. The Care Plan would then be monitored by the Children's Authority to determine whether it is being implemented, and to make recommendations for adherence.

#### Child in Need of Care and Protection

Part III of the Children's Authority Act Chap. 46:10 deals with children who are in need of care and protection. Section 22(1) provides that where the Authority is of the

view that a child is in need of care and protection and that its intervention is necessary in the best interest of the child, it shall investigate the matter and it shall be lawful where appropriate for the Authority to receive the child into its care. A child is in need of care and protection where the child under Section 22(1A) of the Children's Authority Act Chap. 46:10 -

- a. has neither parent nor guardian who is fit to exercise care and guardianship
- b. is lost or has been and remains abandoned by his parent or guardian
- c. whose parent or guardian is prevented by:
  - i. reason of mental or bodily disease
  - ii. infirmity or other capacity; or
  - iii. any other circumstances from providing for his upbringing, and there is no available person or persons capable, fit or willing to undertake the care of such child;
- d. is exposed to moral danger
- e. is a child in need of supervision in accordance with Section 50A of the Children Act
- f. is ill-treated or neglected in a manner likely to cause him suffering or injury to health
- g. is destitute or is wandering without any settled place of abode and without visible means of subsistence
- h. is begging or receiving alms
- i. is found loitering for the purpose of begging or receiving alms
- j. is frequenting the company of any criminal; or frequents the company of any common or reputed prostitute not being the mother of the child.

#### Children in Conflict with the Law

The term "Children in Conflict with the Law" is frequently used as an umbrella to refer to a child who has been suspected, accused, detained for, or charged with a criminal offence in Trinidad and Tobago. The following legislation gives support to this proposed definition:

- Child charged means a child who has been charged with an offence and is awaiting the outcome of a hearing or trial. Section 1A Child Rehabilitation Centre Act, Chap. 13:05
- Child Offender means a child who has been convicted of a criminal offence. Section 1A Child Rehabilitation Centre Act, Chap. 13:05

#### Children in Need of Supervision (CHINS)

The term "Children in Need of Supervision" replaced the term "Beyond Control". Miscellaneous Provisions Supreme Court of Judicature and Children Act 2018 has repealed Section 61 of the Children Act, Chap. 46:01 replacing it with Section 50A which provides as follows:

50A.

- (1) Where a parent, guardian or person with responsibility for a child alleges that he/she is unable to control the child, he/she may apply to the Court for an Order deeming the child to be a child in need of supervision and the Court shall –
  - a) refer the child to the Children’s Probation Officer;
  - b) notify the Authority; and
  - c) request that the Solicitor General appoint a Children’s Attorney for the child.
- (2) The Court shall require a report from the Children’s Probation Officer.
- (3) Upon receipt of the report referred to in subsection (2) the Court may make the following orders:
  - a) order that the child be deemed a child in need of supervision and refer the child to the Authority who may recommend an appropriate intervention;
  - b) order that the child be deemed a child in need of care and protection and make an appropriate order pursuant to section 25 of the Children’s Authority Act;
  - c) make an order for the care and placement of the child and refer the child to the Authority;
  - d) order that the child be referred for counselling or any other rehabilitative intervention or treatment;
  - e) order that the parent, guardian or person with responsibility for the child be referred for counselling;
  - f) order that any family member, members of the child’s household or persons connected to the child be referred for counselling; or
  - g) make any other order including an interim order that the Court deems fit.
- (4) Nothing in subsection (3) shall preclude the Court from making an interim order prior to receiving the report referred to in subsection (2).
- (5) In this section “a child in need of supervision” means a child so deemed by the Court pursuant to subsection 3(a).

### Children’s Home

Children’s Home: means a Community Residence for the care and nurturing of children. Section 2 Children’s Community Residences, Foster Care and Nurseries Act, Chap 46:04.

Community Residence means a Children’s Home or a rehabilitation centre. Section 2 Children’s Community Residences, Foster Care and Nurseries Act, Chap 46:04.

Section 2 Children’s Community Residences, Foster Care and Nurseries Act Chap 46:04:

Rehabilitation Centre means a Community Residence for the rehabilitation of-

- a) Child offenders who –
  - (i) Have been convicted and committed to serve a custodial sentence; or
  - (ii) Are remanded in custody pending sentence; or
- (b) children who have been charged with an offence and are in custody pending a hearing”

### Closed Adoption

In a Closed Adoption, the biological parents and adoptive parents do not share a relationship; neither party has any identifying information about the other and there is no contact. In this type of adoption, the child is matched with the prospective adopter based on the profile of the child requested. Closed Adoptions provide birth parents with a sense of closure.

### Fit Person Order

Fit Person is defined under Section 3 of the Children’s Authority Act, Chap 46:10 as a relative of the child or such other person, including a body corporate, authority, agency or society established for the reception of children to whom this Act applies and who is found by the Court to be a suitable person to care for the child but does not include a Children’s Home.

### Foster Care Order

A Foster Care Order is made for the purpose of placing a child in foster care, which is defined as the assumption of temporary care, maintenance and parental obligations by an approved foster parent. This Order can be pursued where the Authority deems that a child is in need of care and protection. The application is made pursuant to section 25(i) of the Children’s Authority Act, Chapter 46:10.

### Home Study

A home study is the comprehensive screening of the Prospective Adoptive Parent (PAP), their family and their home environment. It seeks to educate and prepare the prospective parent for adoption and evaluate their capability and suitability to adopt.

### **Multidisciplinary Assessment**

A multidisciplinary assessment is an evaluation of the child and parent/guardian/family to ascertain psychosocial functioning, with the view to determining appropriate placement and treatment. It comprises:

- Social Work Intake
- Psychological Evaluation
- General Medical Examinations
- Psychiatric Evaluation, if required

The result is a Treatment Plan which outlines all assessment findings, placement and treatment recommendations

### **Open Adoption**

In an Open Adoption, the biological parents and the adoptive parents share a relationship. The adoptive and biological parents can agree to have an arrangement that allows the biological parents to maintain a relationship with the child. An Open Adoption may often involve the adoption of a godchild, niece, nephew, grandchild, neighbour's child or the child of a spouse.

### **An Order Freeing a Child for Adoption**

Under Section 15 (1) of the Adoption of Children Act, the Authority is mandated to apply to the Court for an Order declaring a child to be freed for adoption where the Authority accepts an application made by a person to place that child for adoption. Section 25 of the Children Authority Act is where the Court is satisfied that a child brought before it by the Authority is a child in need of care and protection. One of the orders that the Court can make pursuant to section 25(j) is that a child can be freed for adoption under the Adoption of Children Act.

Upon the grant of the Order, the Court will make a declaration that the child be "freed for Adoption", following which the Authority can then match the child with such prospective adoptive parents as are approved by the Authority taking into account the child's needs.

### **Risk Assessment**

A Risk Assessment is the administration of a specialised tool used to determine the possibility of the child engaging in future pro-criminal behaviour (in the case of a child in conflict with the law) or engaging in risky/challenging behaviour (in the case of the CHINS). The tool and its user also identify strengths and needs, to generate a plan that will address the youth holistically. These reports and their recommendations are submitted to the Children Court for the Judicial Officers consideration.

### **Supervised Access**

Supervised Access refers to supervised visits between parents/guardians/families and their children. This can either be Court-ordered or recommended on an individual basis. The Child and Family Services Unit facilitates transport of children to these visits. In some cases, the Unit also provides supervision during the visits.

### **Supervision Order**

A Supervision Order is made for the purpose of requiring either the child; the parents or guardians of the child; any person with care and control of the child; or any teacher or instructor of the child, to meet with the Authority or any probation officer, social worker or counsellor designated by the Authority, so that the manner in which the child is being cared for may be supervised by the Authority. This Order is pursued in the case where the Authority wishes to intervene and provide the necessary counselling to the child and sometimes to the adults who are present in the child's life or to monitor the child's upbringing in cases where the child has been reintegrated with his or her family. The application is made pursuant to section 25(k) of the Children's Authority Act, Chapter 46:10.

### **Treatment Plan**

The formulation and implementation of treatment plans fall within the responsibility of the Children's Authority. A Treatment Plan refers to an individualised treatment guide that is derived by a multidisciplinary team after the initial assessment and diagnostic summary of a client's case. In our setting, it refers to the deliverable of the multidisciplinary case conference at the Assessment Centre. This Plan outlines the overarching presenting problem, a breakdown of the problems related to this larger problem, the therapeutic goals and objectives for the child as they relate to the solution of the problems identified, therapeutic interventions to achieve the objectives and goals, as well as a time estimate to achieve those. These would then inform the necessary referrals, and provide recommendations to such agencies about the needed interventions that are to be further developed. The Treatment Plan therefore forms part of the larger care plan.

### **Wardship Order**

Once a child is received into the care of the Authority under Section 22 of the Children's Authority, the Authority is to file immediately for Wardship under Section 23 of the Children's Authority Act which is pursuant to Section 35 the Family Law and (Guardianship of Minors, Domicile and Maintenance) Act, Chapter 46:08.

## APPENDIX 2:

### LEGISLATIVE MANDATE

The Authority's mandate is outlined in the Children's Authority Act Chap. 46:10, Section 5 (1):

The Authority may have and exercise such powers and functions as are conferred on it by this Act and in particular may –

- (a) provide care, protection and rehabilitation of children in accordance with Part III of this Act;
- (b) investigate and make recommendations with respect to the adoption of children in accordance with the Adoption of Children Act, 2000;
- (c) investigate complaints made by any person with respect to any child who is in the care of a Community Residence, foster home or nursery, that the said residence, Home or nursery failed to comply with the requisite standards prescribed under the Children's Community Residences, Foster Care and Nurseries Act, 2000 and any incident of mistreatment of children in such places;
- (d) investigate complaints or reports of mistreatment of children;
- (e) upon investigation, remove a child from his home where it is shown that the child is in imminent danger;
- (f) monitor Community Residences, foster homes and nurseries and conduct periodic reviews to determine their compliance with such requirements as may be prescribed.
- (g) issue, suspend and revoke licences of Children's Homes and Nurseries as provided under the Children's Community Residences, Foster Care and Nurseries Act 2000;
- (ga) issue, suspend and revoke temporary residence licences and conditional residence licences of Children's Homes and Nurseries as provided under the Children's Community Residences, Foster Care and Nurseries Act
- (h) advise the Minister on matters relating to the operation of this Act; and
  - (i) do all such things as may be necessary or expedient for the proper performance of its duties.





**THE CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

**HEAD OFFICE:**

Corner Dere St. and Queen's Park West,  
Port of Spain

627-0748, 623-7555, 625-7151

Email: [info@ttchildren.org](mailto:info@ttchildren.org)

**HOTLINE:**

**996 or 800-2014**



[ttchildren.org](http://ttchildren.org)