

# SCHOOL NURSE DAILY NEWSLETTER

# WELCOME

BACK ◀

NEW  
FEATURES

*Topic of the Month*

**'THE HEART OF  
JAMAICA'**

September  
Activities  
Highlight!

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A LONG awaited WELCOME BACK! It's long overdue because I was MIA for last month, and I have promised to bring your monthly newsletter back for the coming month. So! Welcome 🥰, it's good to see that you all are back and in proper shape! It's been one heck of a summer and now we are back in the soldier's camp AND I am back with many surprises for you too!

One of which is my monthly activity log. During September, I hosted two events, one seminar and the other a webinar. I have added a new feature to the newsletter so you can view the highlights and take a look at what we've been up to.

So, let's get down to it! This newsletter won't be a long one (thankfully), so let's get our minds ready to be fed!

## Scripture of the Month

Proverbs 17:22 – "A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones."





## Topic of the Month

### 'THE HEART OF JAMAICA'

Hear me out, I know that we are accustomed to the snacking, the high sugar content, and salty foods, but are we aware of the risks? Yeah, we say 'me know dis nuh good fi mi, but wah nuh kill uh fatten uh'. But could it be that it's doing both?



Has anyone realised how overweight some of our children are? Does anyone consider the risks associated with this? Obesity rate in children ages 4-11 years has increased by 171%, and at least 9% of these children are under the age of 5.



- Childhood obesity puts our children at risk for non-communicable diseases such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and heart diseases. We should also consider the effect it has on their mental state as well. Imagine being teased about your weight consistently? Being called names? Afraid to eat because of what people may say? Or can't stop eating because it's all that comforts you? Being overweight puts children at risk for depression, suicide, low self-esteem, difficulty accepting themselves or even finding self-worth (Hutchinson, 2022).

An article published in 2013 highlights that Jamaican adolescents are at risk for type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular diseases (such as heart failure, stroke, and heart attack), all which are mainly attributed to their daily food intake (Barrett et al., 2023).

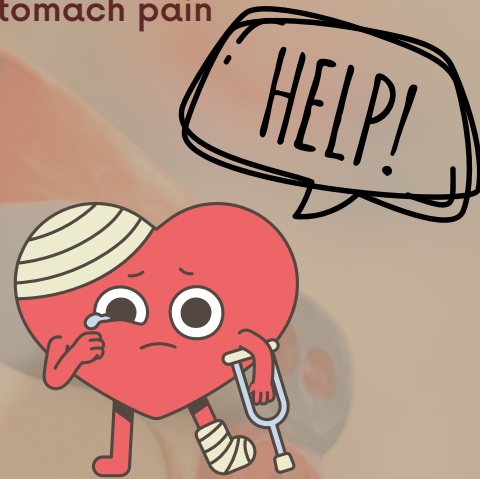
# Wow!



## HOW CAN WE RECOGNIZE THAT OUR HEART NEEDS HELP?

You may notice different signs that your heart health is degrading, here are a few (MacMillan, 2023) :

- Chest discomfort
- Nausea, indigestion, heartburn, or stomach pain
- Pain that spreads to the arm
- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded
- Throat or jaw pain
- Being exhausted easily
- Unusual loud snoring
- Unusual cold sweats
- A cough that won't go away
- Swollen legs, feet, and ankles
- Irregular heartbeat



So, what is there to do?

## GIVING OUR CHILDREN A BETTER CHANCE

How can we help give our children a chance at a healthier future? Well, some of the classics that we know, but honestly do not practise. I have heard it one too many times, 'but him nu like water', 'him nuh like go out a door, a baay tablet him want deh pan', 'me cyah give him fruits, a baay sweet tings and chips him want'.

I want us to remember that, though we want to appease our children, we want to ensure that we are attending to their health needs as well. Our children need to understand the difference between healthy and unhealthy, and understand the risks associated with them as well.





So, let's take a look at how we can help increase the heart conditions of our children:

- Daily exercise – we don't need to tell them to do push ups or run a mile or two, allow them to be children. Children are supposed to PLAY, no matter the age they are. Playing is how they put in the daily exercise they are supposed to acquire. So, if you are worried about their safety, you can monitor them, but allow the children to get their hands dirty, please (Boston Children's Hospital, n.d.).
- Maintain a healthy diet – this is actually not as difficult as it seems. Yes, we want to have a balanced diet, but for many that is not a daily reality. So what do we do? We encourage our children to eat fruits on a daily basis, a banana, apple, pine, and a few guavas. Maintaining a balanced diet doesn't need to be all black and white. Just keep a few things in mind (Boston Children's Hospital, n.d.):
  - Use little salt as much as possible
  - Where you can boil something instead of frying it, it's the way to go
  - Reduce your sugar content as much as possible, that also means drinking natural juices instead of soda and other sugary beverages
  - Drink water! Regularly!
- Regular intake of water – we underestimate the part that water plays in the diet. Dehydration is the main source of headaches in children. Being adequately hydrated as well allows the heart to pump blood through the body more efficiently, and reduces strain on the heart muscles (The Heart House, n.d.).
- Limit the exposure of children to smoking of cigarettes or marijuana. Secondhand smoke exposure is lethal to the heart.





A yellow tag with a lightbulb icon and the text "HELPFUL TIPS".

## HELPFUL TIPS

These are simple steps we can take towards increasing the heart health of our children, let us please put them to action. And for those who will definitely need to see a physician to be placed on a more strict diet to help increase the heart's health, please take action and do just that. It is not normal for our children to be overweight, there are too many risks associated with it, and we want to give our children the best possible chance at a healthy life.



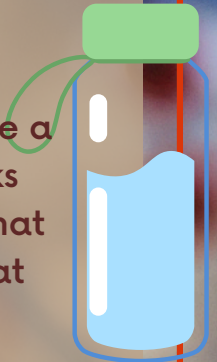
QUICK  
TIPS

## Nurse D's Tip & Dear Parents

As a School Nurse, I've noticed that students do not drink water very often. Many may wonder why Nurse told them to 'get a bottle of water to drink' when they say they have a headache, but that's because they have not had any over the past day or two, or even more. No amount of juice we drink can give us the hydration we need, the body needs water to sustain itself. And when it doesn't have it, it pulls from places that have a high water content (such as the brain) and they shrink.

Let's look at it from a diet intake perspective, the snacks we buy have a high salt content, the food we eat have a high salt content, the drinks we have on a daily basis have a high sugar content. Imagine all of that in your bloodstream with no water to help regulate and dilute it, what do you think may happen?

If you do not take away anything from this newsletter, take this please, daily adequate water intake is necessary for proper bodily function, and that includes the heart, so please have an adequate intake (and encourage your children to do so too).





# Den Cu Yah!

74% of deaths each year are as a result of NCDs (non-communicable diseases) such as cardiovascular diseases (such as heart attacks and stroke), cancers, chronic respiratory diseases (such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and asthma) and diabetes (WHO, 2023).

Disclaimer: The content on this newsletter should not be used in place of medical/professional consultation or advice, but to be used for educational purposes only.

## References

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## HIGHLIGHTS FROM SUICIDE PREVENTION SEMINAR FEATURING TAMI TSANSAI

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# SEMINAR HIGHLIGHTS



The Seminar started off with an impromptu discussion about suicide and all it entails. Everyone was pumped to engage in such a taboo discussion. It was definitely a fruitful one!





**We had a series of prayer sessions for those who are currently struggling with depressive symptoms and suicidal thoughts. We were also thoroughly engaged by Tami Tsansai during her Suicide Prevention presentation.**







The highlight of the seminar was the Art Presentation session, where different individuals gave us an insider scoop on what it feels like to be suicidal. Let's just say, we discovered many hidden talents.







**The session ended on a high where we had our panel discussion with Ms. P. Henry, Ms. T. Cole (Tami), Nurse Douglas, and Mr. A. Duffus as our panelists.**

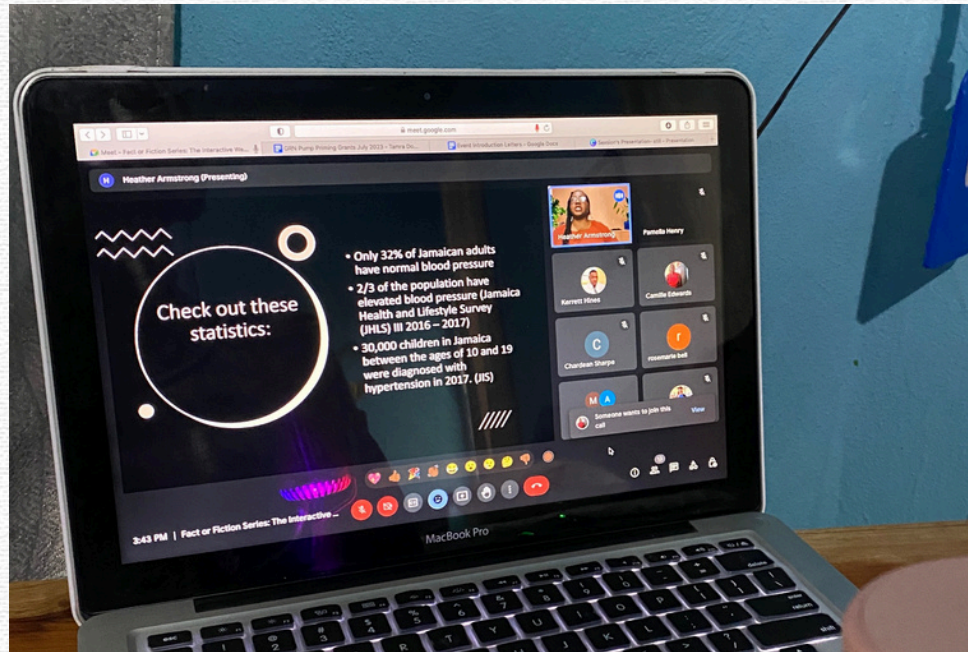


**Sherona McKenzie and Tackiece Nelson sent us off in fine style by teaching us a few dance moves to a song!**



# FACT OR FICTION SERIES: THE INTERACTIVE WELLNESS SESSION

Webinar #1  
Theme: Let's Talk  
Heart Health with  
Dr. Heather  
Armstrong from  
CARPHA



✓ Fact or Fiction Series: The... ▶ 🔍 🔊

Heather Armstrong is presenting

**FACT OR FICTION SERIES: THE INTERACTIVE WELLNESS SESSION (PART 1)**

**“Let’s Talk Heart Health”**

Dr. Heather Armstrong  
Head Chronic Disease and Injury  
Chronic Disease And Injury Department  
Office of Executive Director  
Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA)

 CARPHA Preventing disease, promoting and protecting health



We had a beautiful, brief session, focused on the heart health of our children. It was moderated by our Head of English Department, Ms. Pamella Henry. She also directed the question and answer segment that followed Dr. Armstrong’s wonderful presentation -- which was very interactive!