



BARBADOS CHILDHOOD OBESITY PREVENTION COALITION

Hon. Miss Kay S. McConney, M.P.
Minister of Education, Technological and
Vocational Training
Elsie Payne Complex Constitution Road
ST. MICHAEL

March 3rd 2023

Dear Minister McConney

On the occasion of World Obesity Day 2023, the Barbados Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition (BCOP Coalition) wishes to thank you as Minister of Education Technological & Vocational Training and your team, for taking the bold and necessary step of launching the Barbados School Nutrition Policy on February 15th, 2023. This policy paves the way for a healthy school environment for a generation of children suffering from alarming levels of obesity, as 31% - or one in every three - of our children between 13 and 15 years old are obese or overweight.

At a time when unhealthy foods and drinks have unregulated access to our children in our schools, we congratulate the government for embracing the protection of children with this new policy. The Barbados School Nutrition Policy is a paradigm shift for our country. By launching this policy you have demonstrated how important the health and well-being of young people should be to policymakers, educators, parents and guardians and the entire Barbadian society.

Barbados is one of the countries that have ratified The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. As a nation we have publicly declared that we are committed to ensuring and protecting children's rights and have agreed to be accountable to the international community. One of these rights is the right to adequate health care, including a balanced diet. According to the Convention, "Children have the right to the best health care possible, clean water to drink, healthy food and a clean and safe environment to live in." Children also have the right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health and the right to information about how to stay safe and healthy.



As a Coalition of over 30 civil society organisations as well as individuals members, we are affirming our support for all stakeholders as they seek to align their operations to ensure the effective implementation of this policy from the beginning of Term 3 in April 2023. The BCOP Coalition is here to provide support to vendors, students, parents, teachers and principals, drawing on the experienced and expert resources within the Coalition. Already we have had good response to the distribution of the Alternative Snacks and Beverages List and have started receiving queries and invitations to make presentations at various schools about the products that are being recommended within the guidelines set by the Ministry. Also, as shared at the Policy launch, the School Monitoring App commissioned by the Heart & Stroke Foundation of Barbados Inc, will be made available to Ministry officials to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of the BSNP.

This Coalition comprises of the following civil society organisations:

Healthy Caribbean Coalition	Barbados Diabetes Foundation
Barbados Cancer Society	Barbados Christian Council
Barbados Muslim Association	The Breastfeeding & Child Nutrition Foundation of Barbados
George Alleyne Chronic Disease Research Centre	Dance 4 Life
The Heart & Stroke Foundation of Barbados Inc	United Youth Leaders of Barbados
The Diabetes and Hypertension Association of Barbados	The Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners
The Barbados Association of Muslim Ladies	The Barbados Nurses Association
The Barbados Association of Journalists and Media Workers	Barbados Cancer Support Services
The Kiwanis Club	The Barbados Physical Therapy Association
The Barbados Football Rugby Union	Barbados Association of Endometriosis and PCOS
Girl Guides of Barbados	Barbados Boy Scouts
National Council of Parent Teachers Association	Barbados Association of Retired Persons
Slow Foods Barbados	Barbados Family Planning Association
Caribbean Institute for Social and Emotional Learning	The Incredibles Academy
Barbados Masters and Seniors Athletic Club	Dietitians of Barbados
The Biocultural Education and Research Programme	

We look forward to working with your Ministry and the Government of Barbados to shape a healthy, safe school environment for our children come the start of Term Three of this school year.

Kind Regards



Dr. Kia Lewis

Chairperson of the Barbados Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition