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For Immediate Release

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Mental Health Upgrade for 400+ Students**

As she addressed more than 400 primary school students at the *Mindful Moods, Happy Views* event in the National Racquet Centre on May 24<sup>th</sup> 2024, Ms. Irma Bailey-Reyes, Coordinator, Child Affairs Division, Office of the Prime Minister - Gender and Child Affairs (GCA) asserted:

*“We want children to live balanced, healthy lives, even when achieving labour-intensive goals. Along with our partners, we are providing targeted resources for emotional support, coping mechanisms, and stress management strategies.”*

Hosted by the GCA in commemoration of Mental Health Awareness Month 2024, this is the second event helping Standard Four and Five students improve their mental health resilience and reduce exam-related stress. The first was held in Tobago on May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2024 and both events included support for caregivers by sharing with them the signs of stress and mental fatigue in children and empowering them with knowledge of how to access help and support.

Today, children and teenagers from thirteen (13) schools and three (3) community residences benefitted from study tips and breathing exercises presented by Ms. Sunshine Anderson, a local personality, as she engaged them in ways to manage their emotional control.

Several ministerial agencies and civil society organisations hosted booths that facilitated creative and performance arts activities such as painting, dance and aerobics; social activities to boost team building and cooperation; and information on life-saving services for children. Present were Childline, the Children’s Authority, the Mental Health Clinic of the North West Regional Health Authority, NIHERST, the Community Mediation Services Division; the Labour Inspectorate, Kids in Need of Direction, Hope in Fitness TT, Trinidad and Tobago Association of Psychologists, and Heroes Foundation.

In accordance with the National Child Policy, the Government is committed to ensuring that all children are happy, healthy and confident; their rights are respected, protected and promoted to facilitate their holistic development towards achieving their fullest potential as constructive members of society, now and in the future.

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