

## Message from the Chief Executive Officer



*Beverly Beckles PhD*

The 10th session of the Conference of States Parties to the CRPD (Convention of the Rights for Persons with Disabilities) was held from June 13th-15th 2017 at the United Nations Head quarters, New York. This year's Theme was **“The Second Decade of the CRPD: Inclusion and full participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in the implementation of the Convention”** with Sub-Themes as follows:

- Addressing the impact of multiple discrimination on persons with disabilities and promoting their participation and multi-

stakeholder partnerships for achieving the SDGs in line with the CRPD;

- Inclusion and full participation of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action;
- Promoting inclusive urban development and implementation of the New Urban Agenda – Habitat III.

National Centre for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD) is an accredited NGO to the CRPD and was pleased to be represented at the 10th Session. Long before the adoption of the CRPD, NCPD has been advocating for inclusion and full participation of persons with disabilities.

Many may ask why inclusion and full participation of persons with disabilities, and in return, I will ask, why not? As individuals and by extension a society, we must first see persons with disabilities as people who make up the society in which we live. Secondly, we must focus on their abilities and thirdly, we

must allow them to use their abilities through inclusion and full participation. The **CRPD article 5** promotes equality of opportunity and non-discrimination of persons with disabilities while **article 9** refers to accessibility which requires governments to take action to ensure persons with disabilities the right to independent living and participation in all aspects of life.

NCPD is committed to inclusion and full participation. Each one of us has a role to play in making this a reality. Let our voices be heard!

Beverly Beckles, PhD  
Chief Executive Officer

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# WHAT IS AUTISM?

"Autism is one word attempting to describe millions of stories"- Stuart Duncan

## Autism is a developmental disability



Children with autism, also known as autism spectrum disorder or ASD, have social, communication and language problems. They also have restricted and repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities.



## Autism may be mild or severe.

This is why it is called Autism Spectrum Disorder. All children with autism don't have the exact same problems contrary to normal perceptions.

## According to the CDC



1 in every 68 children has been diagnosed with autism. ASD is 4.5 times more common in boys than girls. There is a great need for statistics in Trinidad and Tobago on the number of persons with ASD.

## There is no cure for Autism



There is currently no medical diagnosis that can detect Autism. From birth to at least 36 months of age, every child should be screened for developmental milestones during routine checkups with a medical professional.

# AUTISM HAS MANY BEAUTIES



By Candice Barbara John

Always Unique, Totally Interesting, Sometimes Mysterious, those are some of the many ways to describe Navin. Navin who is eighteen years old, entered the doors of the National Centre for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD) in September 2016; to pursue certification in Office Administration. This young man is proving to the world that 'disability does not equal inability'.

Navin who was diagnosed as having Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) at a very young age also has speech impairment and sometimes can become very anxious in varying situations. Navin who belongs to a very close knit and supportive family unit spends a lot of time doing things together including being actively involved in church and its activities. Navin's family noticed his differences from quite young and acted upon it to ensure that he accessed the best education and other opportunities so that he can reach his maximum potential.

Not many of us are lucky to be different, but fortunately Navin has that luck but sadly that luck has

caused Navin to experience some of the cruelty that life throws at some people. Navin was bullied during his first experience at elementary school where his teachers somehow lacked the compassion and probably the know-how to work with a student with a special need who was excelling nevertheless. The toughness of life did not stop there for him but today when interacting or looking at him no one can tell of his experiences.

There are different levels of autism and Navin is high functioning. There are many beautiful things about autism and Navin shows us and the world those many beauties. Despite his hurdles, he was able to reach form five at the secondary school level where he studied five subjects. On July 8th 2017 this young man wrote the NEC (National Examination Council) exam in Office Administration to obtain certification. His love for football has driven him to be part of the centre's team, his coach and teammates are amazed at his skills in the sport, a sport he never played before until now.

Navin's achievements do not stop there. At the centre's Christmas concert, he not only left his instructors but also his schoolmates wanting more of his performance on the keyboard. During his performances, one can see his passion for playing the keyboard as the music spoke not only to the audience, but to him also. On the other hand one

can become lost in his breathtaking drawings and paintings.

Look out world, Navin Rampaul is just getting started and without a doubt will continue to do amazing and awesome things.



# New Faces at NCPD

*NCPD is pleased to introduce four new members of staff into the NCPD Family.*



**Mr. Ozneil West**  
Operations Manager

NCPD welcomes back Mr. Ozneil West as the new Operations Manager. Mr. West held the position of Accountant from 2007-2012. On his departure, he went into the retail business sector establishing a supermarket and pharmacy. In April 2017, an opportunity presented itself for an Operations Manager at NCPD which he applied for and was successful. Mr. Ozneil West training is in Accounting and certification in Advanced Local Taxation. He is also proficient in using various accounting packages. Mr. West brings over 16 years work experience collectively to NCPD in the following areas; banking, internal and external audit, accounting, administration, management and retail trade operations. NCPD welcomes the return of Mr. Ozneil West.



**Ms. Michelle N. Daniel**  
Accountant

Joining the NCPD family on April 18th, 2017 in the Finance Department as the new Accountant is Ms. Michelle M Daniel. Ms. Daniel possesses training and qualifications in ACCA and is a Chartered Accountant. With over 20 years of work experience, 18 of which is post qualification. Ms. Michelle Daniel has worked in various sectors; aviation, financial, oil and gas and other energy related sectors. She not only brings her wealth of experience and training but also her commitment, dedication and vibrant personality to NCPD. NCPD welcomes, Ms. M Daniel.



**Ms. Elizabeth Nicholas**  
Research and Communication Officer.

Returning to NCPD on May 1st 2017 is also Ms. Elizabeth Nicholas. She is the new Research and Communication Officer. Ms. Nicholas is the holder of double major Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and International Developmental Studies from the Saint Mary's University, Nova Scotia. She obtained a Master of Arts in Developmental Studies. With over 30 years working experience as a Social Development Analyst. She has travelled extensively representing various organisation and by extension her country, Trinidad and Tobago in various social development fora.



**Mr. Torres Waithe**  
Admin. Assistant - Finance Dept.

On May 1st 2017, Mr. Torres Waithe became a new member of staff in the capacity of Administrative Assistant in the Finance Department. Mr. Waite has 14 years of work experience and acquired a bachelor degree in Business Administration from RBC/UWI in affiliation with the University of Brunswick, Canada. NCPD welcomes Mr. Torres Waithe.

## Quote Corner

Prejudice is a far greater problem than any impairment; discrimination is a bigger obstacle to overcome than any disability.

*- Paul K. Longmore*

# SYMPTOMS OF AUTISM

"Autism is not a choice, acceptance is. Imagine if the opposite was true" - Stuart Duncan

# SYMPTOMS OF AUTISM

"I am different not less" - Dr. Temple Grandin

Autism spectrum disorders (ASD) are characterized by social-interaction difficulties, communication challenges and a tendency to engage in repetitive behaviors. However, symptoms and their severity vary widely across these three core areas.

## Social Interaction

Persons with ASD may have problems using social skills to connect with other people. They may seem to be in their own world. It may be hard for them to:

- share a common focus with another person
- play with others and share toys;
- understand feelings;
- make and keep friends.

## Communication

Persons with ASD trouble with communication skills like understanding, talking with others, reading or writing; understanding and using gestures, like pointing and waving.

following directions; understanding and using words; having conversations; Learning to read or write.

They may repeat words just heard or words heard days or weeks earlier; talk with little expression or use a sing-song voice;

Children may use tantrums to tell you what they do or do not want.

## Common Behaviors

Children with autism may:  
have trouble changing from one activity to the next;  
flap hands, rock, spin or stare;  
get upset by certain sounds; like only a few foods;  
have limited and unusual interests-for example, talk about only one topic or keep staring at one toy.

Recent research confirms that appropriate screening can determine whether a child is at risk for autism as young as one year. While every child develops differently, we also know that early treatment improves outcomes, often dramatically.

The Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers-Revised (M-CHAT-R™) is a scientifically validated tool for screening children between 16 and 30 months of age that assesses risk for autism spectrum disorder (ASD)

Copy and paste the link below to screen your child on the Autism Speaks website

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/what-autism/diagnosis/mchat>



# TREATMENT AND ASSISTANCE FOR PERSONS WITH AUTISM

Each child or adult with autism is unique and, so, each autism intervention plan should be tailored to address the specific needs of the person.



Intervention can involve behavioral treatments, medicines or both.



Early intervention often can reduce challenges associated with autism, lessen disruptive behavior, and provide some degree of independence



With appropriate treatment and education, many children with autism spectrum disorders can learn and develop.

For further assistance for persons with autism please seek support from local institutions such as:

Autistic Society of Trinidad and Tobago

Autism Parents Association of Trinidad and Tobago



# NCPD's Activities

## April - June 2017

Special Olympics Trinidad and Tobago National Games was held on April 1st, 2017 at the Hasely Crawford Stadium, Port-of-Spain. Once again NCPD participated. It's contingent comprised of 25 staff members and 135 Athletes. Athletes competed in basketball, bocce, football, swimming, track and field and volleyball. At the end of the day, NCPD walked away with 62 gold medals, 40 silver medals, 40 bronze medals and 13 ribbons. Two participants from NCPD played key roles in the games, Akil Arcia recited the Athletes' Oath at the Opening of the games and Rondell Quammie carried the Torch of Hope during the Closing Ceremony of the games.





## The Special Olympics Trinidad and Tobago National Games -Power Lifting

Power Lifting Athlete, Drexel Joseph competed in the Power Lifting event at Limitless Gym, Long Circular Mall on May 6th. Drexel won 1 silver and 2 bronze medals. NCPD coach Mr. Ron Wiltshire was present at the event.



## Tree Lighting Ceremony for Autism Awareness Month 2017

The fourth annual Tree lighting Ceremony to commemorate Autism Awareness month was held on April 2nd, 2017 at the bandstand, President's House, St. Ann's. Attending the event were Chairperson of the Board Ms. Shereen Baksh, Vice Chairperson Dr. Natalie Dick, CEO, Dr. Beverly Beckles, Treasurer Ms. Sheree Welch, Programme Manager Ms. Kahaya Sooklalsingh, trainees and parents. Attendees were sensitized on the educational capabilities of persons with autism including being able to function and excel in the 'regular' general education classrooms. NCPD Ensemble performed and was well received by the audience. This annual event is hosted by Their Excellencies Anthony Thomas Aquinas Carmona, SC and Reema Carmona.



## **NALIS Literacy, Health Fair & Walkathon**

On April 5th, NCPD participated in the NALIS Literacy, Health Fair & Walkathon which took place on Harris Promenade, San Fernando. NCPD Employees, Ms. Camile Hosein, Ms. Giselle Ramose and Mr. Ricardo Rampaul provided the public with information about NCPD's products and services. The event attracted not only students from nearby schools but also members of the general public.



## **Friendly Cricket Match**

A group comprising of Board Members, Staff, Apprentices and Trainees all made the journey to Carerra Island on April 8th to play a friendly cricket match against inmates. NCPD team was Captained by Mr. Clarence Shepherd assisted by Ms. Lesa Paul. Despite getting off to a good start, NCPD team lost by 12 runs, nevertheless, it was a day well spent. NCPD group gained insight and a different perspective into life behind prison walls. They were entertained by the inmates musically and the visitors also got a glimpse of the beautiful art pieces. The field trip was spear headed by directors, Mr. Subert Gilbert and Mr. Lex Lovell.



## Awareness Walk

Rapid Fire Kids Foundation held its first Awareness Walk on April 30th 2017. The Walk took place through the streets of San Fernando. NCPD staff members including Dr. Beverly Beckles, Ms. Kahaya Sooklalsingh and Mr. Ricardo Rampaul along with a number of trainees, apprentices and parents participated in the event. NCPD Ensemble played at the closing of the event.



## Caribbean Delegates

A visit by Regional Government Officials was made on May 3rd 2017 to the Centre. This field visit formed part of the agenda of a regional workshop training on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) organised by the Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Geneva Switzerland. The guests were welcomed by the Chairman of the Board of Directors Ms. Shereen Baksh. Dr. Beverly Beckles, CEO made a presentation to the group following which the delegates received a thorough tour of the facilities. The delegates asked many questions and were very impressed by the products and training.

Later that evening Their Excellencies, Anthony Thomas Aquinas Carmona, SC and Reema Carmona hosted a cocktail reception for the delegates. Various Disability organisations and local stakeholders were also invited to the event. NCPD was represented by Ms. Baksh, Dr. Dick, Ms. Welch, Ms. Sooklalsingh, Ms. John and Dr. Beckles. Attendees of the event enjoyed local cuisine, music and opportunities to network.



## HIV/AIDS Sensitization Session

The Ministry of Social Development and Family Services Unit visited the Centre on June 9th 2017 to sensitize trainees and apprentices on HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases (STD's). The session also focused on forming and maintaining healthy relationships. The trainees and apprentices were very receptive and appreciated the information shared.



## Annual General Meeting

National Centre for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD) held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 28th June 2017 at the San Fernando City Hall Auditorium. At the meeting various reports were presented. Mrs. Lynette Seebaran-Suite, Chairperson of the Equal Opportunity Commission, (EOC) was the feature speaker for the evening who spoke on the theme - 'Disability: A Human Rights Issue'. The Board of Directors remained unchanged.

## Bishop Anstey High School East - Care Fair



Ms. Kahaya Sooklalsingh and Mr. Kyle Young Lai represented NCPD at the Bishop Anstey High School East - Care Fair on June 30th 2017.

## 10th Session of the CRPD

The tenth session of the Conference of State Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from June 13-15 2017. This year's theme was "The Second Decade of the CRPD: Inclusion and full participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in the implementation of the Convention".

National Centre for Persons with Disabilities is an accredited NGO to the Convention. Dr. Beverly Beckles, CEO of NCPD, attended the meeting in New York.



# 4th Annual Medical Conference and Community Outreach Programme



Dr. Beverly Beckles presented at the 4th Annual Medical Conference and Community Outreach Programme in Barbados.

### **Bocas Lit Festival**

The Annual Bocas Lit Festival for 2017 was held in April and NCPD participated for the second year. The Centre was invited to demonstrate the paper recycling process, a project of which NCPD is very proud. Employees Ms. Kahaya Sooklalsingh and Ms. Janilla Carrington demonstrated the process.



### **World Challenge Day 2017**

On May 31st 2017, a group of trainees and apprentices took part in the First Citizens Sports Foundation World Challenge Day event at the Centre of Excellence, Macoya.



### **Outreach**

NCPD was invited by the Poonah Open Bible Miracle Centre on June 11th 2017 to sensitize the church population about Persons with Disabilities. Programme Manager, Ms. Kahaya Sooklalsingh represented NCPD and sensitised persons attending church that day. There was a great turn out and the information was well received.



## **NCPD participation at Consultations and Workshops**

### **First Aid Emergency Response**

NCPD prides itself on being able to respond to the needs of its apprentices, trainees and clients. As a result of this, staff members are involved in continuous training. The South West Regional Health Authority (S.W.R.H.A) along with the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Emergency Physicians and Surgeons held a one day training and seminar on First Aid Emergency Response at City Hall, Harris Promenade, San Fernando on 22nd May 2017. Six members of staff attended the training.

### **CEDAW Workshop**

Network of Non Governmental Organisations of Trinidad and Tobago for the Advancement of Women in collaboration with Office of the Prime Minister, Gender and Child Affairs and Equal Opportunity Commission held a Training Workshop from April 24-26, 2017 on the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The workshop was facilitated by the Women's Human Rights Education Institute WHRI- University of Toronto, Canada and Gender Justice Foundation of Costa Rica. The main facilitator was Alda Facio, current chair of the Working Group on Discrimination against Women in Law and in Practice (WGDW), United Nations Human Rights Council.

The key objective was based on an understanding of human rights principles and obligations in the context of the international human rights systems and to prepare participants to understand the CEDAW Convention and to apply its principles practically to support women's equality and empowerment.

NCPD as one of the contributors to the Civil Society Shadow Report on the UN CEDAW participated in the workshop in the person of Ms. Candice John. Participants were educated on women's human rights norms and standards that will enable meaningful partnership towards

addressing discrimination and promoting women's substantive equality in the domestic context. In addition, the training focused on the need for impactful and measureable steps to implement recommendations made by the UN CEDAW Committee in Geneva following the review of the State's report and Shadow report, July 2016.

Emphasis was placed on the significance for coordinated efforts by both government and civil society in the CEDAW monitoring, reporting and implementation process to bring about successful and impactful results in the national context.

### **Draft National Policy on Persons with Disabilities**

Dr. Beckles, CEO and Ms. Nicholas, Communication and Research Officer represented NCPD at the consultation on the Draft National Policy on Persons with Disabilities. Prior to this recent consultation, NCPD had submitted recommendations and had participated in previous consultations. NCPD has been calling on the government to review the current National Policy which was approved in 2005 to ensure alignment with the UNCRPD. We anxiously await finalisation of the proposed new policy.

## ***NCPD's Upcoming Activities***

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
<i>July 8th 2017</i>	<i>NEC Exams</i>
<i>July 8th 2017</i>	<i>We Boat 4</i>
<i>July 10th-28th 2017</i>	<i>Summer Camp</i>
<i>July 13th 2017</i>	<i>Graduation</i>
<i>28th July 2017</i>	<i>Assessment for Eyegaze</i>
	<i>Communication Technology</i>
<i>2nd August 2017</i>	<i>Visit by The Ministry of Housing and Urban Development Vacation Camp to NCPD</i>
<i>September 4th 2017</i>	<i>Start of new Academic year 2017-2018</i>

### ***Wellness Tip***

#### ***Warm Lemon Water***

*Drinking warm lemon water every morning before breakfast can aid digestion, boost the immune system, balance ph levels, clear skin, promote healing and so much more.*

*Be sure to have your Warm Lemon Water every morning before having your breakfast and DON'T forget breakfast is the most important meal of the day.*

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