

More social workers needed—psychologist

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There remains an urgent need for more social workers across the country, as far too often negligence plays a part in the death of children, says counselling psychologist Anna Maria Mora.

Mora, founder of the Counselling Centre for Adolescents in Arouca, made the comment in response to the recent deaths of four-year-old Jenice Figaro and Mawaki and Miracle Gordon.

Police were initially told Figaro died after complaining of a pain in her tummy after eating a meal of French fries last week Thursday, but an autopsy showed she actually beaten to death. The cause of Figaro's death was listed as blunt force trauma from a severe beating on the head and abdomen.

A female relative of Jenice, who is suspected of beating the child to death, is yet to be located and charged.

Four-year-old Mawaki and his two-year-old sister, Miracle, perished in the fire at their home at Tattoo Trace, Valencia, last week, after allegedly being left home alone by their parents.

The children's parents, a part-time taxi driver and a hairdresser, were detained by police and remained in police custody up to late yesterday. They could be charged with child neglect.

The couple's three other children, who were at school at the time of the fire, were collected by police and placed in the care of officials of the Children's Authority.

"We talk about armies of soldiers and police, we need armies of social workers going into communities and visiting homes. We need to have social workers going into homes and ensuring that children are okay," Mora told 195FM yesterday.

She called for more community involvement in the welfare of children, adding that: "They are neglected in so many ways and abused in so many ways."