

**FISCAL YEAR 2025 SECOND  
QUARTER ACHIEVEMENTS  
(JAN - MAR 2025)**



The Children’s Authority of Trinidad & Tobago (“the Authority”/ “CATT”) is a specialised agency with responsibility for the care, protection and rehabilitation of vulnerable children, especially those who are at risk or have been victims of abuse or neglect.

The work of the Authority is guided by its vision, **“to defend and support child rights and make child protection everybody’s business”**. The organisation also seeks **“to promote the best interest of children through advocacy, prevention, intervention and collaborative strategies, based on multidisciplinary approaches”**.

The information below identifies some of the key achievements of the Authority during the second quarter of Fiscal Year 2025, which represents the period January to March, 2025.

## CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

### Regional Case Management Unit

**1. Success Story: Life Skills Training for Transitioning Youths in Community Residence:**

The Children’s Authority, in collaboration with the C.O.A.R. Foundation (Creating Opportunities for Adolescents At Risk), successfully facilitated a transformative life skills training programme for initially three transitioning youths from a Community Residence. The C.O.A.R Foundation is a Non-Governmental Organisation based in Siparia whose purpose is to “impart knowledge aimed to change the mindset of youths all geared towards positive thinking and transformation.” Upon observing the positive effects that the session had on the children, another Community Residence requested to include a resident who transitioned from their facility.

There were eight comprehensive sessions commencing from March 2025, in which these young individuals were equipped with practical tools to support their journey into independent adulthood. The sessions spanned key areas such as financial management, career planning, emotional intelligence, interpersonal competence, self-esteem, and resilience. The training also placed strong emphasis on personal responsibility, hygiene, and self-care. Students received handouts, had the opportunity to participate in role-play and resources such as budget templates and drafting a resume. A significant breakthrough was observed in their willingness to confront personal insecurities, embrace their flaws, and express themselves with newfound confidence. Their participation culminated in a certification ceremony, where each child reflected on the lessons learned and expressed gratitude for the experience. This initiative not only imparted essential life skills but also empowered the youths with a stronger sense of self-worth and direction, to support their transition from care to independent living.

**2. School enrolment:** Two children successfully enrolled in school (one was a new enrolment and the other was a re-enrollment to primary school).

- 3. CATT Investigations Support TTPS in Solving the Murder of a Child:** In January, an anonymous caller contacted the hotline to report the physical abuse of a female child which was perpetrated by her father. The Authority's Emergency Response Team (ERT) intervened and the allegations of physical abuse were substantiated. During the course of the investigation the child informed that her sibling perished in a fire after being physically abused by their father, whom she witnessed set the deceased sibling ablaze. The allegation was reported to the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service and the investigation was reopened. With the support of the Authority, the child was able to provide statements to the Police in the investigation. Consequently, the father was arrested and charged by the Police with murder.
- 4. Parental Empowerment and Support:** In February 2025, a report was received of physical abuse and neglect of three children, which were perpetrated by their father. The allegations were substantiated; however, challenges were encountered in removing the children as there was no placement available with relatives or at a Community Residence. The children's mother had no fixed place of abode. However, through support, the mother was able to get a job and secure an apartment. As a result, the children were removed from their father's residence into the care of their mother; thereby, negating the need for placement at a Community Residence. The team continues to work with the family to ensure stability and the children's needs are met.

### Contact Centre Unit

From the beginning of FY2024/2025 to the end of the second quarter, the Contact Centre Unit managed a total of **18,942 interactions** across multiple communication channels including phone calls, walk-ins, emails, post-mail, and web reports. Notably, **16,969 of these interactions were calls** handled through the Contact Centre's hotline, with agents logging **over 1,367 hours of talk time**. This figure represents only the time spent on phone conversations. It does not include the substantial time dedicated to essential back-end tasks such as case creation and the update of other systems and databases, coordination, and the escalation of urgent matters - all of which are critical to the Unit's overall functioning.

- 1. Customer Satisfaction and Quality Monitoring:** The supervision team continues to rigorously monitor performance through key metrics, customer feedback, and service delivery reviews. Quality Assurance remains central to operations, with client satisfaction surveys providing valuable insights. This quarter, the Unit recorded an impressive **98% customer satisfaction rate**, underscoring a strong commitment to service excellence.

With the recent relocation to the Baden Powell Walk-in Centre, the Unit also made a deliberate effort to include walk-in clients in the customer feedback process, to ensure a more comprehensive and representative view of client satisfaction.

2. **Call Abandonment Rate:** Previously, nearly 30% of calls were abandoned. This quarter, the rate dropped to just over 16%, reflecting a nearly 50% reduction in missed calls.
3. **Improved Service Level:** At the start of the Fiscal Year, approximately 60–70% of incoming calls were being answered within 30 seconds. This quarter, the team has significantly improved performance, with **over 80% of calls now being answered within 30 seconds or less**, reflecting faster response times and enhanced caller experience.
4. **Case Management and Coordination:** The expanded team has improved the handling of incoming reports, assignment of cases, and coordination for emergency interventions.

## CHILD AND FAMILY REINTEGRATION SERVICES

### Assessment Unit

1. In February 2025, the Assessment Unit spearheaded the second round of Basic Forensic Interview training with CornerHouse. Sixteen staff from the Authority participated in a four-day intensive, hands-on training session, which included live simulations of forensic interviews. This successful exercise allows the Authority to increase its pool of forensically trained interviewers (previously four persons, now up to 34 persons) which in turn will reduce the wait time for children who require this valuable service. As of March 2025, the wait time went from six months for an appointment, down to two months. This service utilises a person-centred, semi-structured and forensically sound methodology to interview children who have been victims or witnesses of child abuse. The approach ensures that a child is able to tell his or her story at a pace and in a manner that is most comfortable for the child and aids in reducing traumatisation. Additionally, four persons were trained from Tobago, which means Tobago requests can be facilitated independently.
2. In March, 2025 the Assessment Unit was able to oversee the installation of new forensic interview recording equipment at the South Regional Assessment Centre. This provides two conveniently located opportunities to conduct forensic interviews, making it easier for stakeholders, as well as children. This further aids in reducing the wait time for appointments.

### Foster Care Unit

1. **Foster Care Clients Successfully Transitioned Into Family-Based Environments:** As the Foster Care Unit continues to build the capacity of and support birth families in making efforts to be reunited with their children, where appropriate, possible and in

the best interest of the child, eight children were transitioned back into their birth families from foster care during the period.

2. **Approval of Foster Care Providers:** As the Foster Care Unit continues to conduct foster care recruitment efforts to create safe, stable and loving temporary placement options for children in need of care and protection, three traditional foster parents were successfully approved, and five Kinship Foster parents were approved for the period.
3. **Placement of Children in Foster Care:** Seven children in need of care and protection were placed in traditional foster care, and six children were placed in Kinship Foster care for the period.
4. **Interest in Foster Care:** As a result of sensitisation efforts and continued collaboration with the Communications Unit to engage the public on Foster Care, 60 Expressions of Interest were received for Foster Care. The team conducted preliminary discussions with prospective applicants, and foster care application packages were shared where there was further interest. Persons were invited to attend the foster care orientation and assessment process, and in some instances, applicants were referred to the Adoption team.

#### Placement, Licensing and Monitoring Unit

1. **Placements Into Children's Homes:** From January 1 – March 31, 2025, the Placement, Licensing and Monitoring (PLM) Unit successfully utilised 36 vacancies at Children's Homes. 18 children who were deemed by the Court as Children In Need of Supervision (CHINS) and ordered to be received into the care of the Authority were placed at three Children's Homes, while another 18 deemed in imminent danger through the Authority's investigations, were successfully admitted into Children's Homes. As there is a dedicated Children's Home for high-risk adolescent girls, 14 CHINS placements for girls formed the greater ratio of CHINS received into care. Only three CHINS boys were able to be placed into Children's Homes. Notably, each of these placements broke down, with the Homes highlighting that they are unable to meet the presenting needs of these high-risk boys. There is no current licensee wishing to operate a Children's Home for high-risk boys.
2. The Unit has utilised the arising vacancies to place 19 children (boys and girls) under the age of 10 years. Six of these placements were into new spaces which became available in 2025, following the 2024 first-time licensure of the 34<sup>th</sup> licensed Home.
3. Following frequent admissions in 2024, a dorm for migrant children was at capacity at the beginning of the year. With no discharges of migrant children at the end of the second quarter, no admissions were possible. The Unit is processing the application

for licensing of a Home for Migrant Girls. The licensure of this Home will create 12 spaces for intake of high-risk adolescent girls.

4. **Monitoring:** During the second quarter of Fiscal Year 2025, PLM successfully conducted a monthly visit to each of the Children's Homes, Rehabilitation Centres and Reception Centres, including three facilities in Tobago, as well as a fifth Reception Centre, which commenced operations at the end of 2024. Altogether, the Unit has conducted 123 monitoring visits for 2025.
5. **Stakeholder Engagement and Licensing:** The Unit has advanced the renewal process of 16 Homes in this quarter, with notices of renewal issued, outlining the application package omissions to be submitted, in order to close renewal application packages.

The PLM Unit has conducted significant engagement of external agencies that provide services to Children's Homes, which are critical to the renewal of licences. The Unit has engaged the Chief Fire Officer for visits to Homes whose Trinidad and Tobago Fire Services Certificate of Approval will expire in 2025 and possible new locations of Homes. The Unit has also engaged the Chief Medical Officer for 2025 food badges for employees of Children's Homes and for visits to Homes for the renewal of Public Health Certificates of Approval. To date, 18 Homes have been visited in 2025 by Public Health, with six Homes receiving approvals in February 2025 and two Homes receiving recommendation reports. Three Homes have received 2025 visits from the Fire Services.

6. The year commenced with one Home, having paused operations mid-2024 due to financial constraints. Another five Homes have indicated that they are strongly considering closing in 2025, as they deliberate on their fiscal viability to continue operations this year. They have 21 residents, including adolescents.
7. The Unit is also exploring opportunities for training staff of Children's Homes. Thus far, the Authority has engaged the Ministry of Public Administration – Public Service Academy, as well as the Human Resource Management Association of Trinidad and Tobago to discuss proposed workshops and sensitisations for Managers and caregivers.

### Reception Centre Unit

1. **Sustained Operation of the Retiree Adolescent Partnership Programme (RAPP):** The continued operation of the RAPP demonstrates the Authority's commitment to providing consistent remedial support to children, to address gaps in their academic and personal development.
2. **Increased Access to Individual Therapy:** Individual therapy sessions conducted during March 2025 underscore the Authority's dedication to addressing the unique emotional and psychological needs of each resident.

3. **Comprehensive Psychosocial Support:** A total of 125 individual psychosocial sessions were conducted in March 2025 to promote residents' emotional resilience and social adjustment.
4. **Sustained Opportunities for Religious Expression:** Two denominational groups facilitate religious expression, which demonstrate the Centres' commitment to supporting the spiritual well-being of residents. By providing avenues for prayer, worship, and interfaith activities, the Reception Centre fosters a sense of hope, moral grounding, and personal reflection, while respecting and celebrating the diverse religious backgrounds of the children in care.
5. **Successfully Implemented The Farm-To-Table Project-** Children planted pineapples and red beans.
6. **Other Achievements:**
  - One child wrote two subjects in the January 2025 CSEC and is awaiting results.
  - One child was reintegrated with family.

## CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES

### HSSE Unit

1. **HSE Policy Statement Development:** The HSSE Unit successfully developed and implemented the HSE Policy Statement, demonstrating a proactive commitment to safeguarding the health, safety, and welfare of both employees and stakeholders. This Statement establishes clear health and safety objectives and provides a benchmark for performance evaluation and ongoing improvement.
2. **Security Associate Training:** In collaboration with the Procurement Unit, the HSSE Unit facilitated the selection of a service provider for Security Associate training. The Unit prepared the scope of work and actively participated in the evaluation process, to ensure the selection of a qualified provider. This initiative is part of our commitment to enhancing the skills and capacity of our in-house security team.

### People, Leadership and Transformation

1. **Orientation and Onboarding:** A total of 280 new hires, representing 67% of the Authority's new employees, successfully completed the onboarding process. This milestone underscores the Unit's ongoing commitment to ensuring that all employees are well-prepared, aligned with the organisation's values, and ready to contribute effectively to the strategic goals.
2. **Child Protection and Safeguarding Training:** The launch of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Training program in February 2025 is a key milestone in enhancing our

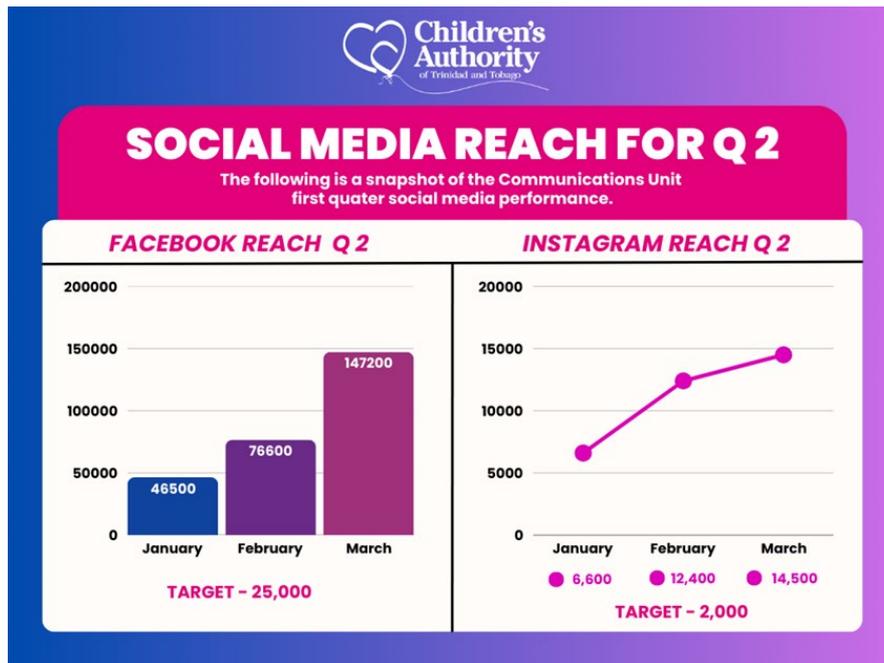
child protection systems. Upon completion, participants will have a stronger understanding of child development, trauma-informed care, and will be better equipped to handle safeguarding challenges.

## TOBAGO OPERATIONS

1. In January, 15 residents at the Reception Centre commenced primary and secondary school and one resident completed CSEC English B exams.
2. Tobago Operations signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Tobago Regional Health Authority and the Tobago House of Assembly on February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025.
3. In February, the Investigation and Intervention Unit conducted 172 telephone monitoring follow-ups with clients and stakeholders, and completed over 86 in-person monitoring visits.
4. The Child Justice Support Unit, Tobago maintained weekly contact with assigned clients. They conducted 170 telephone monitoring follow-ups with clients and stakeholders and completed 97 in-person monitoring visits with clients and stakeholders.
5. The Authority collaborated with the Tobago Festivals Commission in setting up a booth display at the Interdepartmental Queen Show and Personality Competition.
6. Three staff were trained to conduct Forensic Interviews to help support the Police Service in treating with abuse cases.
7. In March, the Investigation and Intervention Unit, Tobago conducted 149 telephone monitoring follow-ups with clients and stakeholders and 57 in-person monitoring visits with clients and stakeholders. The team also responded to four Emergency cases within 24 hours.

## PUBLIC EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

1. **Social Media Campaign During 2025 Carnival Season in Collaboration with UNICEF:**  
The Unit collaborated with UNICEF to conduct a positive parenting campaign via print and social media. With the 2025 Carnival season being longer than usual, the Unit sought to capitalise upon this and share relevant positive parenting messages to parents and guardians. 14 posts were published as part of the campaign, and seven were boosted, resulting in over 145,000 persons being reached.
2. Social media continues to be a key tool in the Communication Unit's arsenal, through which the Authority shares information on child protection, child rights and provides parenting tips. The chart below shows the reach the Unit was able to garner through its social media platforms - Facebook and Instagram, which exceeded the targets set.



- Stakeholder engagement is another key facet of the Unit’s work and efforts are made to engage a wide cross section of the society every month. During the reporting period, the Communications Unit engaged 21 groups across Trinidad and Tobago, which included Non-Governmental Organisations, Faith-Based Organisations and stakeholder agencies in the child protection sector. See the breakdown below:

