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# PRESS RELEASE

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# Counsellor-Led Work Programme Supports Student Development at Eslyn Henley Richiez Learning Centre

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Senior students at the Eslyn Henley Richiez Learning Centre (EHRLC) continue to benefit from a structured Work Programme designed to build practical skills, independence, and confidence through real-world work experience.

The programme, which has been in place for the past three years, allows senior students to participate in supervised work placements aligned with their interests and abilities. Students currently attend placements two days per week, with hours increasing as they approach graduation to better reflect a typical workday. The overall objective is to support students in developing work readiness and life skills that prepare them for meaningful engagement beyond school.

Recently, the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports shared a *Day in the Life* feature highlighting the daily work of School Counsellor Tarriesha Dawson, offering the public a closer look at the role counsellors play within school communities. The Work Programme is one example of how counselling support extends beyond traditional guidance sessions to include career exposure, transition planning, and real-world application.

In a recent statement, Minister for Education, Youth Affairs and Sports, Honourable Sharie B. de Castro, emphasized the importance of counselling services within the education system, noting that “student success is not achieved by academics alone. Behind every confident learner, every resilient student and every young person who overcomes challenges, there is often a counsellor providing guidance, encouragement and support.”

At EHRLC, that support takes many forms. Ms. Dawson works collaboratively with senior teachers, school administrators, families, employers and community partners to support students participating in the Work Programme. Together, the team observes students in workplace settings, identifies areas for growth, reinforces positive behaviours, and ensures experiences are aligned with each student’s development plan.

Ms. Dawson shared that the programme helps students explore their strengths, build work ethic, and develop a clearer sense of purpose. Through hands-on exposure, students strengthen communication skills, confidence, independence

and self-worth, while learning how classroom concepts connect to real-life responsibilities.

She also noted that the programme reflects a strengths-based approach, centring students' abilities, interests and potential. Supporting students in this way often involves engagement beyond the school compound, requiring collaboration with educators, families, employers, healthcare professionals, social service providers and other stakeholders who interact with students daily.

Currently participating in the EHRLC Work Programme are senior students Alisha McDonald and Raneah Salmon, both gaining experience as Teacher Assistants.

Alisha McDonald is completing her placement at Frangipani Academy Simmonds Preschool in Lower Estate, while Raneah Salmon is placed at the Little Lighthouse Child Developmental Centre in Sea Cow's Bay. Through these placements, both students are developing practical workplace skills, building confidence and preparing for life after graduation.

Reflecting on the programme's impact, Ms. Dawson described it as simple yet powerful, noting that structured opportunities like these can positively influence students' futures while strengthening the support systems around them.

The EHRLC Work Programme continues to demonstrate how counselling services, when integrated with classroom instruction and community partnerships, can help students move from learning to living, and from potential to reality.

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