

NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY WORKING GROUP

Progress Report

2023



GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA

Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation



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9 *Months of meetings*

the committee met regularly to present the research of sub-groups research and to develop recommendations.



3 *Sub-groups formed*

to broaden discussions and provide alignment between goals to help increase clarity and focus



3 *Youth forums*

carried out to and provide opportunities for Youth to speak directly to the Minister of Youth, Culture and Sport on any topic



2 *Surveys, one completed and another in progress*

to establish the current concerns and challenges Youth are facing



2 *Conferences planned*

to facilitate free expression, exploration and discussion on issues and solutions relevant to and affecting young people



1 *Workshop in development*

to support the drive to infuse safeguarding policies throughout public/private youth services

MESSAGE *from the* CHAIRPERSON

As the first chair of the National Youth Policy Working Group, I have the privilege of providing an overview of our work.

The Working Group focused on ensuring that we could make positive changes in the lives of Bermuda's youth, with efficiency. For that reason, a part of our work was establishing a lasting structure for the Working Group.

For example, to facilitate our operations, we established sub-committees to assess similar policy goals collectively and with a systematic approach.

Safeguarding and anti-social behaviour were two goals that were reviewed together, and following our review, we recommend the Government draft legislation that regulates safeguarding within youth organisations and establish a Ministry-wide safeguarding policy. These initiatives should be developed in partnership with local accreditation boards and with continued feedback from the third sector.

Supporting youth entrepreneurship was another priority for the Working Group, and we recommend increasing surveys and direct outreach to young entrepreneurs to understand their business aspirations and provide support.

These recommendations, the product of our hard work and dedication, were carefully reviewed during monthly meetings of the inaugural Working Group, along with weekly sub-committee sessions. I am proud of our diverse group of dedicated volunteers, including representatives from the Ministry of Education, the Department of Workforce Development, youth-led charities, and youth organisations. Notably, 30% of our members were young people, including our Deputy Chair.

I would like to express my gratitude to my colleagues who participated in this cohort. It has been an incredible opportunity to work alongside and learn from such passionate and qualified individuals. I am confident that Bermuda's youth will benefit greatly from this Working Group's collective efforts.

Looking ahead, I am excited to witness the continued success of future Working Groups and the lasting impact the National Youth Policy will have on the lives of Bermuda's youth.

Ariana Caines
Chairperson

The **LEAD** indicators for the Policy are:

COMPLETED Formation of the Working Group

COMPLETED Annual progress report of the Working Group

IN PROGRESS Data collection to accurately set out the position of Bermuda's young people



The **LAG** indicators are:

IN PROGRESS Number of goals successfully achieved

PENDING Research and publication of a status report on Bermuda's young people for 2026



MEETINGS

The National Youth Policy Working Group regularly met over the course of its term to discuss the eight (8) policy goals. The review of international practices for similar groups lead to the determination key government ministries must have a seat at the table to afford the Working Group Members access and provide an opportunity to more closely inspect and impact the programmes and services across government which affect young people.

In the last quarter, the Group met with Minister of Youth, Culture and Sport, Senator, the Hon. Owen K. Darrell, JP to provide a status report and present on the challenges the group identified in order to improve the way forward.

Members of the Working Group also participated in three (3) “Zone In” Youth Forms alongside the Minister. These events allowed Minister Darrell to hear directly from the youth on issues of importance to them and to receive feedback on the Policy.

Consultation with the Minister and the opportunities to engage youth over the term assisted the first Working Group in crafting initiatives for the next cohort.



IN PROGRESS review of international and local safeguarding policies



COMPLETED survey of the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation affiliated National Youth Organizations and Groups



42%

NATIONAL YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS AND BODIES WHICH HAVE A SAFEGUARDING POLICY

100% of the affiliate organizations and bodies will have a policy in place by **March 2024**.

SUB-GROUPS

ONE: GOALS 1 and 3

MEMBERS: Melissa Looby, Kelly Hunt, Seon Tatem, McKenzie Tuckett, Terri-Lyn Richardson and Kim Jackson



GOAL 1: *Keep Young People Safe and Protected From Harm*

Safeguarding is necessary to ensure that all young people are protected. The NYP commits to promoting effective multi-agency partnerships:

- a) Establishing a Ministry wide standard for safeguarding
- b) Implementing the standard for Department funding for all grants provided to organizations, clubs and sports programmes that interact with Bermuda's youth.
- c) Researching potential legislative reform to make safeguarding Bermuda's young people a statutory requirement
- d) Safeguarding workshop to be held in July 2023
- e) The Independent Living Programme for persons over the age of 18 who have left care was established

GOAL 3: *Minimize Anti Social Behavior*

When young people are confronted with poverty, crime, violence, neglect or abuse they can exhibit anti-social behaviour. This behaviour may inhibit their psychological, educational and professional development. It can also lead to them becoming detached from formal social systems and ultimately may find themselves in conflict with the law.

**3**

- a) Grants were provided in the 2022 – 23 budget to organisations that assist youth in overcoming their involvement in anti-social activities
- b) Additional funds were sought to expand programs in schools to combat anti-social behavior
- c) Dept. of YSR programmes in the Community Centres, including Free Up Fridays and the Boys and Girls programmes offered sessions on combatting anti-social behavior.
- d) The Ministry of National Security hosted a two-day workshop on community violence in September 2022 with public and private organisations to establish a National Strategic Plan on Community Violence

CONTINUUM of CARE for ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOR**Committees for National Strategic Plan on Community Violence**

TWO: GOALS 2, 4 and 7

MEMBERS: Ajai Peets, Theo Wolffe, McKenzie Tuckett, Judy Teart, Rajai Denbrook and Tanika Rayner



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GOAL 2: *Achieve Full Potential in Learning Development and Education*

The education of our youth is vital for not only their growth and development but also the overall future of Bermuda.

- a) The Minister of Education meets with private schools quarterly
- b) Education Reform continues to progress
- c) The Department of Workforce Development has gone into schools and had students come to their offices to do workplace readiness workshops
- d) Taster sessions were conducted with M3 students to assist them with choosing the right Senior School to support their career aspirations

GOAL 4: *Increase Employment and Entrepreneurship Opportunities*

In 2019 the unemployment rate for ages 16-24 was 23.8%; the highest age bracket facing unemployment.

- a) The Youth Employment Strategy was shared with the public by the Ministry of Labour and Economy
- b) Businesses and organisations formed partnerships with the Department of Education as part of Education Reform
- c) A survey is scheduled to take place in September on young people's career aspirations as well as mental health and anti-social behavior.



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GOAL 7: *Enable Participation in Civic Engagement*

Participating in discussions on proposed Government policies and legislation is vital and ensures that young people are connected and represented. This sub-group focused on facilitating direct communication with the youth regarding the employment and education opportunities in Bermuda.

- a) The Working Group recommends an annual survey be established that will capture the opinion of youth school-leavers regarding employment opportunities and their overall impression of the education system.
- b) The Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation hosted pilot series 'Zone-Ins' providing open access to the Minister for Youth. This was an introductory exercise that assisted the Working Group in confirming key areas future discussions.

- ✓ MENTAL HEALTH
- ✓ COPING POST PANDEMIC
- ✓ DIVERSITY & INCLUSION
- ✓ YOUTH EMPLOYMENT
- ✓ YOUTH MIGRATION
- ✓ EDUCATION REFORM
- ✓ NYP NEXT STEPS
- ✓ ENTREPRENEURSHIP
- ✓ YOUTH LEADERSHIP
- ✓ SAFE SPACES
- ✓ CYBER SAFETY
- ✓ POST GRAD OPPORTUNITIES
- ✓ YOUTH MESSENGING

THREE: GOALS 5 and 6

MEMBERS: Seldon Woolridge, Dr. Nisrine Atieh, Melissa Looby, Ariana Caines, Emmanuel Faria, Seon Tatem



GOAL 5: *Engage Youth in Sport Culture Recreation*

When young people participate in sport, extracurricular and leisure activities, they create healthy habits and become involved and invested in their communities.

- a) The Department of Youth Sport & Recreation provided professional development in coaching workshops
- b) The Department of Youth Sport & Recreation provided a grant to a student to expand their skills in the area of oration
- c) Open houses for parent and child activity days were hosted in all After School Programmes and clubs.

GOAL 6: *Support Young People to Be Active and Healthy*

Unhealthy lifestyles can have a damaging effect on quality of life; by contrast being active and healthy is a significant contributor to overall wellbeing.

- a) The Premier's Fitness Council will be established to provide a health-focused school/home initiative in conjunction with Parent and Teacher Associations.
- b) The Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation will conduct a survey on mental health in September.



GOAL 8: *Encourage Diversity and Inclusion*

Empowering young people to express themselves despite their age, race, socio-economic background, ability, gender and sexual orientation is vital to creating an environment where they feel safe and appreciated.

- a) Over half the seats on the National Youth Policy Working Group are for young persons from diverse interest groups.
- b) The Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation has provided funding to several organisations that are committed to making positive changes for young people.

**Goal 8 was incorporated in all sub-group discussions*



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RECOMMENDATIONS

- I. **Assign a public officer** to coordinate the NYP goals and objectives
- II. **Revise the composition of the National Youth Policy Working Group.** Revise the number of working group members to **eighteen (18)**. The group to be comprised of; Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation one (1) representative, one (1) Association of National Youth Organizations and Bodies Representative (pending), eight (8) Public/Private Community Stakeholders and eight (8) appointed seats from key Ministries;
 - **Seat 1** Ministry of Youth, Culture and Sports, *Ex-Officio/Coordinator*
 - **Seat 2** Ministry of National Security, *Representative*
 - **Seat 3** Ministry of Education, *Representative*
 - **Seat 4** Ministry of Health, *Representative*
 - **Seat 5** Ministry of Economy and Labor, *Representative*
 - **Seat 6** Ministry of Social Development, *Representative*
 - **Seat 7** Ministry of Home Affairs (Environment), *Representative*
 - **Seat 8** Ministry of Legal Affairs and Constitutional Reform
 - **Seat 9** Ministry of Tourism and the Cabinet Office
 - **Seat 10** Association of National Youth Organizations, *Representative*
 - **Seats 11-18** Public/Private Community Stakeholders
- III. **Amend Working Group Terms of Reference** to include the Sub-groups and provision for Adhoc-groups to be formed for special projects.
- IV. **Host young adult Zone-In 18 plus** to understand the needs of those youth who will transition in the near future to adulthood
- V. **Sponsor formal Youth Debate** to expound on emerging issues deeply affecting youth and develop resolutions
- VI. **Facilitate Annual Youth Conference** to give youth can express opinions on proposed or new government policies
- VII. **Build a Safeguarding Workshop** to ensure all youth organizations and groups have statements declaring their commitment to protect the youth they come into contact with
- VIII. **Organize Quarterly Forums** to remain current on emerging issues affecting youth
- IX. **Expand the mandate of Premier's Youth Fitness** to include Personal Development Plans for every school age child
- X. **Develop a Mental Health Youth Campaign** to *heighten awareness and provide information about mental health, substance abuse and available resources*

2023 - 2024 *Calendar*

- I. MARCH | **NYP Goal 5.2** – Summer Day Camp Conference & Expo
- II. APRIL | **NYPG 5.3** – Youth Development Investments 2023 - 24
- III. MAY | **NYPG 1.3** – Youth Development Grants 2023 - 24
- IV. JUNE | **NYPG 7.1** – Zone In 18+
- V. JULY | **NYPG 1.2** – Youth Services Workshop (Safeguarding)
- VI. AUGUST | **NYPG 7.2** – Youth Conference (Civic Engagement)
- VII. SEPTEMBER | **NYPG 4.5** - Survey
- VIII. OCTOBER | **NYPG 7.3** – Formation of Association
- IX. NOVEMBER | **NYPG 7.1** – Zone-Ins
- X. DECEMBER | **NYPG 8.3** – Sponsored Debate
- XI. JANUARY | **NYPG LEAD INDICATOR** – Working Group Review
- XII. FEBRUARY | **NYPG LEAD INDICATOR** – Annual Report
- XIII. MARCH | **NYPG LEAD INDICATOR** – Recruitment of Cohort 3

Persons interested in collaborating with the working group and/or willing to participate in sub-group activity should contact the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation **Tel: 295-0855** or **Email: youthpolicy@gov.bm**.

