

Infants to benefit from textbook donation

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WESTERN BUREAU:

MORE THAN 10,000 children within the infant public school system across the island are expected to benefit from a huge textbook donation from the Palmyra Foundation, according to chairman Kathi Constanzo.

"It was our hope to supply every public infant school child in the country with all of their textbooks, but due to the overwhelming demand we will be supplying most of their books," the enthusiastic philanthropist told *Western Focus* in an interview.

Last Thursday, more than 1,000 students at the Montego Bay Infant School in St James received textbooks and book bags as part of a collaboration between Palmyra Foundation and Digicel.

SUBSTANTIAL BOOST

This year, the foundation received a substantial boost towards their efforts, as they have garnered \$20.3 million, up from \$4.4 million that was raised last year.

Mrs Constanzo described this as "phenomenal".

She added that, as a non-profit foundation, it has grown significantly since its inception in 2007, as only 2,000 children from St James were able to benefit from the textbook drive.

While the foundation is in its early years, she revealed that she was grateful to corporate Jamaica or coming on board to be a part of such an important aspect of the country's development, that is, education.

WELCOMED INITIATIVE

Principal of the Montego Bay Infant School, Monica Hinds, welcomed the initiative.

"I endorse this 100 per cent. Before this programme by the Palmyra Foundation, some of the children use to be without books for the entire year and so this has taken a lot pressure off the parents."

The principal used the occasion to encourage more support from corporate Jamaica to assist with the development of early childhood education, which can significantly improve the country's literacy rate.



PHOTOS BY SHEENA GAYLE

Head of sales for Digicel's western and central regions, Joy Clarke (left), guidance counsellor at Montego Bay Infant School, Carmen Dawkins, and chairman of the Palmyra Foundation, Kathi Constanzo, smile for the camera with students at the Montego Bay Infant School.



Head of sales at Digicel for the western and central regions, Joy Clarke, in a cordial mood with this young student at the Montego Bay Infant School recently, during a textbook presentation by the Palmyra Foundation and telecommunications giant Digicel.