

**MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NATIONAL COUNCIL ON DRUG ABUSE
DRUG AWARENESS MONTH 2006**

The National Council on Drug Abuse has as its mandate, “the alleviation of drug abuse through the development and implementation of effective drug abuse prevention programmes.” Our theme for the Drug Awareness Month is” **“Engaging Communities, Transforming Lives,”** which points to the ongoing partnership and collaboration with our communities to identify risk factors, which lead to drug use and abuse and design initiatives to prevent or reduce drug abuse.

Though our Integrated Demand Reduction Programme implemented between 1992 and 1997, about thirty community group called Community Drug Awareness Committees (CODAC) were formed. Community members were organized, trained and empowered to design and implement drug abuse prevention initiatives. From 1998 to present, the agency continues to work with communities, increasing the amount of CODACs, but also expanding the definition of ‘community’ to include various interest groups, similar agencies and volunteers with a particular focus, to improve our networking and outreach.

Many of the participants then and up to today, will recall how significantly their and other community members lives were changed by being members of these groups and by the activities they undertake. Many people who had started to experiment with drugs or had become addicted were identified, engaged and referred for the necessary treatment. The NDCA continues to work with communities at large but also with the church community, the school community and other social clubs, to determine how we can adequately and effectively continue to impact on drug abuse problem and protect especially our youth from this scourge.

We invite all Jamaicans who love our country and our people to become volunteers and work with us in the process of transforming lives in a positive way to ensure a brighter future for our country and for young people.

Michael Tucker
Executive Director