

# BOOKS4KIDS JAMAICA

**2022**  
Annual Report



**100,000**  
Children Reached



# "The future is bright when you can read and write!"

Books4Kids Jamaica is a nonprofit charity dedicated to providing early learning materials and books to 3, 4 and 5-year-old Kindergarten children in Jamaican schools. Since its startup in 2007, the program has supplied more than 300,000 books to over 100,000 children in 150 schools across all 14 parishes - a contribution valued at over US\$1.7m.

Addressing an urgent and critical need, our Early Childhood Education (ECE) initiative seeks to preserve each child's right to education through the continued provision of physical books and educational materials that help bridge the increasing digital divide.

With no government support, our community project involves hundreds of sponsors, volunteers, principals, teachers and government officials in fundraising and distribution efforts every year.



Books4Kids Jamaica is a registered charitable organisation in Jamaica and the U.S. It is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations to Books4Kids Jamaica are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.



# MISSION STATEMENT

Our primary aim is to increase literacy among Jamaican Kindergarten children growing up in challenging circumstances by giving them real, practical resources for a positive educational experience and continued academic success

We believe in fostering the self-esteem of children growing up in challenging circumstances through introducing them to supportive community role models and giving them real, practical resources for a positive educational experience and continued academic success.





# CONTENT

|                                 |    |
|---------------------------------|----|
| MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD.....     | 5  |
| CHILD NUMBER 100,000 .....      | 6  |
| CHILD POVERTY IN JAMAICA .....  | 7  |
| EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION ..... | 8  |
| THE BOOK BAG.....               | 9  |
| SPONSORS & PARTNERSHIPS .....   | 10 |
| 2022 BOOK DISTRIBUTION .....    | 12 |
| VOLUNTEERS.....                 | 20 |
| FINANCIALS.....                 | 22 |
| ONLINE CHARITY AUCTION .....    | 23 |
| BOOKS4KIDS JAMAICA .....        | 25 |



## A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD



In 2022, we reached a milestone moment when little Shantena Osborne became child number 100,000 to receive books and materials from our program. Delivering books to more than 100,000 children is an achievement we share with all our sponsors, donors, volunteers, educators and government officials, who have continued to support our efforts over the last 15 years. We are absolutely delighted to have surpassed such a significant number.

In 2022, our program delivered books and materials to more than 8,425 preschool children at 111 schools and Early Childhood Institutions across Jamaica. We send a big thank you to all the people who helped us make our 13th book distribution a reality.

The lack of books and materials continues to be a critical and urgent need among preschool children in Jamaica. Low-income families were hit especially hard during the pandemic and are still struggling to recover. Children without access to online educational platforms were left further behind, widening the digital divide. Hence, the delivery of books

and educational materials to Jamaica's young children continues to be more important than ever.

I would especially like to acknowledge my colleague and charity Board Member Frank Perolli, who has worked tirelessly for the children of Jamaica since the beginning of the program 15 years ago. "Uncle Frank" has played a crucial role in the continuance of the program and is loved by everyone for his easy-going manner and kindness to the children.

Our aim is to provide as many book bags as we can so that all children have equal access to education, regardless of financial means. Our goal continues to be the delivery of bookbags to all preschool children in Jamaica.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Ragni Trotta".

Ragni Trotta



# CHILD NUMBER 100,000

“Our student, little Ms. Shantena Osborne is infant number 100,000 to receive books from Books4Kids Jamaica. We are very excited that our school holds such a special place in the history of the program. It has been a great partnership over the years and we are extremely grateful, not only for the books that the charity has given to the Buckingham students, but to the children of Jamaica.”

**Ms. Sasha Chin**  
Acting Principal of  
Buckingham Primary  
and Infant School

BOOKS4KIDS  
JAMAICA  
[www.books4kidsjamaica.com](http://www.books4kidsjamaica.com)








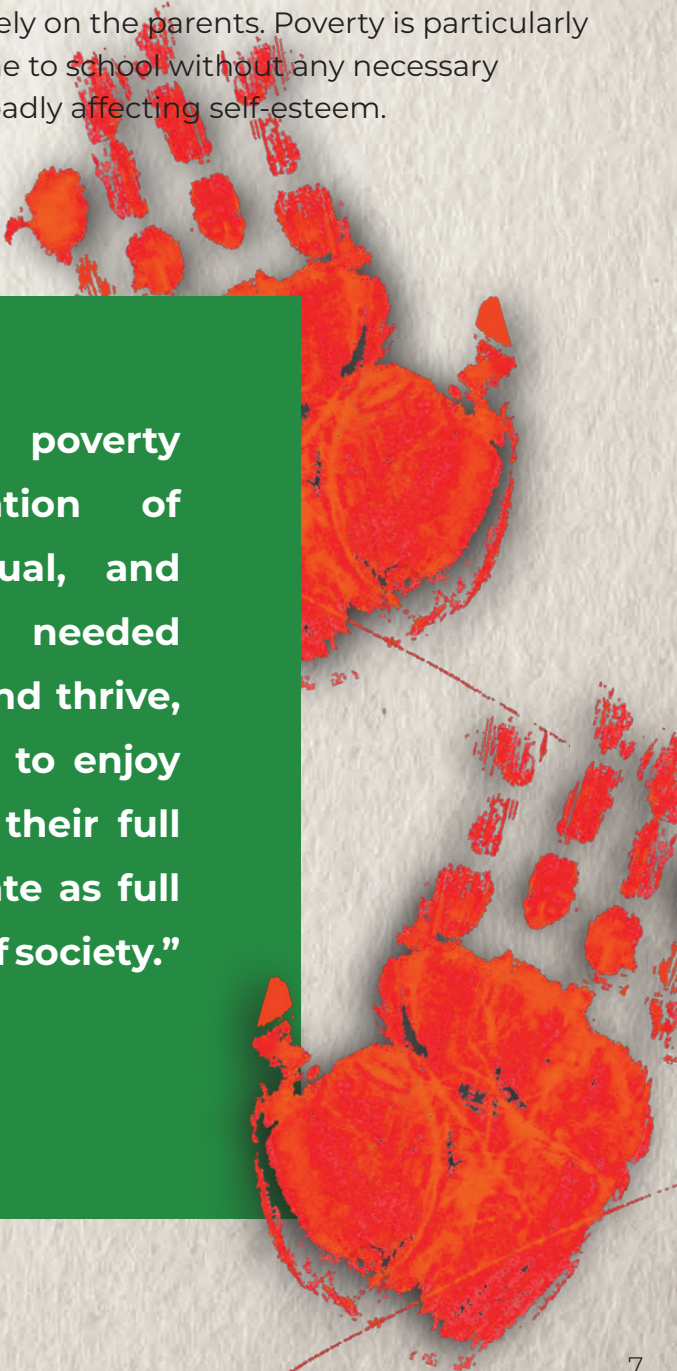
# CHILD POVERTY IN JAMAICA



Jamaica has 107,115 children between the ages of 3 and 5 years. At least 25% of these children are growing up in immense poverty, experiencing hardships that no child should have to endure. Many live in overcrowded housing, routinely suffer hunger and malnourishment and are exposed to abuse, child labour and HIV. In some of the poorest communities, unemployment and violence are endemic, and positive role models are few and far between. For many, childhood itself is an unaffordable luxury.

The first step towards breaking the cycle of poverty is the provision of good Early Childhood Education. However, too many families face exclusion due to lack of affordability and difficult living circumstances, depriving many children of the opportunity to learn.

Preschools continue to exceed the economic reach of many families as all costs, including school fees, textbooks, materials and uniforms fall entirely on the parents. Poverty is particularly rife in rural areas, where up to 100% of the children come to school without any necessary books or basic supplies, making learning difficult and badly affecting self-esteem.



**“Children living in poverty experience deprivation of the material, spiritual, and emotional resources needed to survive, develop and thrive, leaving them unable to enjoy their rights, achieve their full potential or participate as full and equal members of society.”**

UNICEF



# EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Preschool children in Jamaica are spread among 2,676 Early Childhood Institutions. There is a low share of public provision of Early Childhood Education through government-run schools, and only 20% attend public Infant Schools.

Community-operated Basic Schools and private Kindergartens account for 80% of the enrollment at the Early Childhood level, which is mainly financed through tuition fees and non-government support. The Early Childhood Commission (ECC) supervises all of Jamaica's Early Childhood Institutions.

Only 11% of Early Childhood Institutions (ECI) have enough materials for all the children to be engaged in an activity at the same time.



The Books4Kids Jamaica team, together with The Honourable Daryl Vaz, Minister of Science, Energy and Technology and Member of Parliament for Western Portland. From left to right; Frank Perolli (Charity Board Member), Minister Vaz, Ragni Trotta (Charity Board Member), Christopher Clarke (Sponsor) and Kathy Dear (Sponsor).

**“Books4Kids Jamaica has a long and impressive track record. I personally support the initiative, handing out books to more than 500 children in Portland every year. I applaud the charity's ultimate goal of delivering book bags to all Jamaica's preschool children, and I encourage all corporate sponsors to support the initiative.”**

**The Honourable Daryl Vaz,**

Minister of Science, Energy and Technology and Member of Parliament for Western Portland.

Thank You  
Books4Kids  
Jamaica



# THE BOOK BAG

Through the Books4Kids Jamaica program, 4 and 5-year-old children receive a book bag containing the popular 300-page Brain Quest Workbook, a reading book, a pack of crayons, and a pencil. 3-year-old children receive an ABC colouring book, crayons and a pencil.

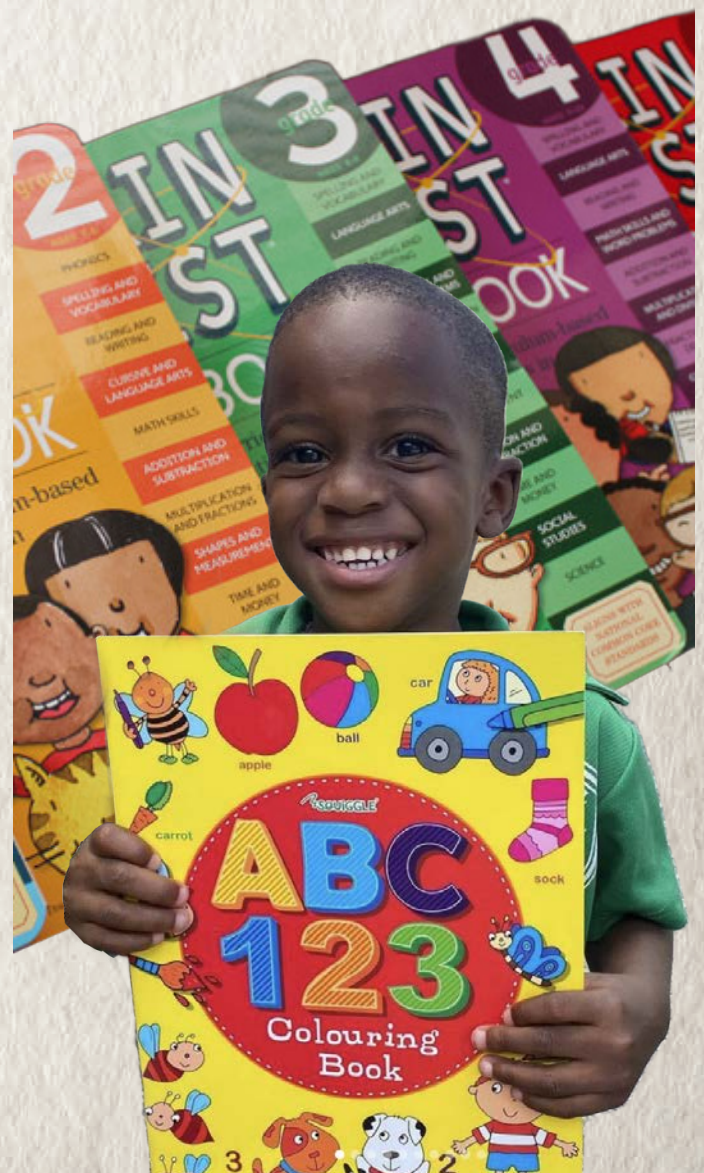
The *Brain Quest Workbook* is a powerful learning tool that exposes children to all areas of development, teaching through a spirit of creativity and fun. Many schools use the *Brain Quest Workbook* as their primary educational tool because it covers all the basic skill areas; mathematics, phonics, science, social studies, spelling and vocabulary. Importantly, all the children have access to the same Workbook. It aligns with the national curriculum and is approved by the Early Childhood Commission.



**"We are so grateful that Books4Kids Jamaica is back. We are ever so grateful for the Workbooks because they include all the subject areas. When the children get these books, the teacher can cover all the subject areas."**

**Ms. Watson**

Lucea Infant School





# SPONSORS AND PARTNERS



**“Early Childhood Education is one of the most significant areas where we can contribute, and it has been an honour for us to work with Books4Kids Jamaica. It is one of the most needed and valuable charitable contributions that we have been able to make over the years.”**

**Noel “Sport” Sloley Jr.,** CEO, Jamaica Tours Ltd

Books4Kids Jamaica thanks the many sponsors who came together to make the 2022 book distribution a reality.

A massive logistic undertaking, long-term sponsors Jamaica Tours Ltd. provided free transportation services, bringing volunteers, books and materials to the many schools across Western Jamaica for the 13<sup>th</sup> year.

Hanover Charities sponsored book bags for 1,000 basic school children in Hanover and helped distribute bags to an additional 500 children in their parish.

Rainforest Seafood provided free warehousing for the books as well as assistance with shipping, clearing and loading.

As always, heavily discounted books were provided by Workman/ Hachette Publishing and Scholastic in support of the program. Pencils for the children were donated by Fontana Pharmacy.

## Program Sponsors

- Caribbean Immigration Services
- Charities Authority of Jamaica
- Fontana Pharmacy
- Hanover Charities
- Jamaica Tours Ltd.
- The Jamaican Customs Department
- Workman Publishing Ltd./Hachette Publishing
- Scholastic Publishers
- Rainforest Seafood





**"We at Hanover Charities are proud to be a partner with Books4Kids since its inception, and look forward to growing this much-needed program to improve the education and lives of our young generation. One love!"**

**Katrin Casserly**

Chairperson, Hanover Charities Jamaica



**"Rainforest Caribbean remains committed to partnerships that contribute to the growth and development of a brighter future for the nation's youngest."**

**Max Jardim**

Director, Rainforest Seafood Caribbean



**Garth Ramsay**

Owner, Caribbean Immigration Services





# THE 2022 BOOK DISTRIBUTION

In 2022, over 50 volunteers helped deliver 15,000 books to 8,425 children at 111 small, medium and large schools in urban and rural areas of Jamaica. Book distributions were made in the eight parishes of Hanover, Kingston, Portland, St. James, St. Ann, St. Mary, Trelawny and Westmoreland.



## LIST OF SCHOOLS

### Hanover Parish

Askenish Basic Lucea  
Bethel Infant School, Hopewell  
Bright Minds Basic, Lucea  
Cacoon Primary & Infant School, Cacoon District  
Cave Valley Primary & Infant School, March Town  
Cold Spring ECD Centre, Pondside, Great Valley  
Dalmally Basic, Dias  
Elgin Town Basic School, Elgin Town  
Esher Full Gospel Basic School, Esher  
Grange ECI, Grange  
Hanover Ministers Fraternity, Hanover  
Haughton Court Basic, Lucea  
Hopewell Basic School, Hopewell  
Hopewell CDC Basic School, Hopewell  
Logwood Basic School, Logwood  
Lucea Infant School, Lucea  
Pell River Basic School, Pell River  
Pondside Primary & Infant School, Pondside, Great Valley  
Prospect Basic Lucea  
Riverside Basic School, Kingsvale  
Sandy Bay Infant School, Sandy Bay  
St. Simon's Primary & Infant School, St. Simons  
Upper Rock Spring Primary & Infant School, Upper Rock Spring  
Watford Hill Infant Department, Hopewell

### Kingston Parish

Arnold Road Methodist Basic School, Kingston  
Calabar Infant School, Kingston  
Mission House Methodist Basic School, Kingston  
Mona Common Basic School, Kingston  
St. Anne's Infant, Kingston  
Sandy Park Basic School, Kingston  
St. Joseph Infant School, Kingston  
St. George's Girls School, Kingston

### Portland Parish

Boundbrook Infant School, Port Antonio  
Buff Bay Baptist Basic, Buff Bay  
Disciples of Christ Basic School, Hope Bay  
Little Folks Caring and Learning, Buff Bay  
Port Antonio Infant School, Port Antonio  
St. Margarets' Bay Infant, St. Margaret's Bay  
Tranquility Infant School, Buff Bay



### **St. James Parish**

Alcar Basic School, Montego Bay  
Barrett Town Primary Infant Department,  
Montego Bay  
Bickersteth Infant School, Bickersteth  
Buckingham All Age School, Kempshott,  
Montego Bay  
Cambridge Infant School, Cambridge  
Catherine Hall Primary & Infant School, Montego Bay  
Central Basic School, Norwood  
Chatsworth Primary & Infant School, Maroon Town  
Euphemia Lawrence Basic School, Reading  
Flamstead Kids Basic School, Flamstead Gardens P.A  
Glendevon Infant Department, Montego Bay  
Goodwill All Age & Infant School, Chatham  
Granville Primary and Infant School, Granville  
Green Pond Primary & Infant School, Green Pond  
Lethe All Age School Infant Department, Lethe  
Maldon Basic School, Maroon Town  
Maroon Town Basic School, Maroon Town  
Montego Bay Infant School, Montego Bay  
Mount Horeb Infant School, Mount Horeb  
Mount Zion Primary and Infant School, Montego Bay  
Providence Heights Infant School, Montego Bay  
Railway Basic School, Montego Bay  
Salt Spring Primary & Infant School, Salt Spring  
Somerton All Age & Infant School, Somerton  
Spot Valley Basic School, Spot Valley  
Spring Mount Basic School, John's Hall P.O  
Success Infant & Primary School, Barrett Town  
Tucker Basic School, Montego Bay  
Vaughansfield Primary & Infant School,  
Flamstead Gardens

### **St. Ann Parish**

Colgate Basic School, Ocho Rios

### **St. Mary Parish**

Cross Roads Basic School, Oracabessa  
Grace Child Care Basic School, Oracabessa  
Race Course ECI, Oracabessa  
Sunshine Basic School, Oracabessa

### **Trelawny Parish**

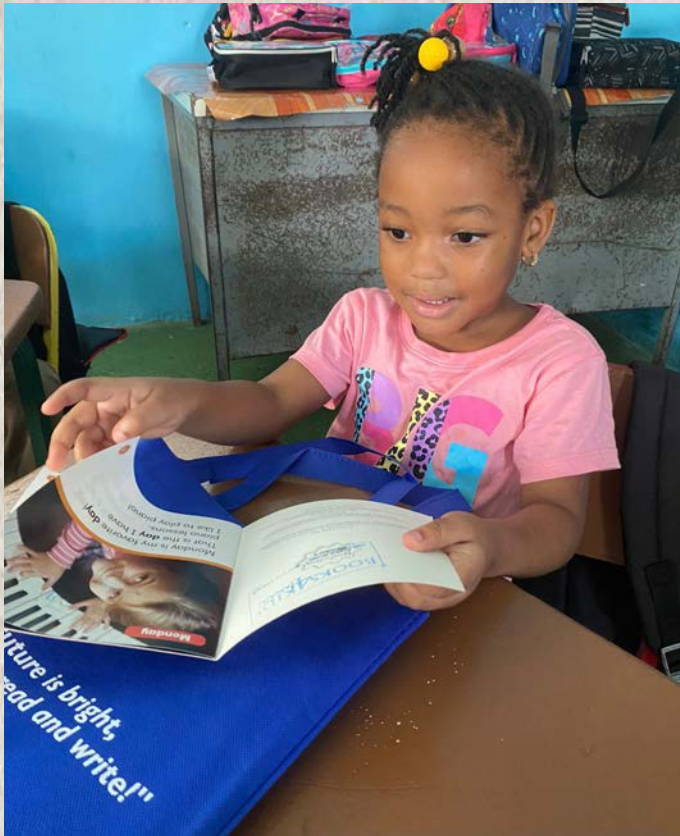
Albert Town Infant School, Albert Town  
Calabar Basic School, Rio Bueno  
Falmouth Infant School, Falmouth  
Freeman's Hall Infant School, Albert Town  
Hague Primary & Infant School, Hague  
Hampden Infant School, Hampden  
Rio Bueno Infant Department, Rio Bueno  
Salt Marsh Infant School, Salt Marsh  
Spicy Hill Basic School, Spicy Hill  
Spring Garden Primary & Infant School, Rock Spring  
Ulster Springs School, Ulster Spring  
Waldensia Primary & Infant School, Piedmont

### **Westmoreland Parish**

Caledonia All Age & Infant School, Darliston  
Camp Savannah ECI, Little London  
Cleveland Porter ECI, Little London  
Delveland Basic and Primary School, Sheffield  
Eldin Washington Basic, Little London  
Enfield Primary & Infant School, Darliston  
Farquharson ECI, Little London  
Haddo Primary & Infant School, Ramble P.O.  
Holly Hill Infant School, Bigwoods, Holly Hills  
Ironshore Basic School West End, Negril  
Kew Park Primary & Infant School, Kew Park,  
Lambs River P.O.  
Little Bay All Age School, Little London  
Little London Methodist ECI, Little London  
Little London Primary and Basic, Little London  
Mint Road ECI, Grange Hill  
Mount Airy Basic School, Negril  
Mount Eagle ECI, Grange Hill  
New Works Primary & Infant School,  
New Works, Darliston  
Peggy Barry Primary & Infant School, Grange Hill  
Petersfield Primary & Infant School, Petersfield  
Savanna-La-Mar Infant School, Savanna-La-Mar  
Seaford Town Infant School, Seaford Town  
St. John's Infant School, Darliston  
Upper Top Lincoln ECI, Grange Hill  
West End ECI, Negril  
West End Infant School, Negril  
York Hill ECI, Little London











**“Books are gifts that we really appreciate, because at St. Joseph’s, our emphasis is on reading from the very beginning. Also, the colours and the fun exercises in the BrainQuest Workbooks excite the children. There are some students that do not have the necessary books, and to them, the Workbook is extra useful.”**

**Mrs. Rosemary Clarke**  
Principal of St. Josephs Infant, Kingston



**“Books4Kids is a great initiative, and we look forward to it every year. It is a really awesome feeling to hand out books and interact with the kids. We can see how much they are learning, and the BrainQuest Workbooks has a variety of things that keep the kids interested.”**

**Shenna Edwards**  
Supervisor for JetBlue Airways, Jamaica







**“Some children are not able to buy their own textbooks, so the Workbooks come in very handy for them to use. They love the letters and they love the stickers. Thank you Books4Kids Jamaica; we do appreciate you.”**

**Charmaine Samuels**

New Works Infant School, St. James



**“On behalf of the Principal and the staff at Montego Bay Infant School, we really appreciate the gesture and, we hope that you will continue to work with us. Thank you very much.”**

**Mrs. Erskine**

Co-Ordinator, Montego Bay Infant School



Shantena Osborne receiving her red book bag from longterm sponsor of Books4Kids Jamaica, Ms. Kathy Dear.



**“Sometimes, the children cannot afford the textbooks that we use, but with the BrainQuest Workbooks you provide, everybody will have the same book to work from. It is colourful, it’s fun, and the children enjoy working in their book.”**

**Carolyn Clarke**

Principal, Providence Infant School, Montego Bay







**“Our partnership with Books4Kids Jamaica to provide stationary and BrainQuest Workbooks to our local Early Childhood Institutions provides an important and practical resource directly to children in Oracabessa.”**

**Travis Graham**

Foundation Manager, GoldenEye Foundation,  
Oracabessa Bay, St. Mary







**“We want to say a big thanks for the books. They really enhance the children’s learning.”**

**Angela Williams**

Principal, Spicy Hill Basic School, Trelawny



**“Books4Kids Jamaica helps our children be literate and numerate as the children use the Workbooks during their work times. On behalf of my colleagues, my students, and my parents, we are very grateful for this partnership, and we hope you continue to work with us.”**

**Mrs. Johnson**

Principal, Rio Bueno Infant School, Trelawny



**“On behalf of the Falmouth Infant School, we would like to say a big thank you for your continued support to us and our children. The books are really beneficial, and we look forward to your visit every year, as do the children and the parents.”**

**Patrice Beharie**

Assistant Principal, Falmouth Infant School



**“Our doors are open, and we welcome Books4Kids Jamaica. We thank you for the resources that you have brought each time you come along. They are of great help to us.”**

**Maureen Thompson**

Hague Infant Department, Trelawny







# VOLUNTEERS

More than 50 volunteers visited small and large Early Childhood Education institutions across the island to hand deliver books to the children.

- Barrington Fleming
- Beate Arntzen
- Christopher Clarke
- Cornwall College Interact Club
- Debbie Louw
- Fr. Colin King, OFM, Franciscan Missions
- Brother Domingo, Franciscan Missions
- Frank Perolli
- Garth Ramsay
- Half Moon Hotel Team
- Hanover Charities Team
  - Katrin Casserly
  - Kadeisha Moodie
  - Lise Murphy
  - Michael Hudson
  - Jacklyn Harris, Hopewell Sports & Community Centre Administrator
- Jamaica Tours Ltd Team
  - Clifford Jones
  - Donald Forbes
  - Garfield Grant
  - Jerome Bacchass
  - Michelle Whittaker
  - Noel Sloley Jr.
  - Sean Braithewaite
- Kathy Ann Dear
- Jaqueline Hamilton
- Janice Allen
- JetBlue Airways
  - Addoneika Blake
  - Alision Daley
  - Andrea Henry
  - Cameron Hylton
  - Roshay Smith
  - Ruhmayne Marrett
  - Sanya Peart
  - Sasha-Lee Williams
  - Shadhae Crossgill
  - ShannaKay Reynolds
  - Shenna Edwards
  - Tracy Ross
- Max Earle
- Michael Troupe
- The Oracabessa Foundation
  - Travis Graham
  - Shavel Lawrence
- The Phillip & Christine Gore Family Foundation Special Education Teachers
- The Portland Charities Team
- Rainforest Seafood Caribbean
  - Bethany Young
  - Max Jardim
  - Rohan Dixon
  - Stephanie Daley
  - Toni-Ann Hudson
- The Early Childhood Commission
- Ragni Trotta
- Rodia Williams





**"It was such a joy and delight to actually help hand out books to the children. I must commend Books4Kids for the many years of service to Jamaica, as the support of Early Childhood Education is so critical to the development of a nation."**

**Ms. Janice Allen**

Senator in the Houses of Parliament  
Jamaica



**This is a really valuable/constructive project. You can see firsthand that the money raised is spent towards its primary purpose, which is books for the children. It is hard to see how little many of the children have. Some have nothing at all."**

**Beate Arntzen**

Tromsø, Norway

**"Supporting Books4Kids leads the empowerment and enrichment of children in Jamaica."**

**Christopher Clarke**

Sponsor & Volunteer



# FINANCIALS

Books4Kids Jamaica raised US\$ 50,295 towards the purchase of books and materials for the 2022 book distribution. US\$21,695 was raised in the 2022 Online Charity Auction and, a further US\$28,600 was given in cash donations.

In addition to cash contributions, an estimated US\$120,000 was contributed to the 2022 project in the form of in-kind contributions encompassing free transportation and auction items as well as heavy discounts on books and materials, shipping and services.

## OPERATING INCOME

**Online Charity Auction**      **\$21,695**

### Cash Donations

|                                       |          |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| • The Most Honourable<br>PJ Patterson | \$2,000  |
| • Hanover Charities                   | \$8,000  |
| • Stephen and<br>Bonnie Holmes        | \$5,000  |
| • Ragni Trotta                        | \$12,000 |
| • Gore Foundation                     | \$1,600  |

**Total Cash Donations**      **\$28,600**

**Total Income**      **\$50,295**

## OPERATING EXPENSES

76% of the generated income of \$50,295 was spent on grants to over 8,000 preschool children, to include BrainQuest Workbooks, Scholastic readers, crayons, pencils and bookbags. 15% of the money generated were primarily spent shipping books and materials to Jamaica, including brokerage and customs clearance, local accounting, taxes and auditing fees.

### Operating Expenses

|                              |                 |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Marketing & Websites         | \$2,000         |
| Grant Funds                  | \$38,296        |
| Shipping, Distribution, Fees | \$7,425         |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>        | <b>\$47,721</b> |

## OPERATING RESULT

|                         |                |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Total Income            | \$50,295       |
| Total Expenses          | \$47,721       |
| <b>Operating Result</b> | <b>\$2,574</b> |



# ONLINE CHARITY AUCTION

## Sponsors

Corinthia Hotel Lisbon  
Corinthia Hotel London  
Corinthia Hotel Malta  
Couples Resorts Jamaica  
Cunningham Golf Academy Instruction  
GoldenEye/ Island Outpost  
Grand Palladium Jamaica Resort & Spa  
H10 Hotels/ Ocean Coral Spring  
Half Moon Equestrian Centre  
Hilton Grand Vacations  
Hyatt Zilara & Ziva Rose Hall  
JetBlue Airways & JetBlue For Good  
Karma Resorts  
Karisma Hotels  
Jamaica Inn Hotel  
Melanie Schwapp  
Mema Designed  
Mystic India Restaurant  
Owen Marsh  
Iberostar Beach Hotel  
Iberostar Suites  
Resort Condominiums International (RCI)  
Round Hill Hotel  
Secrets Wild Orchid & St James Resorts  
Simo's  
The Body Shop  
The Cookie Fairy 876  
The Houseboat Grill  
The Mango Spa  
Treatz  
Tropicana Jewelers  
Regency Resorts Tenerife  
Wyndham Hotels Worldwide

**“Books for Kids Online Auction allows us to contribute in a small way back to a country that was so good to us for so many years. The work that Books4Kids does to give a head start to the youngest generation is vital for the future of Jamaica. And the happy result for us has been spectacular trips to places far and away we otherwise may never have had the opportunity to visit.”**

**Vincent Miller and Elizabeth Brown**  
Auction Winners



**“Over the last 15 years, the Books4Kids Jamaica program has grown to become an important contributor to our Early Childhood Education sector. As a long term sponsor, I am proud to personally support an initiative that has helped make a difference in the lives of more than 100,000 preschool children.”**

**PJ Patterson**

Former Prime Minister of Jamaica









# BOOKS4KIDS JAMAICA



## **Bob Trotta, Charity Founder**

The Books4Kids Jamaica charity was originally founded in 2007 by pioneering developer, the late Bob Trotta. He was a great believer in Early Childhood Education as a means to increasing opportunities for all. “Uncle Bob” had a unique ability to connect with children and left a legacy of love to Jamaica’s children. Following her husband’s passing in 2017, Trotta’s passion lives on through his wife’s Ragni dedication. She has picked up the mantle as the non-profit’s benefactor and continues to spearhead the project.



## **Ragni Trotta, Board Member**

Ragni Trotta is a post-graduate of The London School of Economics and Political Science (UK) with a MSc in Media, Communications and Development. The daughter of two Norwegian school teachers, she lived in Jamaica for 10 years and is passionate about the importance of Early Childhood Education. She is a marketing professional with extensive experience in the global tourism and resort development industries.



## **Frank Perolli, Board Member**

Board Member Frank Perolli has been a key part of the charity team since its startup in 2007. From Canada, the former General Motors executive lived in Jamaica for 15 years. He believes in giving back to the youth of the country by way of assisting kindergarten children to learn to read and write.





# BOOKS4KIDS JAMAICA



## **Books4Kids Jamaica 2022 Annual Report**

Written by: Ragni Trotta  
Cover photo: Ragni Trotta

## **Please follow Books4Kids Jamaica on:**

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Instagram: @book4kids\_jamaica  
Facebook: Books4Kids Jamaica

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