

FAQs

1. How many times can a child be referred to Child Diversion?

A child can only be referred to the programme three times. However, a child may no longer be eligible for diversion if he or she commits or attempts another offence within three years of starting a diversion programme.

2. What are the offences eligible for Child Diversion?

Eligible offences* include: indecent assault, unlawful wounding, simple larceny, negligent use of fire, noisy and disorderly conduct, damage to property, littering in public places, sexual intercourse with a person under 16.

*Other offences at the Judge's discretion

3. If a child accepts responsibility, can that be used against him/her later?

No. There are protections under the legislation which apply to children who accept responsibility.

4. How is accepting responsibility for an offence different from pleading guilty?

Taking responsibility for an offence indicates a child's readiness for rehabilitation and is a crucial step in the diversion process. A guilty plea, however, is a criminal defendant's admission to the court that they committed an offence. The Child Diversion Act explicitly states that acceptance of responsibility is not a guilty plea.

5. What happens after the programme is completed?

After a child successfully completes his/her treatment programme, the matter is dismissed.

6. What is the average time of the programme for child?

The length of time in the programme is based on the individual treatment plan developed for each child as it is responsive to the needs determined for the child. If the intervention is unsuccessful, the child will return to formal judicial proceedings.

PARISH	ADDRESS	CONTACT
Kingston	61 Constant Spring Road, Kingston 10	876-906-4923-31
St Andrew	2 Hagley Park Road, Kingston 10	876-445-4470
St Thomas	43 Queens St, Morant Bay	876-618-3006 516-8228
Portland	2 Russell Avenue, Buff Bay	876-941-0726
St Mary	6 Main Street, Port Maria	876-725-4407
St Ann	2 Tucker Avenue, St. Ann's Bay	876-972-2713
Trelawny	Rock, Trelawny	876 996-4592
St James	Shop 136, City Centre Shopping Mall, St. James Street	876-971-3417/3208
Hanover	Shop 1, CAP Complex Lot 2, Miller Drive, Lucea	876-966-8649
Westmoreland	105 Great George Street, Savanna-la-mar	876-724-8032
St Elizabeth	Coke Drive, Santa Cruz	876-724-9646
Manchester	7 South Race Course Road, Mandeville	876-618-2936
Clarendon	Shop 24, Glenmuir Business Centre	876-618-2924
St Catherine	Shop 20, Palms Plaza, Lot 23 West Trade Way, Portmore	876-588-0262



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JUSTICE



NATIONAL
CHILD
DIVERSION
PROGRAMME





CHILD DIVERSION

The Child Diversion Programme redirects a child from the criminal justice system.

It is the process of implementing measures for dealing with children who are alleged, accused of, or recognized as having infringed the penal law, without resorting to formal judicial proceedings.

GOAL

The Child Diversion programme aims to:

REHABILITATE children who have committed a diversion offence

REDUCE the number of children exposed to the criminal justice system

EMPOWER communities to re-socialize children offenders

TYPES OF REFERRAL

A child can receive two different referral types:

1. Diversion by Police

- i. Informal Warning
- ii. Formal Warning
- iii. Police Caution

2. Diversion by the Courts



Types of Warnings

i. Informal Warning

– For first time offences or offences requiring less serious responses

ii. Formal Warning

– Child received informal warning prior, but current situation does not warrant criminal proceedings

iii. Cautions

– Received informal & formal warning or offence requires a more serious response.



DIVERSION REQUIREMENTS

- Suspected of or committed a diversion offence
- Child offender accepts responsibility
- Consent of child offender to participate in Child Diversion Programme
- Signed consent of child offender's parent/guardian or attorney
- Consent of victim (if identified) for child offender to participate
- Verification of child offender's address
- No more than two Police Cautions previously given to child offender
- Child has previously been issued a formal warning (if not a diversion offence under the Sexual Offence Act)

DIVERSION METHODS

A risk assessment will be conducted to support the development of a targeted treatment plan that includes a range of support services such as

- Counselling
- Sexual or reproductive counselling and education
- Mentorship
- Drug use and abuse treatment
- Remedial training
- Vocational training
- Community services
- Conflict management

