



GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA
Ministry of Youth, Social Development and Seniors

The Office of Youth Affairs

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT TO THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY – BY THE
HON. TINEE FURBERT, JP, MP.**

27th JUNE, 2025

JOB READINESS PROGRAMME

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise in this Honourable house this morning to applaud the work of the Office of Youth Affairs, Youth Services Team on the successful launch and initial outcomes of their Job Readiness Programme.

Mr. Speaker, this cornerstone initiative directly supports Goal number four (4) of the Government’s National Youth Policy which is to “**to increase employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for young people**”. This pivotal Job Readiness Programme has been strategically developed to provide Bermuda’s young people with essential skills and work experience to prepare them for formal employment options.

Mr. Speaker, this programme is a result of years of hard work carried out by the staff in the Office of Youth Affairs. A programme that began as a kernel, has blossomed into a bountiful crop and ...this is truly remarkable.



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Mr. Speaker, the Counselor-in-Training (CIT) programme was initiated several years ago at community centres under the Ministry of Youth, Sport, and Recreation. Inspired by international youth development models from organizations such as the Boys and Girls Club, Character Counts, and the YMCA, Bermuda's CIT programme focused on positive youth character development. This programme not only engaged participants during the summer, but also provided essential leadership skills and promoted community involvement in a safe environment. Mr. Speaker, many participants who showed an interest in becoming summer day camp counselors progressed from junior counselors to camp counselors, and some even secured employment with the Department of Youth and Sports

Mr. Speaker, during the summer months, the CIT programme provided activities for primary school students. However, it did not include provisions for high school students. Following advocacy by parents, the programme was expanded to include high school students. Consequently, a Leadership-In-Training (LIT) initiative was introduced to extend opportunities during mid-term holidays and uphold the core leadership objectives.



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Mr. Speaker, the Job Readiness Program, is a hybrid of the CIT and LIT launched in the Summer of 2024. This programme was specifically offered to high school students in both public and private schools from S1 to S4.

Mr. Speaker, the Office of Youth Affairs staff reached out to school principals and counsellors, attended school assemblies, shared information via social media and provided Government press releases in order to raise awareness of this beneficial programme.

Mr. Speaker, the programme's structure was meticulously crafted to ensure participants gain valuable real-world experience. Successful applicants who were able to meet the entry requirements participated in a comprehensive orientation session, completion of a two-week volunteer service period at either the Eastern or Western Zone Community Centres. These youth were to then commit to a minimum of five hours of work per day during the school term breaks. This immersive approach ensured students develop a strong work ethic and necessary practical skills.

Mr. Speaker, the advantages of a programme such as this are substantial for young individuals. It fosters skill development in various areas, including communication, leadership, teamwork, critical caregiving skills, how to create safe and nurturing



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environments for children, and develop crucial soft skills like time-management, self-control, conflict resolution, and resilience among others.

Mr. Speaker, the first cohort of the Job Readiness Programme, saw an enthusiastic response, with 10 high school students registering. They demonstrated remarkable dedication, with several students committing to staying with the programme for the entire summer, immersing themselves in the world of an After School Programme Worker by shadowing Programme Workers both in the field and in the office, gaining invaluable work experience.

Mr. Speaker, an important aspect of the programme is its direct pathway to employment. Senior high school students were eligible for paid positions as After School Programme Workers. Additionally, students could earn community service hours and receive an individualized professional reference letter for use in future job applications.

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to report on the immediate success of this pathway. From the inaugural cohort, four outstanding students were hired into formal employment. I, alongside the Office of Youth Affairs proudly acknowledge the accomplishments of these young individuals who have only recently graduated from high school and are now embarking on their next educational journey.



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- Jaidan Durrant emphasized learning much from coworkers and enjoying interactions with children, taking away self-control and conflict resolution skills.
- Makaylie Smith highlighted the energy of the children and learning patience as key takeaways from the programme.
- Deja Steede found meeting and interacting with the children helped her become more open-minded.
- Daetona Simons cherished the relationships built with staff and children, noting the programme pushed her to be more disciplined and reliable.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to acknowledge the Senior Programme Supervisor, Ms. Triana Renee James, who designed the Job Readiness Programme. She heard the voices of Bermuda's young people and created a programme that spoke to their exact needs. The success of this first cohort underscores how The Office of Youth Affairs' staff shows unwavering commitment to the National Youth Policy's goals.

Mr. Speaker, the next cohort of the Job Readiness Programme is set to begin on June 30th. The Office of Youth Affairs is targeting a cohort of 12 youths. I encourage interested young people to apply at www.ospbermuda.bm that we may continue to support the next generation of Bermuda Youth Workers.