

## **ABSTRACT**

Children's homes in Jamaica are operated by the Government as well as by Private Organizations in response to the needs of disadvantaged children. All the homes are licenced to operate under the Juveniles (Children's Homes) Regulation, 1951 which is embodied in the Juveniles Law 44 of 1948. These homes like most other institutions form a part of their community and should offer the children the quality of living which children should receive in any normal home.

A survey was conducted in four children's homes in the metropolitan area of Kingston and St. Andrew to assess the standard of care in these homes. Information was obtained through: administration of questionnaires, interviews, observation and reviewing records.

The study showed that occupancy of homes ranged from 68.2% to 100% with a mean of 78.6%. The ratio of care-givers to child was 1: 3.16. This should compare favourable with international standards. There were 69.2% of staff who have been trained in child care and 84.6% of staff requesting training in residential child care. All staff members had positive attitudes towards the children although 40.4% of them were at the lower end of the positive line. Majority of staff participated in activities with the children. Not all homes were regularly visited by health professionals, however, they responded favourably when a request was made.

Most major physical facilities were present and adequate in the homes. The children were well integrated into their communities while several community groups and individuals assisted homes in varying degrees. The activities of the children were influenced by the children's home and community environments. However, most of their interactions and perceptions have been greatly influenced by their socialization prior to admission to the children's homes.