

Extra time for youth pan camp

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THE four-day youth pan camp, introduced this year as one of the educational components of the Laventille Steelband Festival, has been extended to include time lost due to rain.

As several outdoor activities, including the rudiments of pan

tuning, were affected by showers during the week, the festival committee sought agreement from participants and parents to compensate for the shortfall.

Consequently, the camp, which was scheduled to end yesterday evening, has

been extended to include two hours this morning, so participants could properly complete the programme.

Co-ordinator Julien Cudjoe, who is also manager of the camp's Laventille Community Complex venue, yesterday said: "We

couldn't rob the children of the few hours we lost, so it was decided that we should extend the learning process by those hours.

"The children were enthusiastic about completing the full programme, so we will continue into Saturday morning, to ensure that the fundamentals of pan-tuning are covered.

Every child must leave the camp with a proper understanding of that process," Cudjoe said.

Drawn from schools in the Laventille, Belmont and Morvant districts, 35 children were taught basics of pan manufacture, playing techniques

and the history of pan. The programme began last Monday, taking a break for Emancipation Day.

Tutors included Merle Albino de Coteau, the first woman to arrange music for the steelband; veteran pan tuner Clifford "Rope" Alfred, and Michael Cooper, of Trinidad and Tobago Instruments Ltd, who is also chairman of the festival committee.

The children, many of whom had never before touched the instrument, by Thursday were playing the National Anthem and "Don't Cry for Me, Argentina", applauding themselves on the achievement.