

SERVOL

SERVOL PARENT OUTREACH PROGRAMME (POP) - February 2024



SERVOL PARENT OUTREACH PROGRAMME (POP) Celebrating 30 Years of Impact (1993-2023)

In 1993, the Parent Outreach Programme, (POP) took its inaugural steps as a pilot project with twelve dedicated facilitators. Supported by a loan from the World Bank, The Ministry of Education recognized the programme's potential and encouraged Servol to expand it across Trinidad and Tobago.

For the past three decades, POP has forged valuable partnerships with The Ministry of Social Development, Family Planning, The Children's Authority, Health Centres, Families in Action, and the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, which added value to the programmes delivery.

Acknowledging that the Early Childhood Programme may not sufficiently reach parents of infants and toddlers, *"We understand that a significant portion of personality development occurs in the first three years of a child's life"*. Sensitively addressing prevalent unenlightened parenting practices, the POP strives to bridge this gap.

The Outreach Programme has positively impacted the lives of numerous parents and children throughout Trinidad and Tobago. Special emphasis were placed on the roles of fathers' involvement, providing children with valuable male role models. The results have been promising, as parents are engaged in meaningful dialogues with their toddlers during everyday activities, such as cooking or cleaning.

Recognizing the importance of early preparation for school, some communities have actively advocated for the establishment of Early Childhood Centres in their areas. The success and encouragement derived from these initiatives underscore the enduring influence and relevance of the Servol Parent Outreach Programme in nurturing supportive parenting practices across the nation.

By Charlene Phillip - POP Coordinator





**Gillian Semper
Former Coordinator,
The Parent Outreach
Programme (POP)**

After over a decade in the Parent Outreach Programme (POP), *I firmly believe it's a divinely ordained initiative.*

During POP Awareness Month, sponsored by ANSA McAL, events were held in Chaguanas, San Fernando, Sangre Grande, and Tobago, showcasing achievements with speeches, parent displays, and literature.

Funded by the Inter-American Development Bank, POP conducted a training programme for ten community members, later named **Parent Partners** and employed by Servol in POP. This marked the start of a formalized Training Programme, further enhanced through collaboration with the National Training Agency.

Ten Facilitators underwent a **“Parenting Facilitators Training Pilot Project”**, evaluated using Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) methodology. Collaborating with the Ministry of National Security, POP trained women in Samaroo Village, Arima in Parenting Facilitation.

Engaging in craft markets, POP transformed spaces into home templates, exhibiting items made by parents and Facilitators. The team established its craft display at Harris Promenade San Fernando and Woodford Square, Port of Spain.

POP hosted a Canadian Occupational Therapist, enriching staff with strategies for working with children at home. The therapist guided the creation of a 'POP Kit' containing toys, laminated worksheets, and holistic child development insights.

Members of the **Canadian Women’s Club** adopted families through POP, providing Christmas hampers and school supplies. They also sponsored a children’s treat at Blanchisseuse Community, emphasizing community engagement.

In conclusion, the Parent Outreach Programme has positively impacted many lives, offering support to individuals seeking opportunities for growth. As it celebrates its 30th anniversary, POP remains a vital asset to Trinidad and Tobago.

Congratulations on this milestone!



Adelle B. Conner (on the extreme right)

My name is Adelle B. Conner, and I've dedicated the past eighteen (18) years to the P.O.P Programme. I am immensely pleased to share how this programme has profoundly influenced my life.

My journey with the Parent Outreach Programme (P.O.P.) began when my sister, a facilitator, and a friend introduced me to it. At the time, I was a housewife, affectionately known as a *“Domestic Engineer,”* a term I picked up through P.O.P. Initially, I assisted in accompanying facilitators around Kelly Village to connect with young women facing circumstances similar to mine. Little did I know that this experience would lead me to become a P.O.P. Facilitator myself.

The turning point came when I landed an interview, realizing that being part of P.O.P. was my true calling. Always harbouring a desire to help others, becoming a P.O.P. facilitator provided the perfect avenue. I seized the opportunity to showcase my talents in sewing, cookery, floral making and arrangement, counselling, and hosting workshops on healthy parenting practices and child development, among others.

Working alongside parents over the years has brought me immeasurable joy, blessings, and happiness. My God-given talents have enabled me to impart knowledge to parents, teachers, and children, witnessing their growth from one level to another. For this, I feel a deep sense of accomplishment and gratitude for my role. It genuinely feels like I've never worked a day *‘in my life’* because I wholeheartedly love what I do as a P.O.P. Facilitator.



Floral Making



Celia Bissoondath, POP Facilitator

In 2014, after 26 years in ECCE level classrooms, I sought change and transitioned to a POP (Parents Outreach Programme) facilitator role, recommended by my Field Officer. With a mentor's guidance, I was smoothly adapted, fostering collaborative relationships with parents in the field.

As a current POP Facilitator, I've had the privilege of hearing parents' diverse experiences, providing support and witnessing their satisfaction. Throughout my journey, I've played a crucial role in enhancing parenting skills, promoting personal growth, forming support groups, and facilitating various initiatives, including collaborating with stakeholders for essential supplies.

Beyond my POP role, I've contributed as a substitute teacher, conducted workshops, and participated in school events.

My heartfelt thanks to everyone involved in this transformative journey.

POP Parent Aliya

I would say what drew me to the Programme were the Facilitators, who seemed genuine and not pushy at all. They showed a genuine willingness to help me as a parent and work alongside for the betterment of my child and me. They also seemed very passionate about the welfare of children overall, which I think is very important for the facilitators to love their job and be passionate about these goals; it reveals a lot about the quality of the Programme and their characters as individuals.

I would say that the Parent Outreach Programme had a great impact on me as I learnt a lot about the different things to consider when raising a child; it also opened up my mind to thinking of different perspectives and alternative ways concerning the overall well-being of a child that I did not consider.

The programme played a significant part in making me confident in how I raised my child so that I could move forward in my child's overall success in life.

Lastly, I got to meet persons as passionate about children and mentors who still assist in my well-being and my child whenever I require advice or support.



POP Parent Anita Khan

I have been a parent of the Servol Outreach Programme for 17 years. When I worked with Miss Maureen Morris, she taught me how to be a good parent to my children.

I was a young mother living in an abusive relationship. Miss Maureen Morris would do sessions with my husband, me, and sometimes my mother-in-law. We learnt to make crafts and toys for the children. I learned to keep a tidy home through Miss Morris, and she would also bring Miss Adelle Connor with her.

I am glad that I met them and took the programme today. I am using the skills to help my son parent his child. Thank you, Miss Maureen Morris, Miss Maria Morris and Miss Adelle Connor and thanks to the Servol's Outreach Parenting Programme.

Jennifer Collymore, P.O.P Facilitator

God always has a way to meet the needs of humanity, and the Parent Outreach Programme was such. When I entered this dynamic programme in 1995, my first encounter was with the woman they called the "***Iron Woman***"; powerful, organized, and persistent. She was P.O.P., and P.O.P. was her - this was no other than the charismatic Ms. Marcelle De Govia .

I quickly learnt about the Programme's objective and was assigned to my work area "***Pension Quarters to Hell Yard***", in the Beetham Gardens. "***Are you not afraid?***" people would ask, and my response would be "***No.***" Those days were not different from now, there have always been evil/crime, and still is, no matter where you go.

I saw that this programme, P.O.P, could change family life. We went from house to house with a message we truly believed in, to meet people we loved. We saw family life change through structured intervention, by lesson plans geared towards household crafts such as pastry making, garment construction, and crafts from things that could be otherwise discarded. This was very pleasurable the families we dealt with. Later on, the programme was introduced to primary schools, where the children learned to sew/mend their torn clothing.

Overall, I had a wonderful experience working with Servol's P.O.P. initiative. I enjoyed working with the parents and helping them become more self-sufficient, independent, and confident.



**Victoria/ St Patrick Parish
Staff Lawrence Motas ECCE**

The Parent Outreach Programme has had a tremendous and positive impact on the lives of our parents and teachers over the years. They have given their support during both fun and difficult times in the lives of various individuals in our community whom they counsel and educate. They are the people we need to continue serving in our communities. P.O.P. has encouraged many low-income families to help themselves in many ways. We, the teachers of **Lawrence Motas**, appreciate you and admire your strength throughout the years for maintaining such a standard through Servol in our community. Special thanks to Cherry Ann Richards Ramnarine, who presently holds this position as our POP Facilitator and our former facilitators, Marilyn Thompson and Linda Peters, we wish to thank you, P.O.P., for your continued support.



Miss Morris, POP Facilitator

Collaborated with the Surveillance Unit Chaguanas's Cluster in Caroni to support families facing food challenges under POP. They assisted in hampers, milk, and more. The overwhelming support from stakeholders allowed the programme to continue serving the community during challenging times.



**Gillian Nurse (Success Story)
POP Facilitator, Tobago.**

I began working with Natasha in 2005. She resides in Pembroke, Tobago. When I introduced POP, she lived in a common-law relationship with two children. Natasha had *three* CXC O 'level subject passes and often would complain about being unable to secure a job. As I worked with the family, I realized that Natasha began to express a deeper understanding of Child Development and Self-care. **Then something sparked!** One day when I visited, she decided to continue her studies at home while caring for her children. Natasha wrote one subject yearly until she acquired *six* passes. This allowed her to become gainfully employed as a secretary at the Royal Bank. However, her secret ambition was to become a teacher. At present, Natasha is a teacher at Good Wood Methodist Primary School. She is also married and has three children.



**Kelvin Alexander Fire Fighter
Receiving certificate for the
Marine Fire Fighter Course**

Engraved in my mind is the philosophy that no one is better than another, and everyone needs help at some point. The lessons and values that POP taught were etched in my mind, which I use daily, even in my current career as a firefighter.

**Parent Outreach
Programme (POP)**

Has been able to have some notable achievements in communities throughout 1993 –2023

**Marketable Craft /Skills
Family Day / Sports
Workshops**

- Self-care for parents*
- Health care for women*
- Finding new purpose*
- Courage to make a difference*
- Time vs Opportunity*
- Taking charge*

**Social Events
Home Gardening
Hamper Distribution**

