



PR#106-25

PRESS RELEASE

MoHW and UNICEF Strengthen Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services Through Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Training

Belmopan. July 3, 2025.

The Ministry of Health & Wellness (MoHW), through its Mental Health Unit, in collaboration with UNICEF, has launched a strategic training initiative on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)—an evidence-based psychological intervention proven effective in addressing anxiety, depression, trauma, and behavioural issues in young people.

The main objective of the training is to build the capacity of frontline professionals working with children and adolescents to provide timely, appropriate, and effective mental health support. By equipping key service providers with the foundational knowledge and practical tools of CBT, the Ministry aims to expand early intervention efforts and foster resilience in children facing emotional and psychological challenges.

The training provided participants with the necessary skills to conduct initial assessments, recognize early signs of mental distress, and apply basic CBT techniques to support emotional well-being. It also aims to strengthen mental health services for children and adolescents, particularly those in the school system and those who come into contact with social services.

The sessions are being facilitated by Dr. Susanna Mitchell Hoy, a highly respected child psychologist at the Ministry of Health & Wellness. Participants included psychiatric nurse practitioners from the Ministry of Health & Wellness, social workers from the Ministry of Human Development, Family Support, and Gender Affairs, and primary and secondary school counsellors from the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology.

This cross-sectoral training reflects a whole-of-government approach to mental health, recognizing that the well-being of children and adolescents requires coordinated action across health, education, and social services. It also aligns with the Government of Belize's ongoing efforts to integrate mental health into all levels of care and build a national system that is inclusive, community-based, and child-centred. Additionally, it underscores a national commitment to improving early identification of and response to mental health challenges among Belize's youth.

The Ministry of Health & Wellness extends its appreciation to UNICEF for its continued partnership and technical support in advancing mental health programming in Belize.

Ends

For more information, please contact:

Iveth Quintanilla

Technical Advisor

Mental Health Unit

Ministry of Health & Wellness