

## **BCJ Keen On Digital Media Literacy**

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With the added exposure to dangers caused by the ever-evolving media landscape, the Broadcasting Commission of Jamaica (BCJ) is fixed in its position to heighten digital media literacy among the public, children in particular, with the aim of encouraging self-regulation.

The BCJ is the only local body experienced in digital media literacy and content regulation across platforms.

"We're engaging students from the perspective of managing their digital self in a digital economy and society as we know that children consume the majority of their content online," said Cordel Green, executive director of the BCJ, as he addressed a Gleaner Editors' Forum at the newspaper's offices in Kingston last Thursday.

"So we can't simply speak to them about the content they consume through traditional platforms," Green continued as he alluded to plans to develop a virtual academy to house media and digital literacy content.

Green listed Internet addiction, radicalisation, and recruitment of children through gangs along with child grooming as some of the threats that the data would make more recognisable.

He added: "Persons can no longer rely on a traditional regulator to be the intermediary between consumers and content creators when creators are now consumers and consumers are creators and the content is divorced from platforms and devices.

"Our digital media literacy thrust is twofold. In addition to a school's outreach digital programme, there's also an adult digital literacy programme where we go out and share with the people. We want to empower parents to be able to recognise and respond to these potential threats so we engage with a lot of parent-teacher associations. Messages for online and traditional television will also be developed to address some of these issues."

### **... 'Command and control' obsolete, says Clayton**

In May, Minister of Education, Youth and Information Ruel Reid said that the Government was having dialogue with the Broadcasting Commission of Jamaica (BCJ) with a view to putting on the table proposals to regulate a significant portion of the local media landscape that is not now being regulated.

Of the media landscape, a mere 20 per cent was cited by Reid as being regulated.

Reid stated then: "In this era of disinformation and terrorist recruitment, there is the need to find a new balance between privacy rights and legitimate security concerns."

In speaking to the move for digital and media literacy, Professor Anthony Clayton, chairman of the BCJ, stated during a Gleaner Editors' Forum last Thursday that the traditional 'command and control' method was now obsolete.

"We can't literally police the Internet. No organisation anywhere has got the capacity to do that. So it means we have to come up with a whole new strategy, which we're developing now, but we're not there yet. However, we're certain that an integral part of it is going to hinge on media literacy and we'll be working with the schools to provide this so that people are made aware of the opportunities but also the dangers."