



Registered Charity #779



### Mission

To break the culture of negativity by engaging youth in active, fun-filled sustainable lifestyles, in order to cultivate positive and productive social attitudes. *"Bringing out the positive charge in youth".*

### Vision

To develop a youth membership base of outstanding individuals, supported by world-class recreational outdoor nature facilities, which promote positive and healthy lifestyles and engender positive social development.

## **Introduction**

Nature Fun Ranch (NFR) is a nature based youth development programme managed by youth. A registered charity, NFR was founded in 1999 by five Barbadian community minded teenagers who decided to use their creativity to develop a positive alternative to the negative lifestyles that plagued their local community.

NFR provides a safe environment that fosters holistic positive psychosocial development of its members through its long-term outdoor, unorthodox, educational, equestrian and fun filled programme located in Bruce Vale, St Andrew. The programme seeks to give at-risk youth an opportunity to explore their strengths and prove their worth to a society that may view them as everything other than productive citizens. NFR programming takes a comprehensive systems approach to dealing with its diverse target group. Trained staff and peer mentors work in unison with NFR members and their families to understand the root causes of nonconforming behaviours while providing the necessary support for positive behaviour change. In so doing, it provides an invaluable asset to Barbados by benefiting the highly vulnerable and disenfranchised section the society.

## **Why the NFR Programme works**

Once connected with nature at the ranch, NFR members experience a desperately needed sense of belonging to something much greater than themselves and even their community. NFR management body consists of trained Social Workers and Counselors who would have lived, experienced and worked in communities similar to where most members originate. This experience offers a great sense of knowledge, empathy and understanding of the background of members.

The unconventional approach to behavioural change is what compliments the core functions NFR and contributes to its success. NFR also assists where necessary members in areas of discreet financial assistance and obtaining citizenship documentation. Skills gained at NFR are a unique selling point for at-risk youth who may otherwise have faced very gloomy career prospects.

The success of Nature Fun Ranch over the years to maintain the interest and its membership has been because from the inception each member was encouraged to contribute new ideas and

think outside of the box. The theory behind this is that youth are easily bored and when suggesting things to do they think very limited and have very little faith in great activities actually coming off. Our mission from the beginning was to break that culture of thinking. On the membership form from 1999, each member had to rate each proposed activity and existing section and suggest new ideas. Everything and each decision is made on consensus and the management of the group is the youth themselves.

### **Mode of Operation – *A day on the Ranch***

On weekdays, senior members (15 approx) report to the Ranch to do maintenance and development. Other Ranchers join in the afternoon for after school program and to participate in various programs. The first of these programs will include their school assignments, revision or training. The second will be areas of responsibilities and duties e.g. grooming, gardening, cleaning, filing etc. The third part will be meals, spiritual meetings, discussions, and games. The final is clean up, check off duty list and departure. School weekday Programs would run daily approximately between 3:00 pm until 7:00 pm and then Participants are taken home to their door.

Weekends and Vacation Time (30-60 members approx) sees the same four components of a school weekday along with an activity components, these activity components include camps, practical and theoretical training courses, tours, cook outs and many outdoor

adventurous activities. Weekends and Vacation Time would run daily approximately between 9:00 am until 7:00 pm.

## The N.F.R Experience

Rehabilitation is greatly assisted as a result of a combination of the components below:

Attraction - N.F.R has a wide range of attractions that help us to get the attention of participants. This is critical in the work we do. Some of these attraction include Off Road Vehicles, Exotic pets, Outdoor living, Horses and other animals.

Therapy – The overall 10 acre country side property and program is very therapeutic

Motivation and Focus through discovering, developing and refining passions and goals

Positive Affirmation – Humans need for the feeling of belonging and family is universally accepted. At N.F.R we have developed a real sense of family and positive peer pressure. The importance of understanding that there are people who love and care for you and really want to see you do well should not be underestimate. Similar backgrounds and shared vision ignited by passions and S.M.A.R.T goals can lead to great success.

Life Skills – Being involved in Practical Ranch Experience teaches and/or develop good leadership, management, time management, communication and critical thinking skills among many others.

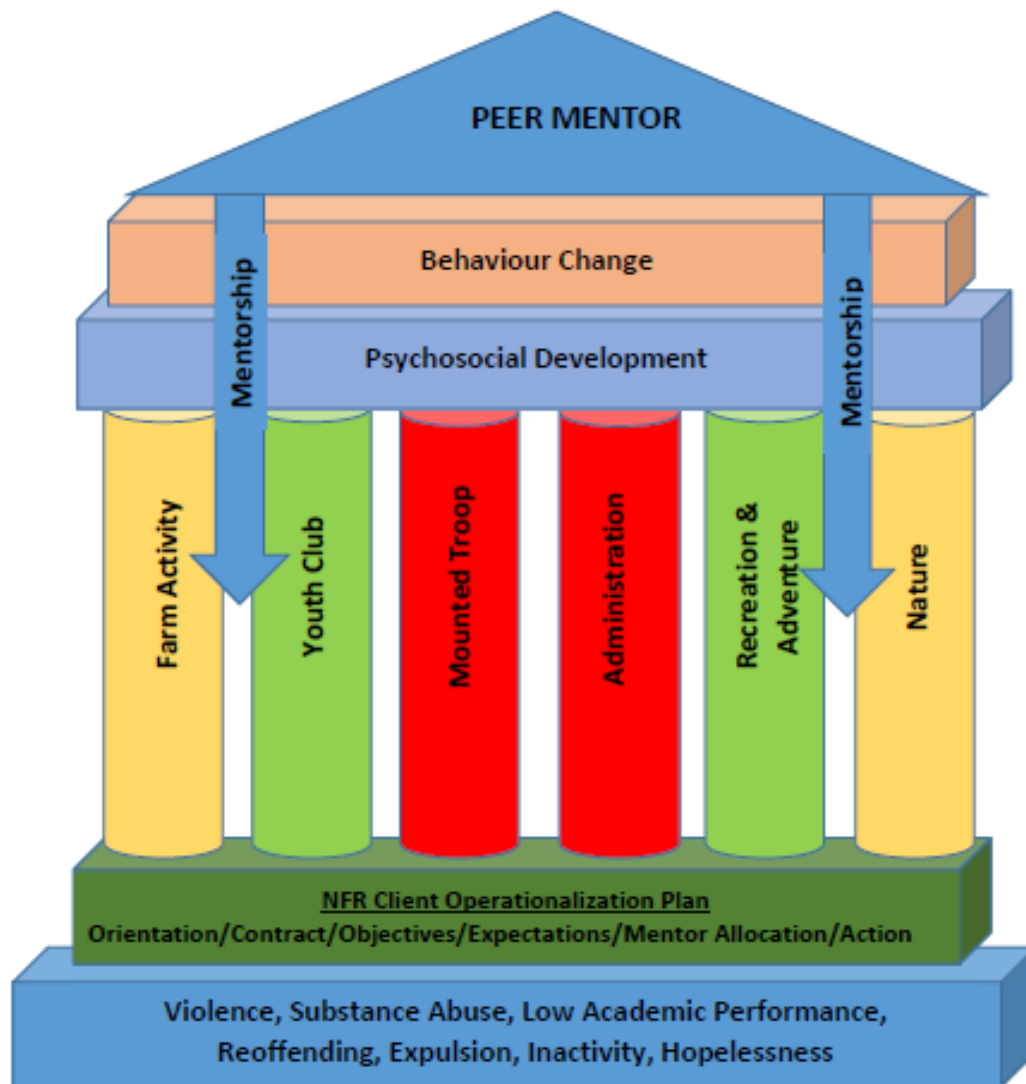
Skill Training – Practical Ranch Experience will develop skills in Agriculture (Aqua-culture, Animal Husbandry, Premaculture, Horticulture, Organic Farming, and Crop Production) Horse Care, Landscaping, DIY, Marketing among others

Empowerment Opportunities – Our Empowerment Program focuses on introducing and helping participants to Job and career building, Academic Education, Healthy lifestyles, Citizen Documents, Savings and Investments and Business and Entrepreneurship.

## Benefits of NFR Programme

<b>Social benefits</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Developing relationships</li><li>• Responsibility</li><li>• Time management</li><li>• Developing a sense of self</li><li>• Mentorship</li><li>• Self Esteem Building</li><li>• Ability to explore individual skills</li><li>• Developing coping skills</li><li>• Team work</li></ul>	<b>Environmental</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Safe and structured</li><li>• Positive peers</li><li>• Programme managed by products of the NFR programme</li><li>• Positive psychological effects of nature therapy</li><li>• Constructive activity to be engaged in</li><li>• Wide expansive area</li></ul>
<b>Skills</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Animal Husbandry</li><li>• Equestrian</li><li>• Recycling</li><li>• Fish and Pet Keeping</li><li>• Outdoor Survival</li><li>• Public Speaking</li><li>• Organic Gardening</li><li>• Composting</li></ul>	<b>Health</b> <b>Promote</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Physical health</li><li>• Mental Health</li><li>• Sexual Health</li></ul>

## NFR Model



### Track record

An Independent Evaluation revealed that as at April 1, 2016 of the 2074 participants of NFR, a 92% success record was recorded in relation to the goals and objectives. Since inception, of the **forty-four** serious cases whom have been referred to NFR to be *rehabilitated*, just one member (2%), has reoffended whilst participating in the Programme. Of the members who have been referred to NFR under the *prevention* component of the Programme, just 0.5%, or one out of **one hundred and sixty-nine**, offended whilst in the Programme.

## **Success Stories**

### ***Rancher A***

Rancher A is a 14 year old male who initially had extremely negative academic reports from his secondary school and a very tenuous relationship with his mother. He eventually turned to the streets as a means of survival.

NFR engaged Rancher A and discovered that he was a very caring and sharing child, greatly dedicated and exceptionally hard working. This resulted in him being obtaining the highest points and bonus for the year 2009 and won the coveted 'Most Outstanding Rancher 2009'.

There has been a marked improvement in his attendance and performance at school and home over this period.

### ***Rancher B***

Rancher B when first engaged by NFR was very outstanding individual who after a few years of separation from the programme became involved in illegal drugs. NFR re-engaged him and he immediately fit in and demonstrated great leadership skills. It was clear that he had a passion for horses and wanted to be a jockey. Rancher B rose within months to Director and won the "Director of the Year 2009". He has developed both at school and in his extra- curricular activities. He is now working towards a Soccer scholarship.

### ***Rancher C***

Rancher C has known the Ranch for eight years. He became a regular Rancher three years ago. Prior to his full time involvement, it has been disclosed that his Haynesville St. James neighbourhood was having a negative impact on him. This resulted in participation in illegal drugs, suspensions from school and an intolerable attitude. He was using his leadership potential for negative influence. After his full time involvement, he was then able to use his leadership in a positive manner. He brought many participants from his neighbourhood and beyond to the Ranch who later became valuable members.

In recent times he has shown tremendous skills in management and has even attained the role Deputy Project Coordinator (ag). He is presently employed with one of our associated small businesses; Ace Aquatics and works as a supervisor of the pond and aquarium maintenance personnel.

## **Management Structure**

### ***Board of Directors***

The Board of Directors guides the NFR management in strategic decision-making.

1. Corey Lane (executive director) – youth affairs / mentoring
2. Francine Charles (non-executive director) – youth affairs
3. Adrian Elcock (non-executive director) – construction / finance / management
4. McDonald Nicholls (non-executive director) – business / retail
5. Tricia Watson (non-executive director) – law

### ***Board of Advisers***

The Board of Advisers is a source of specialist advice and support for Management. Their expertise complements that of the Board of Directors.

1. Frances Chandler (Agriculture)
2. Ashok Merai (finance)
3. Julia Waterman (finance)
4. Carol Jacobs (government and social responsibility)
5. Ian McNeil (environment and permaculture)
6. Colin Clark (youth affairs)

The Board of Directors and the Board of Advisers are voluntary positions.

### **Financial Information**

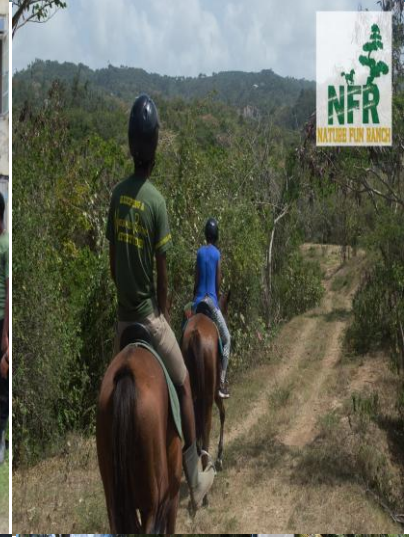
- NFR has a high standard of book keeping practices dating back to its first day and this has assisted in it being funded by United Nations, Government of Barbados, US Embassy, Canadian High Commission and other charities and organisations.
- NFR recently upgraded its accounting practices with the assistance retired Accounting Executives
- NFR is audited by a local Auditor – Mrs. Anthea Daley
- NFR has audited accounts, statements and a bank account.
- Every cent in the dollar is used for development and all labour and administration is volunteered.



## Our Photo Board









## Our Vision Board

