

JN Group provides relief for victims of Walker's Place fire

THEY'RE COPING, but trauma lingers in the minds of many of the children and caregivers who escaped the fire at Walker's Place of Safety in Kingston on the tragic night of January 15.

"It will take long-term treatment," said Leroy Anderson, manager of the Jamaica National Children's Home (JNCH) in Papine, St Andrew.

Thirteen of the 34 children who were saved from the inferno were transferred to the JNCH, and others are residing at the Maxfield Children's Home and City of Refuge.

"The trauma doesn't leave them overnight. There are children who, if they hear an alarm or a siren now, they ..." he tried to explain, with sympathy in his voice, but was unable to complete the sentence.

He continued: "Some go into reflection and they have



Leroy Anderson, manager of the Jamaica National Children's Home in Papine, St Andrew, inspects a stove donated by the JN Foundation while Onyka Barrett Scott, acting general manager of the JN Foundation, and Dahlia Mosely Henriques (centre), assistant manager, JN Group, look on. The supplies, which include four twin beds, sheets, a refrigerator, pots and the stove, were bought and donated with contributions from the public and JN Group employees.

flashbacks. However, they are learning to cope," he concluded.

It was with similar compassion

that the Jamaica National Group, through its JN Foundation, responded to the urgent needs

of the wards of the Walker's Place of Safety, going immediately to social media to raise funds to

replace the furniture and equipment which were destroyed by the fire.

Through the JN Group Human Resources and Development Department, a list of needed items was created, and the funds raised via social media from the public and employees were used to purchase those items, including: a four-burner gas stove, refrigerator, pots, three double beds, sheets and pillows.

A BIG RELIEF

"On behalf of the JN Group's staff and members, we were happy that we could assist with this need," said Onyka Barrett Scott, acting general manager of the JN Foundation, as she, along with several JN Group employees, presented the items to the home recently.

"It's a big relief!" a pleased Anderson exclaimed. "The children, and the home in particular, will use these donations as best as we can," he said, noting that the home was in need of additional items to make living more comfortable for the children.

"It is a tragedy when a child loses a home. In this case, many children were impacted, therefore, we are extremely gratified that JN members, employees and others have responded so generously to the call to assist," Barrett Scott stated.