



PRESS RELEASE

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Understanding Autism Information Seminars – Parental Strategies; Managing Behaviour

The Ministry of Equality, as part of its role of developing policies and creating awareness of disability issues, is also developing a program to assist and support parents and carers of individuals with autism.

The Ministry, through its meetings with stakeholder groups and clinical professionals, is aware that autism can present many challenges and can at times feel overwhelming: behaviours may disrupt family life making it difficult and stressful.

It is therefore important to support and empower parents and carers as they are, of course, instrumental as to how children and adults on the autism spectrum approach daily life. We understand that parents themselves would welcome information and support in doing so.

The Ministry for Equality is running various informational and training seminars on disability awareness throughout the year. It has now introduced workshops in a series called “Understanding Autism” where it will organise various information seminars specifically targeted at parents and carers of people with autism to help offer support.

The series will be launched to mark International Autism Day on Sunday 2nd April and will commence with a presentation on how to manage behaviours. This will be delivered by Ms Linda Woodcock who is the parent of a young man with autism spectrum disorder. She is a Studio III UK trainer and has a BSc (Hons) Applied Social and PG certificate in Adults with Intellectual Disabilities with Severe and Complex Needs. Ms Woodcock is also the co-author of ‘Managing Family Meltdown: The Low Arousal Approach to Autism’.

Anyone wishing to attend any of these presentations should first register their interest with the Ministry of Equality. Participation for all seminars is free, and given the interest and demand already expressed there will be limited spaces available. These will be given on a first come, first served basis.



The Minister for Equality, the Hon Samantha Sacramento MP, said: "Autism spectrum disorder is a lifelong development disability that manifests in different ways. In some instances, parents may struggle to cope and can feel overwhelmed. It is important that we provide support to individuals on the autism spectrum and to their families as well. Thoughts, attitudes and feelings may influence one's ability to help children and adults on the autism spectrum. It is therefore important to harness a positive attitude so as to encourage motivation to learn and behave."

The objective of this presentation is to empower parents with information and strategies so as to achieve the managing and changing of common challenging behaviours and thereby reduce stress and anxiety for both parent and child.

Training on disability awareness is at the forefront of the Ministry of Equality's 2017 programme.