



PRESS RELEASE

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Successful Fostering and Adoption training course

The Gibraltar Care Agency has last week concluded a five day training programme for individuals genuinely interested in becoming foster or adoptive parents.

These sessions follow the successful Fostering and Adoption Awareness Campaign held in October 2016 by the Honourable Minister Samantha Sacramento MP, which encouraged numerous applicants to come forward and seek further information regarding a sensitive area of social services provision in Gibraltar.

The course, 'Preparing for Fostering and Adoption', is the first stage in the assessment process, which is required for any prospective foster carers or adoptive parents. The course commenced last Monday, when 14 selected applicants attended the John Mackintosh Hall to participate in the various sessions.

The training allows the potential candidates to gain a detailed insight into the demands of fostering and adoption so that they can decide if they wish to proceed. The meetings also give the Care Agency the opportunity to ensure that candidates meet the necessary requirements to undertake such a crucial role. During the training, the Care Agency team receive an overview into the applicants' lives and can help them to decide whether fostering or adoption is right for them.

The training has a two-fold objective: equipping the candidates with information, skills and detailed knowledge of the circumstances experienced by children who need to be brought into care. At the same time, the training takes the participants on a journey that helps them explore their own personal values in relation to the task of caring for children and what kind of impact this will have on their families and way of life.

A participant summed up his feelings about the experience: "I've changed my thinking about adoption because I wanted a child to be mine. I now understand that it is the child's needs that are important. I'm now thinking that maybe I could be a foster carer."

Another said: "Before the course started I didn't really look at the bigger picture. I didn't see that children had lost their parent and family, it's made me so much more aware."

A third declared: "I feel that some of my personal experiences of loss in my life could now help a child through some of their hurt and pain."



Minister for Health, Care and Justice, Neil Costa MP said: "I am delighted with the outcome of the fostering and adoption campaign, which last year focused on 'Shaping Families', and also with the outcome of the annual training event. As I have repeatedly told my colleague Samantha Sacramento, this is an extremely worthwhile and meaningful programme.

"It is important that children who, through no fault of theirs, end up requiring a placement outside their family, are provided with suitably trained foster carers and adoptive parents in the community. I am extremely proud at the direction that this service is taking and how it is progressing in supporting children and young people and giving them a new opportunity to grow up in a safe, secure and nurturing family environment."