



PRESS RELEASE

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Fostering Campaign October 2018: Let's Face it – Time to Foster a Child!

The Minister for Health, Care and Justice, the Honourable Neil F. Costa MP, launched the fourth Fostering Campaign on the 15 October 2018, coinciding with the National Adoption Week in the UK. As with each campaign, the Care Agency aims to find suitable alternative homes for children in care. Minister Costa took the opportunity, once again, to make positive comments about the development of the fostering and adoption services in Gibraltar. The Minister was extremely grateful to Ms Dianne Vallejo, CEO of Bassadone Motors, for having shown specific interest in supporting the Care Agency with this year's campaign.

Ms Nicole Viagas, Head of Children Services, said that she was delighted to be part of such a great service, stating: "Children need the best possible start in life, and if this cannot be offered by the parents or family members, then alternative placements are crucial. I want to thank our wonderful foster carers and social work team for making this a reality for our children. Our carers understand that children need a safe base from where they can feel special; belonging to a family and positive childhood experiences translates into well-adjusted and successful adults." Ms Viagas went on to say that children's timescales are important and need to be acted upon promptly, "children grow up quickly and, therefore decisions about their future need to be made in a timely manner in line with their development."

The Children's Services are seeing the fruits of a truly committed team. The relationships between foster carers and social workers, and the service they provide, continues to grow. One of the developments in this team has been the creation of specific support programmes to help foster carers understand the impact of abuse. This programme deals with the effects of daily exposure to chronic stressful environments on children and teaches foster carers strategies to manage consequences of these.

It is with this in mind that the Care Agency will continue to be committed in developing this service through the provision of ongoing training by CoramBaaf to foster carers, social workers, and all those involved in this service. The Care Agency aims for a brighter future for children and therefore needs more foster carers and adoptive parents to be able to offer children an alternative to residential care.

Ministry of Health, Care and Justice



At the launch, Minister Costa spoke of the importance of children being brought up in a loving, stable and secure home. He said: “Children and young persons need parents and carers who will provide them with unconditional love and care. They need the consistency of a stable, warm and caring environment to help them overcome the consequences of adverse childhood experiences. These are some of the many reasons why I wholeheartedly support the Care Agency in finding suitable and alternative placements for children who desperately need them. I want to pay tribute to our current foster carers who enable children overcome their difficulties, through their patience, kindness and commitment. I would also like to urge persons considering becoming foster parents to contact our wonderful staff at the Care Agency to find out more about fostering, and the huge positive impact they could have on the lives of children and young persons.”