HOME-START MALTA & GĦAWDEX

Addressing the needs of vulnerable families in our communities

Remenda Grech
Chairperson Home-Start
Director FSWS

Aims and objectives

- Combat poverty & social exclusion, whilst nurturing social & community development

- Offer services to the most vulnerable in the community

- Foster change through local participation

Foundation for Social Welfare Services

poverty

Child Protection Services:

The reform

- NCAC Forensic Interviewing with children

- The use of videography to record sessions – both to use as "statements" by the children and also for peer review

- The use of evidence-based assessment tools

- The use of psychometric testing and personality testing

- The gathering of medical information and testimony from third party people

- The Therapeutic Pillar is concerned about supporting children vicariously through their parent(s)/carer(s) or their families.

- It assumes that helping to alleviate social pressures, lifestyle pressures, financial pressures and improving the parental skills portfolio can translate into improvements in the quality of life of the child

- The Intervention Phase is hardly the jurisdiction of the CP alone. In fact, a Multi Disciplinary Team (MDT) is generally established for each case. CPS remains the supervisory unit, overseeing the general process and guiding the case reviews.

- There is a time frame to be respected for such actions. Failure to register improvements in the key areas of development may result in a change in CP plan vis-a-vis the child

INTERVENTION

Generic Services

- Family Workshops are group sessions dedicated to enhancing family communication.

- Through the Family Workshops professionals help families strengthen their skills, learn how to appreciate family life and improve their communication with each other

- During the course, participants:
  - Learn how to identify the strengths within the family and identify skills that can be improved and developed further;
  - Learn how to solve conflict within the family by understanding how our needs and emotions can create conflict,
  - Learn and practice clear and direct communication with family members
  - Understand the relationship we have with our emotions and the way we react,
  - Learn different ways on how decisions are taken by including every member of the family
  - Explore ways of how the self-esteem of every family member can be enhanced and
  - Use real life family situations to practice the skills learned throughout the course.

- These workshops are usually carried out in a group setting once a week, for 10 weeks. The work carried out during these workshops is flexible and centered on the needs of the participants, however sessions are not meant for therapy but for learning.

- Home-Start Malta offers support to parents who have at least one child under the age of 5 years.

- Trained and supervised volunteers offer emotional and practical support during a home visit which takes place once a week.

- Home-Start Malta and Home-Start Ghawdex co-ordinators have launched a new project delivering the Parentsplus programme to a group of young mothers.

- A greater number of families are being reached as the mothers attending these sessions do not receive support from home-visiting volunteers but one facilitator facilitates the sessions.

- Maria a middle aged single mum was not coping with her 5 year daughter Christine.

- Maria lacked the basic parenting skills and easily gave in to Christine who is a very bright girl.

- Since Christine was missing out from school as the mother found it hard to wake in the morning, it was agreed that the Home-Start co-ordinator accompanied her to school twice a week.

- Presently Maria manages to take her daughter to school every day. Since the conditions in the family have improved the mother very rarely has episodes of panic attacks.

- The Home-Start volunteer still visits this family however plans are being made to start weaning the support and empowering the mother to move on and rely on her capabilities and other services offered in the community.