



PRESS RELEASE

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CHAMP: Mental Health in Young People

The CHAMP (Children, Healthy and Active! Multi-agency Programme) launched its fourth phase of planned events on Saturday 1st June 2019 at the Commonwealth Park. This event focused on mental health in young people and what families, schools and the community can do to promote their emotional well-being.

The public were invited to visit different stands, some involving activities for children and others explaining how food choices can affect the development of a healthy mind. There was also a stand for the Gibraltar Young Minds Network (GYM), a new part of the children's health promotion team, in order to start work on addressing mental health in young people and co-ordinate a multi-agency and multi-disciplinary approach to young people's mental health and well-being.

The event also included a performance from St Bernard's first school about learning what can be done to stay resilient, such as problem-solving and talking to adults, and to help everyone remember how important it is to help ourselves stay resilient.

Ms Clare Jolly, Child, Adolescent and Family Psychologist for the GHA, shared her views: "When working out how best to make use of this initiative, we talked to young people, their parents, and some professional partners and it quickly became apparent that two things needed to happen. Firstly, a focus on early intervention and prevention. Secondly, that if we are to reach more young people, we need to look to some of the innovative research and practice around the world, and take ideas from those who are experts in Gibraltar, its residents."

The Minister for Education, Heritage, Energy and Climate Change, the Honourable Dr John Cortes went on to say that: "Great work is already happening here in Gibraltar through the schools, through CHAMP and through a vibrant voluntary sector – all with whom we are forming relationships and developing insights into the unique challenges and strengths of our community."

The Minister for Health, Care and Justice, the Honourable Mr Neil F Costa MP, added: "This event gives us all a chance to learn from each other, and talk about the importance of protecting our mental health; a hope being that in the future, far fewer children will need specialist services. The aim of this initiative is to build a unique, resilient service that consults regularly with its service users and gain useful feedback. A multi-disciplinary team already provides interventions for mental

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health and we aim to support these interventions, allowing them to continue producing a “co-therapeutic” relationship, ensuring that the right resource gets to the right child at the right time”.

For more information see: <https://healthygibraltar.org/CHAMP>