

Tuesday, 14 April 2020

Safeguarding campaign launched

The Government is today launching a safeguarding campaign to keep children, adults and families safe during the Coronavirus pandemic.

There is a concern that children, and especially vulnerable children and adults, may become an even greater cause for concern during the Stay At Home period as invisibility increases vulnerability.

A new See It, Hear It, Report It campaign has been launched by the Departments for Children, Young People Education and Skills and Justice and Home Affairs, with support across the whole of Government and the States of Jersey Police, to encourage Islanders to work together to keep everyone at heightened risk safe and in sight.

The campaign will highlight that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, encouraging Islanders to be our "eyes and ears" in the community and report any safeguarding concerns. The campaign will also promote the support available to children, young people, families and adults.

The Children's Minister and Education Minister will be promoting this campaign when they take part this evening in a Q&A session with young people on Radio Youth FM, a show that is run by young volunteers from the Jersey Youth Service.

<https://tunein.com/radio/RYFM-s180189/>

Minister for Children, Senator Sam Mézec, said: "Coronavirus (COVID-19) is causing great social and economic upheaval and the social circumstances of many families are changing. This is a difficult time for everyone and we know that some children, young people and families in our community will struggle.

"Everyone involved in promoting the welfare, protection and care of the vulnerable – children and adults alike - is working extremely hard in the face of unprecedented challenges to support the most vulnerable during this period.

"It is a time of severe pressure across society, which we know will present heightened levels of risk for some children, young people and families, so it is especially important that they continue to receive the services and support they need.

“It is imperative that we all work together to safeguard children, young people and their families.”

Minister for Education, Senator Tracey Vallois, said: “We will ensure that children and young people have a voice throughout this campaign and we are looking forward to hearing from young people this evening and answering their questions on Radio Youth FM. The issues they raise will continue to shape our campaign and the support we offer and we will be asking how best we, as political leaders, can best engage with children and young people to ensure an ongoing, open, two-way exchange of views about what we do to help.”

Minister of Home Affairs, Constable Len Norman commented: “Safeguarding is everyone’s business and through this campaign we want to ensure that family members, neighbours and friends have the courage to make a call and report suspected abuse to the appropriate service. It is everyone’s responsibility to support and protect the vulnerable children and adults in our island community, as for victims of abuse, sadly their home is not always the safe haven it should be.

“Since the lockdown the States of Jersey Police and other services have seen a slight increase in reports of domestic abuse, and therefore we want to ensure that both victims and their families are able to access the right help and support during this time. And my message to the perpetrators of abuse is simple – you will not get away with the crimes that you are committing.”

The Chair of the Safeguarding Partnership, Sarah Elliot added: “Our message is clear to all victims young and old, you are not alone and you are not on your own. All the services throughout the island are still working hard through the pandemic to support you and they will do their utmost to provide the protection, help that you need.”

- Ends -

Notes to Editors

For further information, please contact the press office on 01534 440430 or pressoffice@gov.je

- The Children’s Minister and Education Minister are available for interviews today. Please book a slot through the Press Office.
- Children and young people are invited to question Jersey’s Children’s Minister Senator Sam Mézec and Education Minister Senator Tracey Vallois.
 - The Ministers will be interviewed live on Radio Youth FM, run by Jersey Youth Service, next Tuesday, 14 April at 6.30pm.
 - The show is presented by Honor (21) and Alfie (18) who are both volunteers at Youth Arts Jersey.
 - The radio streams through Tune In app: <https://tunein.com/radio/RYFM-s180189/> and is a live show every day from 6pm - 8.15pm
 - More details can be found on Youth Arts Jersey Facebook page:

- <https://www.facebook.com/youthartsjersey/>
- The Home Affairs Minister is available for interviews from 14:00-17:00.
- Please contact e.mathew@gov.je if you wish to interview Sarah Elliott, Independent Safeguarding Chair, Jersey Safeguarding Partnership, or Detective Superintendent Stewart Gull (Vice Chair of the Safeguarding Children's Board/CSE & Missing Children Sub-Group Chair) and Acting Superintendent Alison Fossey from the States of Jersey Police