

Duration of the Family Workshops Groups

The Family Workshops consist in a group of parents (between 8 and 10 participants) that would meet once a week for two hours for a period of approximately six months. The organisers are very flexible and try to meet the participants' demands as much as possible, such as agree on date and time of meetings, decide together which topics would help them most and so on. For those who have young children that are not of school age there is the facility of child-minding provided by the volunteers of Programm Uljed Darna, another Appoġġ service.

The format of the Family Workshops is flexible and centres on the needs of the participants. A key element for the success of these groups is the motivation of the participants.



Who will benefit mostly from this project?

The persons who could benefit mostly from the group work are those who are:

- Ready to share and learn from others
- Ready to learn more about family communications
- Have been dependant for a long time on Social Workers / social services
- Are at a greater risk of becoming dependant on social services

How one can ask to participate in the project?

All those who think that they are motivated and willing to participate in the Family Workshops can contact Aġenzija Appoġġ on **24-hour freephone Supportline 179** or on **2295 9000** during office hours, or send an email on appogg@gov.mt

Families can also be referred to participate in this project from other services which are following them. There might be cases where families can be referred by parish priests, local councils and other professionals always with their consent.



Family Workshops



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Families at Risk

Many parents are facing diverse situations such as mental or physical health difficulties, relationship problems, financial difficulties, unemployment, isolation, difficulties in the upbringing of their children and many other issues. Often they are overwhelmed with these situations especially when they do not find the necessary support to overcome them. These families often end up receiving long-term interventions from the Social Workers, particularly those in the community and in the Apqoq Intake and Family Support Service, who address multiple issues.



How do we help?

As Social Workers we help these families build the necessary support networks within their community as well as help them to strengthen their own potential and resources. This is done in order to make them less dependant on the social services and more integrated into society. Many times this proves to be quite difficult since community support networks are not always present. With this in mind, the Apqoq Intake and Family Support Service has started a new project, the Family Workshops.



What are the Family Workshops?

The Family Workshops are aimed at parents experiencing several difficulties in their life particularly in relation to child upbringing.

Through the Family Workshops we hope to:

- Provide a healthy space for the parents to work on personal development;
- Provide opportunities to improve relationship skills that would help them get closer to the significant others in their lives, primarily, though not exclusively, to their children;
- Help the parents understand human behaviour - in particular, child behaviour - and help them learn skills for better child care, on the emotional level as well as basic physical care;
- Support them towards using a positive parenting attitude with their children;
- Provide them with opportunities to learn skills that would improve the management of their own home - such skills would include budgeting skills, nutrition, health and safety in the home, basic home maintenance, etc;
- Help them work towards a more independent and active life.

How is this done?

The Family Workshops start by focusing on the person - working on self worth and personal development is of utmost importance. Only when a person starts to understand oneself and appreciate one's own worth would s/he be able to start to work on addressing issues around her/him.

Once a person has started to feel more comfortable with oneself, the group would move on to the second stage where the participants are invited to learn skills that would help them manage their home better - they would be encouraged to learn more practical skills that would put more quality in the home environment and daily family life. During this stage awareness on diverse issues such as domestic violence, child protection and others are raised.

Finally, once the participants have gone through skills training and have gained more confidence in their own abilities, they would start to draw up an action plan to becoming more independent - either through entering the labour market, or by becoming more active and participatory in their community.

The Family Workshops are both knowledge-based by providing information on various topics as well as practical by providing opportunities for skills training such as cooking sessions, budgeting skills, doing home work with their children, going on outings to develop a positive experience to family entertainment, and others.

Family Workshop sessions and activities organised are all free of charge.

