

RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

the response of the St Jeanne Antide Foundation
to the growing crisis of poverty and social exclusion

ANNUAL REPORT
ST JEANNE ANTIDE FOUNDATION
2022

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Networks Membership:

- Anti-Poverty Forum (APF).
- Parish Djakonija network of representatives of faith-based community agencies and the wider network of parish pastoral work volunteer teams and community support agencies across Malta.
- Platform Against Homelessness.
- Malta Health Network (MHN).
- Diocesan Diaconia Secretariat - forum of faith-based organisations.
- Aġenzija Żgħażagħ.
- Network of service providers in the area of domestic violence.
- WAVE (Forum Network).
- Platform of Human Rights Organisations in Malta (PHRO).
- UNHCR network of agencies active in the migration field – Integration Roundtable.

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TOWARD YOUTH (IVY) GROUP

THE ST JEANNE ANTIDE FOUNDATION (SJAF) – 15 YEARS OF SERVICE PROVISION - 2007 TO 2022

Nora Macelli, CEO: “Since its inception, SJAF has come a long way. Despite changing socio-economic realities faced by families we support, we have managed to stay true to our core philosophy—that of being of service in a loving-kind and compassionate manner, not giving up on those service users whose behaviour challenges us most, being flexible, finding solutions to glaring gaps as evidenced by our grounded practice, creatively mobilizing a wide range of supports, pro-actively seeking to collaborate with other support agencies and practitioners at all levels and across sectors, advocating for changes in policy and measures, involving service users in frontline work and having volunteers as close partners.”

Overview of SJAF service provision since 2007

SJAF evolved out of discussions by a Steering Committee established in March 2006 by the Malta Province of the Sisters of Charity of St Jeanne Antide Thouret. Made up of members of the Provincial Council of the Sisters of Charity and a small group of lay persons, the Committee explored the best way forward, for the Province, to continue serving the poor. The work of the Steering Committee led to the creation of SJAF which became registered as a Foundation and subsequently, in May 2008, as one of the first NGOs to officially become enrolled with the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations (OCVO).

2007 saw the creation of a number of volunteer teams that undertook prison visits, provided learning support for vulnerable children from neighbouring communities, and carried out community outreach and community social work. These initiatives were all based at a site provided for this purpose by the Sisters of Charity at 51 Tarxien Road, Tarxien. Today the centre is known as ĮCentru Antida – a drop-in family support services hub. Back in 2007, it was known as a Reception Centre.

As it evolved, SJAF became committed itself to provide support services for unserved and under-served groups – through a range of approaches that combined community-based social work, community outreach, grounded development of support services, collaborative work with community-based organisations, other NGOs and state-run service providers and volunteer teams working alongside professionals.

Over the years, SJAF developed and ran a number of social support initiatives. These included:

2007 to date: ĮCentru Antida Family Support Services Hub at 51, Tarxien Road, Tarxien: this drop-in centre houses all SJAF operations and services.

2007 to date – Community Social Work Service. This service is one of the core services of SJAF operating in localities where no other community-based social workers are active. It currently serves the localities of Hal Tarxien, Paola, Fgura, Santa Lucia and Birżebbuġa.

2008 to 2012 - Community Development Project in the locality of Hal Kirkop. This project was commissioned and funded by the then National Family Council. Outreach work was undertaken in 17 social housing blocks accommodating 112 households. Street outreach work with disaffected youth led to the setting up of a youth group involving entrepreneurial skills development and personal development work. A club for young single mothers was led by 2 community workers – trained mothers themselves. Social work support was accessed by many families. Operationally, project workers were based at the Social Centre of the Hal Kirkop Local Council – a multi-purpose one storey building close to the Housing Estate. As funding dried up, the project closed down.

2008 to 2014 - NannaKola grandparents education clubs aimed at grandparents who regularly took care of their grandchildren to enable their adult children to retain their employment. In total, 11 Clubs of 13 four-hour weekly sessions each were led in the localities of Tarxien, Paola, Fgura, Haż-Żabbar, and Fleur-de-Lys. To ensure the clubs reached vulnerable families, outreach work was carried out outside primary schools and in certain neighbourhoods to promote and enthuse caregiving grandparents to attend. A Grandparents' Forum was also formed to enable participants to continue meeting to dialogue with experts in a number of fields of interest to grandparents. The club curriculum and educational materials were uploaded on the SJAF homepage.

2008 to 2010 – Bridge Programme - a 6-months basic-skills training programme for vulnerable young persons with mild-to-moderate cognitive impairments and mental health conditions. This ran for three cohorts and incorporated the matching of each young participant to Volunteer Learning Support Tutors to re-inforce their learning in a number of areas and admission to key job training schemes in existence at the time. The programme was concluded on the setting up of Youth.Inc programme which at the time was managed by the Foundation for Educational Services (FES). Having a similar mission to the SJAF Bridge Programme, it was felt at the time that young people being supported by SJAF would be referred to Youth.Inc.

2010 to 2019 – VINČI Community Social Work Project in the locality of Haż-Żabbar: With start-up funding from the Malta Community Chest Fund, this grounded community social work initiative took off. In close collaboration with the Parish Priest, an office base was set up and refurbished in the Parish office and residents invited to visit on most mornings. The social worker undertook extensive street outreach work leading to the identification of a substantial number of families facing hardship and distress. A consultation clinic was set up for relatives who were caring for a family member with mental health difficulties. Educational clubs for grandparents were also organised.

2010 to date – LWIEN Service aimed at family caregivers of mentally ill persons. The service is still running and continues to fill a gap in service provision for this category of overwhelmed category in our society.

2011 to 2013 - GAMRA Community Social Work Project in the locality of Fgura: This initiative took off with start-up funding from the Voices Foundation. Regular street outreach work combined with home-based and office-based social work support for families with tenuous links to support systems were undertaken. Parish Volunteers were trained for befriending work and helped to set up a diaconia office to welcome persons in distress on particular days.

2012 to date – SOAR Service – trained and mentored survivors of domestic violence supporting and mentoring other survivors. This service is growing and should move to its own premises once refurbishment works are completed by late 2023/ early 2024.

2013 to 2017 – Dar Hosea aimed at supporting vulnerable women involved in street prostitution. Dar Hosea was the first ever day centre for prostituted women in Malta. It was started to fill another gap in service provision in the country. Start-up funding was obtained from the European Economic Area grants for Malta managed by SOS Malta. Subsequently a grant was awarded by the 1st Malta Impact Awards. Apart from the Dar Hosea drop-in day centre, weekly volunteer-led handicrafts sessions at the Corradino Correctional Facility were held as a means of keeping in touch with women as they enter or are released from prison. In 2017, Dar Hosea transitioned into an independently managed service under the voluntary organisation Association of the Friends of St Jeanne Antide.

2013 to 2021: Ċentru Enrichetta Family Services hub in the locality of Birzebbuġa: From September 2014 until 2021, this centre operated as a satellite site of Centru Antida. During these years, it was run by a team of Social Workers and a Family Literacy specialist. The Malta Community Chest Fund Foundation operated a weekly clinic at the centre for a number of years.

2013 to 2016 – Esther House refurbishment. The utilisation of this 3-level building belonging to the Sisters of Charity had been allocated to SJAF. Various grants had been tapped to refurbish the building into three self-contained studio flats for supported independent living for vulnerable women. Eventually, Dar Esther was opened as the first site of the Y-Assist assisted accommodation service.

2018 to 2022 - Y-ASSIST supported accommodation for vulnerable homeless young mothers and their children. Commissioned by the President's Trust, later known as The Malta Trust Foundation, SJAF managed two Y-Assist sites each accommodating three women and their children. In total, starting from September 2018, Y-ASSIST provided intense support and accommodation to 13 women and their children, helping them access a wide range of services to enable them to transition to independent living. The service was wound down in 2022.

2008 to 2022 – Groupwork: Through the years a range of group-based activities for service users were undertaken. Some of these included the SPARK Project through which 3 cohorts of 4th Form students from the Immaculate Conception Secondary School were exposed to voluntary work experience with children from families supported by SJAF; Live-Ins for children from service-using families; Self-esteem group; Klabb Familti for young vulnerable single parents; a Mother & Baby Club; a Homework Support Club every Friday afternoon that ran for many years until 2020; self-care groups for caregivers of mentally ill persons; 13-session participatory community-based courses for caregivers; the on-going Saturday Club for SOAR survivors; art therapy groups; lace-making; creative writing; and other initiatives. An innovative group-based project that filled a glaring gap was the running of a Youth Group for young people on the autistic spectrum organised collaboratively with the Autism Parents Association (APA).

2008 to 2022 – PUBLICATIONS

Along the years, SJAF invested in the production of various publications most of which are listed in the Malta National Bibliography. These include:

2006 to 2020: SJAF Monthly e-Magazine: initiated in 2006 in a newsletter format, the publication became a widely disseminated electronic magazine which ran from July 2008 to issue number 127 in January 2020. It was halted at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic when SJAF invested instead in publishing posts on its Facebook page – Fondazzjoni St Jeanne Antide.



2015 to 2019 – 70 articles published fortnightly in the Newspaper II-Leħen focusing on contemporary social issues and support services and emotional freedom techniques.

2008 to 2022: a range of publications – books, electronic magazines, annual reports - which can be accessed from the foundation's website: <https://www.antidemalta.org/books.html> Moreover, the Emotional Freedom Service of SJAF has uploaded a number of resources for interested readers: <https://www.antidemalta.org/emotional-freedom-service/html>

2022: SOAR – unlocking human potential. It is an account of SOAR service outputs between 2012 and 2022.

Nora Macelli, CEO

“ It is time to hand over the helm to my successor as head of SJAF – Melanie Piscopo, Executive Director. Since 2010, we have worked very closely and impactfully and her leadership will ensure continuity of the NGO’s ethos, philosophy and grounded approaches. I thank the Sisters of Charity of St Jeanne Antide for their support and firm belief in the difference SJAF services were making in the lives of individuals and families facing so much hardship and distress. I thank all my colleagues – past and present and all the donors without whose involvement we would have struggled to survive. With much gratitude to all those whose lives touched mine deeply and lastingly! ”



SJAF 2022

GOVERNANCE

The SJAF Governing Board is responsible for the oversight of strategic planning, policy development and financial management of the organisation. Board members come from diverse backgrounds such as social work and nursing, financial management, social care service planning and management, and entrepreneurship. The CEO is a non-voting member of the Governing Board that meets monthly.

www.antidemalta.org/governing-board/html

SJAF works in partnership with community-based organisations as well as State agencies and NGOs that are national in scope. Its scope is both local, and national. During 2022, the Foundation ran the following services:

Family Support Service Centre (*Scope: community based*).

Centru Antida is the Foundation's main family services hub. It lies in the heart of Hal Tarxien. Support services at Centru Antida during 2021 included the following:

..Social Work: family supports provided include assessment of needs, care planning, home-visits, advocacy, referral, accompaniment, information giving, emotional support, groupwork and in-kind support. Generic social work support was undertaken mainly in the catchment areas of Hal Tarxien, Paola, Fgura, Haz-Zabbar and Birzebbuġa. The service was also extended to service-using families that were making use of other SJAF services that are national in scope such as the LWIEN Service.

..Volunteering opportunities such as mentoring, reception work, handymen work, crafts production and admin support.

.. Charity Shop in Tarxien functions as a fundraising mechanism and a means to provide in-kind support to families facing financial hardship. It continued to operate every Monday and Wednesday from 9 am to noon except for the months during which it had to be shut down due to a spike in number of COVID-19 pandemic cases.

The **Community Social Work Service** of the Foundation cuts across all the above services. In the main, workers operate at community level and have a generic practice. (*Scope: mainly community-based*)

The SOAR Service (*Scope: national*): advocacy and support by survivors of domestic violence who are rebuilding their lives and moving towards self-reliance and resilience. The Foundation's Social Workers co-work with the SOAR Service team to support self-referred and referred women and their children.

The LWIEN Service (*Scope: national*): offers professional guidance and non-formal education for family caregivers of persons with severe mental health problems. The service includes family consultations by a senior Mental Health Nurse, social work, and support literature in Maltese.

ETHOS

Personnel maintain a friendly, humour-filled atmosphere in relating to each other - this is detected and appreciated by visitors and service users. The personal values, compassion and respect for others of the main workers, including volunteers, and the policies of the Foundation, have created an environment and an approach to vulnerable service users that has resulted in a certain ethos, culture and atmosphere.

Service users frequently comment on the attentive listening, acceptance, peacefulness and love they find at SJAF, and on the humane and personal approach in the different fields of practice. The economic, psychological, emotional and social freedom and self-acceptance found by distressed or vulnerable persons through the work of the Foundation recovers human dignity. Not only do the staff love the service users but the latter also come to discover their own capacity to love. Spontaneously or through SJAF encouragement, some service users even offer their voluntary service to help others. These are signs of the healing power of the divine at work through loving-kindness and compassion.

HUMAN RESOURCES

In 2022, 16 employees were engaged with SJAF, 5 of whom on a full-time basis, 4 on reduced hours basis and 7 on part-time basis. Apart from these, 58 Volunteers were engaged in service provision across the different SJAF services and initiatives. The staff and volunteer complement comprised the following:

- 16 remunerated personnel; of these: 4 social workers, 4 Peer Mentors one of whom is a service coordinator, 1 mental health nurse, 1 Family Support Worker who also manages Centru Antida, 1 admin support worker, the manager for finance and administration, 1 IVY Leader, 1 maid and 1 website maintenance support worker and the CEO who is remunerated by the Sisters of Charity of St Jeanne Antide.
- 58 Volunteers, one of whom led the Emotional Freedom Service on a voluntary basis; 2 co-managed the SJAF bazaar.



EVENTS

Particularly memorable during 2022 were these events:

On October 10th: visit by the Hon. Michael Falzon, Minister for Social Policy and Children's Rights and the informal dialogue that took place between himself and family support personnel.

Informal visit by
Michael Falzon,
Minister for
Social Policy and
Children's Rights



On the 4th April, an MOU was signed between SJAF and the Victim Support Agency outlining inter-agency collaborative measures.

Signing of MOU
with Victim Support
Agency (VSA)
4th April



On the 27th June, SJAF took part in the For Impact Event: creating dialogue that paves the way for dialogue organised by the Academy of Givers. Apart from the varied programme of speakers and panel discussions, the event provided corporate bodies and NGOs the opportunity to network during an Impact Fair.

Participation in For Impact
Event on 27th June



On the 23rd November, SJAF celebrated 10 years of the SOAR Service with an evening programme to which survivors and their children, SJAF staff and Volunteers and donors were invited.



SOAR 10 Year Anniversary event – 23rd November

On the 20th December, SJAF organised a Get Together for active volunteers during which they shared their different experiences of working closely with service users.



On the 23rd December, the British High Commissioner H.E. Ms Katherine Ward, spent a day with SOAR survivors of domestic violence during a therapeutic art event at the School of Arts in Valletta. Present as well were Committee members of the Association International Women Malta (AIWM).

CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

During 2022, staff and volunteers benefited from 57 different CPD opportunities. Topics covered included the following:

Services by other agencies	3
Social policies (national and EU)	4
Approaches to family support work	9
Financial Management	3
Health and safety	5
Contemporary social issues	8
Outcomes of research studies	1
Personal development	17
Advocacy	7
IT systems, including case-management software	1 course

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO DONORS

The Foundation acknowledges the significant contribution, during 2021, of the following donors:

- The Malta Delegation of the Sisters of Charity of St Jeanne Antide which contributes the use of four service sites and the salary of the CEO.
- The Ministry for the Family, Children's Rights and Social Solidarity for its financial backing of the Community Social Work Service at Ċentru Antida SOAR Service.
- The Alfred Mizzi Foundation for their highly valued significant financial contribution towards key SJAF services across the years.
- QPml
- VSF Malta Foundation
- Chetcuti Cauchi Advocates
- Association International Women Malta (AIWM)
- APS Bank.
- Melita Foundation
- Il-Ven.da Konfraternit  tal-B.V. Marija tal-Karit , il-Belt Valletta
- Pragmatic Play
- Ocean Yield Malta
- Archdiocese of Malta
- MPS Ltd
- Gasan Group
- Crane Currency Malta
- Salvo Grima Foundation
- Joseph Hili & Sons
- Mr E. Aquilina
- Women for Women Foundation
- Andrew Galea & Associates for the pro bono annual financial audit.
- St Peter Foundation for its sustained in-kind support for vulnerable families.

- QIC Europe Ltd.
- Aġenzija Żgħażagh
- Jobsplus
- Deloitte
- Wilhelmsen Lines Malta Ltd.
- Erremme Ltd.
- Christine Farrugia and friends
- Lions Club Sliema
- Rotary Club La Valette Malta
- KPMG
- The P. Cutajar Foundation
- Focolare Movement
- Nadine Cuschieri, Mrs Malta
- Family Sammut
- Tamara Webb
- MITA
- HSBC
- Juanfil
- A.M. Mangion Group
- Lovin' Malta – Lovin Milled Campaign.

Gratitude is expressed to countless other benefactors, schools, company workers, families and other members of the general public who contributed donations and in-kind items needed by vulnerable families supported by the St Jeanne Antide Foundation. Unless otherwise requested, we remain committed to acknowledging monetary and in-kind donations via our Facebook page:

Fondazzjoni St Jeanne Antide

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND ANNUAL AUDIT

A financial audit is carried out annually by the auditing firm Andrew Galea and Associates; the firm provides this service on a pro bono basis as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility policy.

Audit reports for the previous years were submitted to the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations and to donors. Similarly, the narrative Annual Reports which are published and made available to donors and the public on the SJAF website: <http://www.antidemalta.org/annual-reports.html>



Message from Melanie Piscopo, Manager (Finance and Administration)

“ Accountability and good governance have always been the bedrock of our Foundation’s operations. As the Manager (Finance and Administration), I have the responsibility of ensuring effective financial management processes based on robust policies and procedures. Being a social service-providing NGO that extends a range of free support services to individuals and families in distress, it is not easy to secure funding to cover salaries and operational overheads since most funding opportunities for NGOs in Malta continue to be project-based. The eligibility criteria for NGO project grants normally exclude salaries of existing employees. Moreover, donors require (rightly so) grant applicants to outline the organisation’s sustainability plan.

One cannot set a specific deadline to meet the needs of service users; thus, ensuring enough income to sustain expenditure is essential. We must be sure not to be frivolous in expenditure. Over the years, legislative regulations have imposed financial burdens on all those operating in the third sector, so one always needs to be conscious of a rainy day to ensure that the services provided by the Foundation are sustainable. However, we are always amazed by God’s Divine providence, which constantly watches over us and arranges difficult circumstances to benefit those in need.

On a personal note, joining the Foundation back in 2010 has been an eye opening experience of the realities and complexities vulnerable individuals and families face when they are at risk of falling into poverty or social exclusion. Regretfully, I say that coming from the corporate sector was quite a surprising and cultural shock back then, learning that, indeed in Malta, there is poverty. I have learnt the importance of compassion and empathy and how one cannot judge a book by its cover but has to look deeper to understand better the realities of what’s inside.

CENTRU ANTIDA FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES HUB

Centru Antida is the base of all SJAF operations and service provision. At the centre, safeguarding the wellbeing of all stakeholders remained a key operational function. A roster of Volunteer Reception workers was maintained.

Centre management ably followed-up facebook messages and alerted social work staff regarding incoming appeals for help. Orders for in-kind support items were regularly made. Three volunteers worked hard to prepare regular aid packages for SJAF service users. They sorted, packaged and labeled aid packages containing food items, detergents, toiletries, and nappies. Each month, the volunteers were responsible for stock-taking to guide centre management on any required appeals and procurement of new stock.

IN-KIND SUPPORT RESOURCES MOBILISED

Centru Antida management succeeded in providing the wide range of in-kind supports needed by practitioners across SJAF services. Such supports are constantly mobilised at the request of SJAF family support practitioners for their many service users battling a barrage of difficult and challenging life circumstances. Pick-up, sorting, packaging and delivery of items donated by the general public is coordinated. Management also took part in regular online staff meetings and senior management planning and review ones. Most importantly, active participation in the monthly online meetings of the Parish Djakonija Network of pastoral work volunteers across Maltese parishes was undertaken to keep alive SJAF participation in this net-work and to further develop collaborative work.

Overall, in-kind supports mobilised during 2022 included the following:

- 296 food aid and personal and home hygiene packages.
- 96 Christmas packages containing food and personal and home hygiene items; of these, 37 packages also contained toys for children of service users ranging from early childhood to age 18 years.
- 80 gifts to children and 5 gifts to elderly persons.
- €4,175 voucher donations utilised to help service users in dire financial situations.
- 52 donations of Back-to-School educational resources according to lists provided by schools.
- 2 Facebook appeals for in-kind supports: fans and baby milk – only fans received.
- Wide range of pre-loved clothes for all ages.
- Second-hand furniture sourced through the network of family support practitioners from church-based and state agencies. Members of this WhatsApp network offer and make use of donated second-hand furniture for service users. Examples: 2 single beds and 1 bunk bed, 2 complete spare bedroom; 4 gas heaters; 1 mattress; 2 baby beds; 1 twin pram; a sewing machine; a settee; a wall unit; 2 nappy changers.
- 5 baby hospital bags.
- €466 used to purchase formula milk.

Fondazzjoni St Jeanne Antide
Published by Miriam Grech - 29 November 2022

1st December is just a few days away....here is our Reverse Advent Calendar. You can do an individual or a group collection. Your support is greatly appreciated.

St Jeanne Antide Foundation

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

1 Paips or Konserva	2 Shampoo & Conditioner	3 Pasta or Rice	4 Floor Washing Liquid	5 Hot Dog Sausages
6 Wipes	7 Chocolate Flavoured Cereal	8 Shower Gel	9 Tinned Vegetables	10 Toilet Paper
11 Tea Or Coffee	12 Clothes Detergent	13 UHT Milk	14 Dish Washing Liquid	15 Friend Ham or Luncheonette
16 Crackers or Biscuits	17 Canned Beef	18 Toothbrushes/Toothpaste	19 Fleur	20 Oil

It's the season to help others

HOW DO I DO IT?
It's easy, rather than treating yourself everyday, treat someone who really needs it. Simply get a box and each Click to expand... advent add a new item.

0:02 / 0:12 *For more information you may contact minam on 79297153*



TIMESOFMALTA.COM
How your Christmas donation could be a lifesaver for those facing poverty
I couldn't even afford to make a sandwich for my children: St Jeanne Antide Foundation servic...



Fondazzjoni St Jeanne Antide
Published by Nora Macelli - 22 August 2022

Last year, you helped us support 25 children of families assisted by the Foundation's Social Workers, with back-to-school supplies. Thanks to your contribution we were able to purchase school uniforms, shoes, bags, stationery supplies according to teacher's lists and much more. Once again we are reaching out to you for your kind heart and generosity. Please help us support more children to start their scholastic year with a smile and with adequate educational resources! Tha... See more

St Jeanne Antide Foundation

BACK-TO-SCHOOL SUPPLIES DRIVE

Boys' Junior Lunch Boxes	A4 Purple Button Folder
Boys' Junior Drinking Bottles	Small PVA Glue
A4 Black Box Files	Medium UHU Stick
A4 White Boards including eraser	Alcohol Wipes
White Board Markers - mixed colours	A4 Spirial Bound Folscap
Large Tissue Boxes	A4 Plastic Punched pockets
A4 Flat files Blue/Purple/Orange	Rounded Edge Scissors
Laptops	Narrow lined copybooks

Or else make a donation towards this drive following the link with this post.

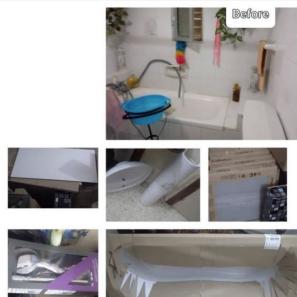




Fondazzjoni St Jeanne Antide

Published by Melaine Proscio 12 August 2022

Thanks to a kind anonymous donor who provided new sanitaryware, an elderly couple whom the foundation supports for over 10 months will soon have a new functioning bathroom. A massive thank you also goes to Carlo Savozi Malta for sponsoring part of the plumbing works. Looking forward to see the after image 😊



Fondazzjoni St Jeanne Antide

Published by Miriam Grech 13 June 2022

Special thanks to Greenblue Malta for their donation of stationery items in preparation for scholastic year 2022/2023



Fondazzjoni St Jeanne Antide

Published by Noora Maia 14 April 2022

Thank you HSBC Corlett Centre staff - Mark Dalli, Odette Chircop-Speake and Denise Aquilina for the bountiful donation of Easter goodies and so many bags of second hand clothing, shoes and children's items. You regularly think of the needs of so many families we support. Bless you!



Fondazzjoni St Jeanne Antide

Published by Milica Jevtic 01 February 2022

Thanks to Joanna Gera for this donation of baby items. This will help us prepare more hospital baby bags for mothers to be supported by the foundation.



Fondazzjoni St Jeanne Antide

Published by Noora Maia 13 February 2022

Gratulations to SRS - Students Resource Society for their perseverance to collect educational resources for our children in need. Thank you SRS for yet again responding to NGO's Back-to-School resources campaign. Thank you Nicole (on right) for the delivery.



Fondazzjoni St Jeanne Antide

Published by Noora Maia 01 February 2022



Fondazzjoni St Jeanne Antide

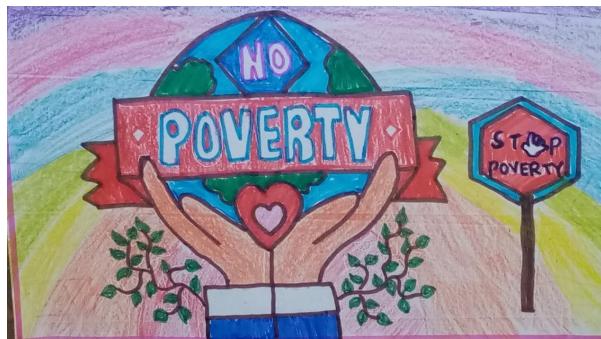
Published by Noora Maia 01 February 2022

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USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS AN EDUCATIONAL TOOL

In the course of their work, the Foundation's family support workers often meet many people who are still sceptical about the existence of real poverty around them. To further education the general public about the harsh reality faced by many people sliding into poverty and social exclusion, various posts were uploaded on the Foundation's facebook page. Here's a sample of them, captioned - JEKK MA



EŻEMPIU numru 2 minn xogħolna ta' kujum: (isem mibdul)

Cynthia hija omm zgħażuġha ta' zewġt iftal b'dizabilità. Meta għejt riferu lilna kienet tinsab iż-żon. Il-familjari abbandunawha għax telqet lil zewġha li kien jaħqar lilha u l-lil uliedhom. Familħha ma emmnuhiex għax hu kien jaġib maskla u juri wiċċi b'ieħor.

Bili manteniment l-eks zewġha ma jaġħihi, il-proċessi tal-qratit jtu, u l-benefiċċi soċjali mqabbla ma' l-is-fidi finażjarli li għandha huma sostanzjali, ghenniha b'kull mezz possibbi sakemm tqura fuq saqqajha: depożitu fuq il-kirja u parti mill-kirja sakemm gie approvat is-sussidju fuq il-kerxa, assessmenti psiko-edukattivi taż-zewġ uled, ikel u affarrijiet essenziali tad-dar, hlas ta' kontijiet, u ilbieς. Bidiet tistę́x qarri tħalli fuq saqqajha u daħlet tistħudja – il-holma tagħha.

Minħabba appuntamenti l-isptar għat-tfal u ġiri 'l-hawn u 'l-hem, kellha titlaq mill-kors ta' stuđju. Ingħatat akkomodazzjoni soċjali u sibbiex ħamra u kollu ma htieġ. Laqqajnejha ma' voluntiern mill-parroċċa u ma' Volunteer Mentor. Dan ic-ċirku soċjali qawmilla l-isptiru u sens ta' tama għal gejjieni ahjar. Qed dejjem tipprova tilha



 Fondazzjoni St Jeanne Antide
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JEKK MA TEMMINX LI HAWN IL-FAQAR FOSTNA, ma jfissir li l-faqar ma ježistix.

EŽEMPJU numru 3 minn xogħolna ta' kuljum: (isem mibdul)

Michael m'ilux li skonta sentenza l-habs. Malli sab ruhu lura fis-soċjetà, martu telqet u haliet f'idejh it-trobija ta' uledhom. Sab ruhu f'sitwazjoni li hawidu ghax, barra li kellu jiftimx impieg ta' malajr biex iġħajex lil uledu u jħallas il-kera u kontijiet oħra, kellu jitgħalliem b'rotta mgħaqqa hafna dwar l-iskejju ta' uledu, trobija, xiru u tisjir, tindif, beneficiji soċjalji, registrar għax-xogħol, thejjija personali għall-intervisti, libiee ghall-hu, u bosta afferjiet oħra.

Il-bini ta' relazzjoni ggida ma' ulied sabha diffidi. Hija diffidi għal ulied wkoll. Habet se jaqtar qalbu idža għamel -alムu aktar iċċagħiha kollha li offriew Social Worker. Kiseb coaching dwar kif iqassam id-dħul limitat u bil-mod il-mod accetta wkoll li jmrur ma' ulekk. Ghall-İaqqa tgħidha tħalli kif kien minn-hu. Minkejha t-trikk trakki li tħażżeq l-İaqqa l-hajja kultani. Michael mixieġ i-quddiemm - pass wa-

Billi uliedu ghennihom jidhlu fi klabb 3 – 16, Michael u uliedu bnew rutina. Il-pass li jmiss? Li jipprova jsib hin biex jattendi xi korsijiet li jidulu c-cans ta' mpieg ahjar.

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EŽEMPJU numru 4 minn xogħolna ta' kuljum: (isem mibd

Cynthia għandha 55 sena u ma tixrifx l'barra mid-dar hlief ghall-quddiesha bikra, s'għand lu sal-għixer ta' sal-Berga meta jkun hemm biex u bne thallas il-kontijiet. Li kien għalha ma tixrifx mid-dar. Għal-Sin tħalli warbet abbuż psikologu, emmazzjoni u fin-żanġjar li rendiha persuna mwarrha li ma tħallat ma' hadd għażżeen temmien li hadd mhu se jemminha jekk taqṣam l-inku lu tinsab fih. Tibza' ħafna minn-zewġha u tgħidilha li, għajnej ġewż qasafha u pjanti, m'għandha xejn id-dar id-didlu tista' l-tibbex "dawn ġeċċi".

Ulied Cynthia parpu 'l barra malli setghu u ma jikkuntattjawx lil ommhom ghax iwashlu fiha li baqghet deejem twiebhes rasha biex tibqa' d-dar ma' zewghha kiefer u tibqa' sal-lum tiskuza l-mohqrja tieghu. Ghalkemm midhla al-tahbiarjet u diskussojnijiet dwar il-vjolenja domestika, u ghalkemm tikkommuna mas-Social Worker tagħha ta' sirkwit biex telefon ghax ma titħafx il-bieb jekk tnid trid iżzurha, Cynthia tirraguna li ta' 55 sena imposibbli tmur tgħix fxejt. Tgħidilu: "U fejn se mmur wara? Biċ-ċard fiziku li għandi, kif se noħrog naħdem?" Separazzjoni ma tkkонтemplax tagħmel ghax lanqas tħimma ja li kollha tideskri ruħha "mħux mizżejjha". Ta'



Tahseb li m'hawnx
foqra fostna?

M'għandekx raġun.

izzurha, Cynthia tirraġuna li ta' 55 sena imposibbli tmur tgħix f'xelter. Tgħidha: "U fejn se mmur war? Bal-mard fiziku li għandi, kif se noħroq naħdem?" Separazzjoni ma tikkonttemplax taqgħim tgħelx lanqas tħimma li jkollha tiddeskriv ruħha "mħux mizzewġa". Ta' kujlun tixtri l-afrijaż għal dakinhar mingħand il-grocer. Tqanċac u tillapazzha.

Nibghatulha videos minn fuq il-YouTube bil-WhatsApp dwar it-tkabbir ta' haxix tal-ikel f'pots kbar u dwar tisjir brin b'dak li għandha. Meta ngedid lu li nixieqt nibghatulha vouchers tal-ikel minn Supermarket kbir tgħidjalha "le" kemm ghax qatt ma marret supermarket, kif ukoll minnhabba l-ugħiġi f'għisim. Għaliha nnifisha ma tixtri xejn. Jekk nohdlu hwejjeg tażbi s-size tagħha, zewġha jizbel ġħażu se caccetta karitā.

Mill-fit flus li zewgha jaqithha, tfaddal ticka ticka halli thallas il-kirja fil-hin kull 3 xur. Imwerla li jitkeccew jekk ma thallaxx fil-hin. Gieli hallasnielha kont tat-telefon 'I hawn u 'I hemm gxas nibzgħu li, jekk jiskonnetjawhom, ma nkunx istiġħu nikkomunikaw magħha. Zewgha wkoll qed jidram u kellu jitlaq mil-impieg tajeb jaħalli għaliex iehor b'paga ħafna anqas. Cynthia ma tkikwikk qabel lu benniċċi soċċiali

(Xerrdu dawn l-ezempji veri fost min hu xettiku u għinuna nsostnu l-impatt soċċijal ta' hidmieta Grazzi)

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EŽEMPJU numru 5 minn xogħolna ta' kuljum: (isem mibdul)

Peter ghadu kif għalaq 50 sena. Isofri minn kumplikazzjoni ta' mard – dibajjet Tip 2 mhux ikkontproblem, problemi tal-qalb u arritte li qed tiggrava. Minħabba dal-mard, biza' li mhumiex qed il-ħażu ma' l-gholi tal-hajja, u ansjett, zbruffat lu dipressjoni. Billi bhalisa jinsab bla xogħol, qasol ja li jħallha l-bank għas-fen -id dur u kontijiet ohra. U flus imġengħiha fil-bank m'għandu fuq xiex idur. Famili issa sabet ruħha fil-kategorija ta' dawk li qed jikbrulhom id-djun ġħax id-dhul tagħrifhom muhix bizejjed bekk īncopri n-nafqa tal-haqiqi. L-id-kunku ba' kontijiet muhx imħallsa dallam lu mohħu.

Flimkien ma' organizzazzjonijiet oħra, qed naħdmu biex nghanu lil Peter u l-familja tiegħu. Peter jghidilna li, i kieku ma konnix hemm għalihom, ma jafx fejn kien jispicċa. Il-pjan li qed inhejju ma' Peter iinkludi dawn l-elementi:

- Ghajnejha professjoniell regolari biex jitgħalleml jipprova l-kroniku m'mod effettiv. - Is-Social Worker qed taħdem mal-familja biex jaġħmlu użu minn servizzij li ma kienux jafu bihom qabel.
- Il-Mental Health Nurse tal-Fondazzjoni qed taħdem ma' mart u ilied Peter biex iż-ħfumu abjar dwar id-dpresejji u l-medikazzjoni preskritta

lilu, u dwar kif għandhom igħibu ruħhom miegħu ħalli jibqa' sejjjer 'I quddiem u ma' iwaqqafx il-medikazzjoni.

- Thabrikna biex Peter jibda jmur Day Centre fil-qasam tas-saħħha mentali. Sejjier tajjeb.

- Inkoraggajnih izur Nutritionist u biex jibda programmi fizici. Apparti minn hekk, Peter qed jiimxi mixja kuljum.

- Ghinna lil mart Peter tergħi ssib impieg warha hafna snin nieqsa minhabba t-trobbija tat-tfal. U wkoll qed inhabirku biex Peter jergħa jidba jaħdem. Sadanittar, tkellimma ma' qrabha halli jgħinu lil Peter u martu finanzjarjament bil-pagamenti tal-Home Loan b'patt li jitħalls lura bil-mod il-mod - halli l-familja mit-kirkoll.

(Xerrdu dawn l-ezempji veri fost min hu xettiku u għinuna nsostnu l-impatt soċċiali ta' b'diġietnejha. Grazzi)





JEKK MA TEMMINX LI HAWN IL-FAQAR FOSTNA, ma jfissir li l-faqar ma jezistix.

EZEMPIJU numru 6 minn xogħolna ta' kuljum: (isem mibdul)

Il-ġenituri ta' tfal b'dizabilità isoħru minn ansjetà kbira. Hafna mill-ansjetà marbuta mal-fatt li s-sistemi ta' setturi differenti mhumiex flessibbli, għandhom kriterji li ma jiffittawx lill kuz, u hemm dewmien.

Permezz ta' ħidma fil-komunità, sira nafu lill Luana, omm ta' tifel b'dizabilità ta' sitt snin. Billi qed trabbi weħedha u m'għandhiex qraha li jaġiha daqqa t'id, l-omm qed tikkolla fizikament, emmożżalment u psikologikament. Bżajna li se taqa' f'dipressjoni. Allura, b'hafna rapportu diskusjoni, ghennha ssir memberu ta' support group li qed iserviha ta' cirku ta' hbieb li jifhmu u jgħiha. Qed titgħallek hafna mill-grupp.

Permezz ta' sponsor, stajna ngleħi lu lill Luana tixtri apparat addattar ghall-ħtieġijet partikolari ta' b'linha. Sibniela Volontiera li ilha sentejn toffri lit-tifel ta' Luana appoġġ fit-tagħlim darba fil-għimha. Heggiġna lil Luana ssegu kors online immirat ghall-ġenituri ta' tfal bid-dizabilità li bina jgħix biha. U, biex tħażżeq mal-hajja u tkun biex thallas il-kontijiet kollha, ta' sirkwit nghaddulha pakkett bi proddi tal-ikel u detersenti. Minn mindu Luana bdet taħdem part-time, tħidilna li

detergents. Minn mindu Luana bdet taħdem part-time, tħidilna li qed thossha ħarġet minn fazi f'hajjitha mimlija qtugħi tħalli. Hija grata hafna tal-ħajnejha li tweżinha.

(Kerrdu dawn l-eżempji veri fost minn hu xettiku u għinuna nsostnu l-impatt socjal li ta' hidmetna. Grazzi)

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PROCESS.....



Illum hu l-Jum Internazzjonali ghall-Elminazzjoni tal-Faqar. Hija l-ġħażla tal-Fondazzjoni St Jeanne Antide li tkompli tikku b'kull mod possibbli tant persuni u famili li qed isoħru l-effetti ta' qism il-qalb li jiġi mieghu l-faqar. Il-kaguni huma hafna, huma kumplikati, u jeħtieġu unita' b'sahħiħha bejn ikoll, ahna minn ħamra, biex naraw li jittebju s-sistemi, jikber l-ħarfien, titkattar il-kompassjoni. Jinqasam il-gid b'mod ekwu u etiku.



ANZJANI VULNERABLU jinsabu konfusi sew u qed jaqtgħu qalhom li jinqdew mill-banek. Ghaldaqstant, ma nistgħux ma nsemmux uħud mid-diffrumenti li qed jifaccjaw TANT U TANT ANZJANI VULNERABLU meta jiġu biex jinqdew mill-branch tal-bank tagħhom. Dawn li gejjin huma whud mill-oxtak li ma jistgħux isbu tarbi tagħhom.

1) MA JAFUX JUZAW IT-TEKNOLOGIJI li invadew lill hajjithom. Ma jafux juzaw kompjuter. Ma tagħiġi kompjuter. See more



STATISTICAL OVERVIEW OF FAMILY CASES ACROSS SERVICES

During the 15-year time-span since SJAF was set up – 2007 to 2022 - SJAF has provided support to 9,133 individuals from 4,979 vulnerable families through its range of support services. In 2022 alone, SJAF provided a range of support services to 1,411 individuals from 635 families:

- 186 new family cases
- 55 re-opened family cases
- 394 family cases from previous years that continued to receive support in 2022.

The following charts summarise the main type of difficulty for which 186 new families turned to SJAF for support, the localities where families reside and the referral source.

Main presenting problem of new referred families in 2022	Number of families
Overwhelmed and anxious family caregivers of severely mentally ill persons/ mental illness	76
Financial difficulties and slide into poverty	47
Abuse in intimate relationships	29
Emotional distress	15
Homelessness & substandard housing	6
Conflictual family relations and inability to manage family affairs	6
Ill health and frailty	4
Other	3
TOTAL	186

Locality of residence of 186 newly referred families in 2022

Locality of residence	Number of families
Fgura	11
Paola	6
Hal Tarxien	10
Birżebbuġa	11
Marsaskala	6
Santa Lucia	2
Other localities	140
TOTAL	186

Source of 186 new family cases

Referral source	Number	Referral source	Number
Self-referrals	81	Relatives	23
State-agencies	10	Friends	25
Other service users & volunteers	15	Private practitioners	4
Church-based organisations	23	Others	5

New cases of vulnerable families supported between 2007 and 2022

Year	Individuals	Families
2022	1,411	632
2021	1,103	215
2020	684	367
2019	533	313
2018	664	381
2017	706	375
2016	622	397
2015	543	373
2014	424	288
2013	481	320
2012	473	298
2011	540	324
2010	412	284
2009	185	150
2008	231	169
2007	121	93
TOTAL for 2007-2022	9,133	4,979



MIRIAM GRECH

Family Support Worker, Centru Antida Family Services Centre and Carmen Grixti, her Volunteer Admin Assistant

“ Miriam Grech: “I started working part-time with SJAF way back in February 2008. What a journey it has been! At the time, as a mother of 3 children, going back to work after 10 years was not an easy thing to do. I had to learn to juggle all aspects of my life. But the Foundation management supported me on so many levels. I can truly say that when policy makers speak about flexible work, the Foundation was incredibly flexible itself. Otherwise, I would not have managed to meet all my children’s needs as they grew up. Now that they are not ‘little’ anymore, I can safely say I am an expert juggler of a mother’s/ woman’s/ wife’s/ employee’s daily routine!

My journey at SJAF has taught me so much! I have learned about compassionate understanding of the suffering of so many people the Foundation supports. All our service users have their own stories - from having nowhere to live, being subjected to abusive intimate relationships, not having enough money to pay rent, utility bills, telephony, school lunches to mental health problems and loneliness. But, thanks to the Foundation and my incredible colleagues and volunteers - along these past 15 years – we have tried our utmost to make the lives of those in distress who come to us much better. We make them feel welcomed, listened to, loved and cared for.

As regards to Volunteers - oh WOW! How many people have offered their time, energy and skills here? I cherish each and every one of them. I have to mention Jessie Spiteri – our one and only Jessie... For many years, she was practically a live-in super Volunteer. I miss her presence at Centru Antida. I’d like to thank all the Volunteers who, in one way or another, served at Centru Antida or directly provided fellowship and professional support to vulnerable individuals and families. Without Volunteers, we would not have made it this far. We would have been poorer.

My job at the St Jeanne Antide Foundation made me also realise how generous and supportive the public is. Anything our NGO appealed for along the years – be it by telephone, email or facebook - was swiftly provided by generous hearts who responded. It often feels like magic or, more likely, like a providential miracle. From a packet of nappies to food items, toiletries, detergents and personal hygiene products, baby milk, pushchairs, baby beds, furniture, clothes, toys, books to donations of money to cover a particular emergency expense like a pair of reading glasses, gas heaters, fans and stationery. During the Christmas period, in response to our annual Reverse Advent Calendar initiative, Centru Antida is transformed into one large store with all the donations that keep coming in till January. A mere ‘thank you’, is not enough to express our heartfelt gratitude to all those who, without any hesitation, respond to our on-going appeals for in-kind supports.”

Carmen Grixti, Volunteer Assistant to Family Support Worker in charge of in-kind supports to service users: “This was my first experience as a volunteer as I became a pensioner.

First of all volunteering has to be from the heart. I can assure you that you gain more than you give. At this Foundation we work as a team. All of us have special roles, but when something out of the blues arises, we cooperate as one big family, which leaves us with great satisfaction. And all this has been a commitment for the last six years. I thank God for this journey and I will keep on until my health permits.”



VOLUNTEERING

Volunteers are invaluable service providers whose service is much valued. They are considered as partner colleagues of the SJAF professionals.

In 2022, SJAF had a total of 58 active volunteers who provided a range of services which included, among others: Reception work (5), Handicrafts making (13), Mentoring (7), SOAR Volunteers (10), Learning Support (5), Handymen (2), Food Aid and Hygiene Bank coordination (1), IVY Youth Group (7), Emotional Freedom Service (1), Admin Support (3), Charity Shop (2), Befriending, (1), Book Club (1).

Volunteering hours in 2022 totalled 6,963 hours – equivalent to 3.3 full-time workers. Were the hours of service of volunteers to be remunerated, their service would have cost the Foundation a minimum of €49,892.50. Their service contribution is invaluable and valued. Volunteers are considered as partner colleagues of the SJAF professionals.

VOLUNTEERING HOURS BY SERVICE

and hourly equivalence rate for estimating and recording unpaid voluntary work – 2022

	No. Of Persons	No of Hours Weekly	Weeks	Total hours	Hourly equivalence rate @€6.50
Handymen	2	5	45	450	€2,925.00
Emotional Freedom Service (EFS) @ Euro 15	1			48	€720.00
Charity Shop	2	12	48	1152	€7,488.00
Reception work	5	45	50	1378	€8,957.00
Food aid and hygiene bank stores coordination	1			72	€468.00
SOAR Volunteers	10	6	52	266	€1,729.00
IVY Group (interrupting violence toward youth)	7			27	€175.50
Admin Support	3	3	20	160	€1,040.00
Handicrafts production group	13	65	52	3380	€21,970.00
Book Club coordination	1			30	€195.00
Befriending	1	2	52	104	€676.00
Learning Support	5	7.5	52	390	€2,535.00
Mentoring	7	3	52	156	€1,014.00
	58			6963	€49,892.50

Handicrafts Products – fundraising contribution of the SJAF Handicrafts volunteer team



VOLUNTEER TESTIMONIES

Guža Ghio, Volunteer Learning Support Tutor: “Meta dħalt bħala voluntiera ma’ grupp ta’ nies oħra sena u nofs ilu, qatt ma bsart kif wieħed jista jgħin lil ħaddieħor anke b’affarrijiet semplicej. Thossok tgħiñ meta tirrispondi xi telefonata minn xi persuna li għaddejja minn ħafna tbatija. Kelma ta’ kuragġi tista’ ittaffi xi ffit minn dik it-tbatija. Tiftaħ il-bieb lil xi ħadd li għie jitlob l-ghajjnuna tara t-tama u l-perseveranza ta’ ħafna nies fil-bzonn. Meta tmur lura d-dar, thoss sodisfazzjon kbir li stajt kont ta’ għajjnuna u kuragġi lil dawn il-persuni b’ħafna diffikultajiet li jridu jiffaccċċaw kuljum fil-ħajja tagħhom.”

CS: Volunteer Learning Support Tutor: “It has now been 7 months since I started giving my voluntary service in the Foundation. I am helping a young service user with his mathematics so that he does well in his Sec exam. I admit that, at first, I was a bit wary of beginning something new – totally different from my medical profession. The first questions that came to my mind were “Will I manage timewise?”; “Am I up to the task I was to undertake?”; “Will I be able to connect with the staff and those I would be helping?”

But the answers came quickly as first of all I was determined to make it happen and, when there is determination, you manage to create the time. Secondly, the staff were very welcoming, supportive and helpful.

I am happy to say that my experience is positive as, besides helping the young man, I managed to build a good working relationship with him and, now that he will soon not require my assistance, I will be looking forward for a new challenge with the Foundation as the need arises.”

COMMUNITY SOCIAL WORK SERVICE AT CENTRU ANTIDA FAMILY SERVICES HUB

1,070 family members from 318 vulnerable families in distress were supported in 2022

AIMS of the service

- To identify and support hard-to-reach socially excluded families and those at risk of poverty;
- To dialogue with and build a genuine, supportive and loving-kind rapport with identified vulnerable, socially excluded and poor families;
- To engage such families in a relationship that enables them to explore different solutions to their pressing problems and life challenges;
- To carry out holistic family-support interventions through access to a range of supports available in-house as well as those provided by other organisations;
 - To develop a trans-disciplinary, community-based practice involving practitioners from diverse fields of practice – social work, counselling, mental health, non-formal education, youth work, training and employment, complimentary therapies, entrepreneurship and the expressive arts;
- To enable vulnerable families to build bridges with enabling parish structures and support organisations across sectors: social welfare, education, health, mental health, employment, entrepreneurship;
- To advocate on their behalf when the situation so requires and to submit policy recommendations to policy makers;
- To learn from community social work practice so as to share insights about what works with other practitioners from state and non-state organisations;
- To refer individuals and families to other service providers as and when required to maximise well-being outcomes and to minimise duplication;
- To always ensure the safety and protection of children and adults deemed vulnerable and to always act in their best interests.

During 2022, SJAF worked continuously on multiple levels to support families in distress due to a number of factors. The support offered by the Community Social Work team focused on channelling the energy taken up by anxiety and distress and a sense of hopelessness and inability to cope with difficult circumstances into cultivating a sense of hope and readiness to become more self-determined and self-reliant.

WHO WE ARE

We are a team of community social workers who run one of the Foundation's core family services.

We are at the service of communities neighbouring Tarxien and support the vulnerable families.

We identify and support hard-to-reach socially excluded and poor families at risk of poverty.

We dialogue with and build a genuine, supportive and loving-kind rapport with identified vulnerable families.

We strive to enable families to explore different solutions to their pressing problems and life challenges.

Values: loving-kind, compassionate professional approach; enabling families to grow, self-determination, self-reliance and resilience.

Office: Centru Antida Family Services hub

St. Tarx Road, Tarxien, D11 1000

Phones: 21809201 / 218271367 / 21808881

Emails: socialwork@antidamalta.org

Website: www.antidamalta.org/community-social-work.html



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<https://www.antidamalta.org/how-you-can-help.html>



COMMUNITY
SOCIAL
WORK
SERVICE



St. Jeanne Antide Foundation

The SJAF Community Social Work Service team continued to operate through the SJAF Centru Antida Family Services Hub. Apart from welcoming and supporting persons and families in difficulty from the localities of Hal Tarxien, Paola, Fgura, Birzebbuġa and Santa Lucija, the team continued to work closely with other SJAF practitioners running the SOAR and LWIEN Services. The team additionally responded to calls for help from families from other localities and worked closely with other agencies to enable such families to access services closer to their community of residence.



revisit policies, procedures and practices, access team building and mentoring support, share developments, dialogue with invited guests, discuss outcomes of representation in different national fora and networks and plan collaborative work initiatives. Practitioners identified areas for continuing personal and professional development on the basis of which CPD opportunities were accessed with input from both external resource persons and Foundation staff.

In terms of the generic social work practice, the team offered a range of supports to families from the localities of Hal Tarxien, Paola, Fgura, Birzebbuġa and Santa Lucija. Referred and self-referred families could access a range of supports depending on identified needs during the care planning stage. In doing so, the team worked closely with practitioners and officials from other agencies across sectors – education, health, mental health, housing, banks, and other national service providers such as the Water and Energy Agency. Some of the key supports extended to vulnerable families included the following:

- advocacy and mediation;
- access to learning support opportunities through SJAF's own Volunteer Learning Support Tutors or through referral to other external support systems;
- close liaison with mainstream formal and non-formal educational institutions;
- access to in-kind support such as food aid and hygiene bank packages, clothing, school uniforms and educational resources, baby items, household goods, furnishings, second-hand laptops;
- access to a supportive Volunteer Befriender or a Volunteer Mentor;
- help with finding a job and assistance to access services offered by other agencies at local, regional and national levels.

In certain cases of over-indebtedness, the team was able to offer a measure of debt relief to alleviate anxiety, distress and inability to meet the family's basic needs due to limited income. This was done because the community social work team saw an increase in over-indebted families whose income was lower than the amount needed for them to meet basic needs.

The SJAF Community Social Work team predominantly runs a generic service while dedicating time to serve families being supported by the specialised in-house services such as LWIEN (mental health caregiver support) and SOAR (female survivors of domestic violence). The team of social work practitioners met every week to discuss casework,

A DIFFERENT KIND OF CSR: WE SOCIAL WORKERS who daily strive to provide high standards of support to individuals and families in distress love to dream about better support systems for those we serve. During the past two years, we have been quietly highlighting the urgent need for a MONEY ADVICE AND BUDGETING SUPPORT SERVICE for very vulnerable persons whose income is insufficient to cover basic needs cost. This phenomenon is called OVER-INDEBTEDNESS. Its cause is not a gamble... See more



#djakonijamalta #jumilkarita #socialwork #communitywork #support
You may place your donation by clicking the link below
<https://donorbox.org/donate-sjaf>

We need you.....

In 2021 alone, our Community Social Work team has provided a range of support services to 884 families. Of these, 215 were new referrals involving interventions with 1103 family members; 454 were ones that continued to be supported from previous years. Financial difficulties and mental ill health continued to be the major stressors.

Donate

Please make a donation to help us continue supporting children & their families in 2022.
<https://donorbox.org/donate-sjaf>

During 2022, at any particular time, the Community Social Work team consisted of four Social Workers who, between them, worked with a total of 318 families.

New cases in 2022	91
Cases still open at the end of December 2021 who continued to access support in 2022	227
Total families supported in 2022	318
Total individuals supported from 318 families	1070
Closed cases (of 315)	138
Cases still open in December 2022	180
Of the 318 families supported in 2022, those facing financial difficulties	220

1070 individual service users by gender and age category – 2022

Adults = 618

Children and young persons = 451

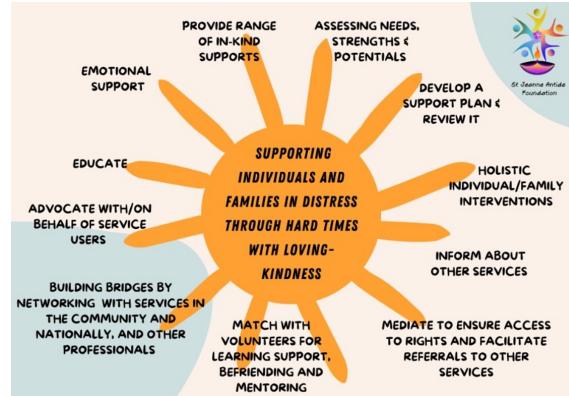
ADULTS (618)	MALES			FEMALES		
Age category	18-40	41-59	60+	18-40	41-59	60+
Total	165	42	41	204	95	71

CHILDREN & YOUNG PERSONS (451)	MALES			FEMALES		
Age category	0 to 3	4 to 12	13 to 17	0 to 3	4 to 12	13 to 17
Total	65	129	50	59	108	40

Team members benefited from regular professional supervision. Weekly team meetings were held, sometimes with input of an external Mentor. The team ably reviewed existing standard operating procedures and created needed ones. The team continued strengthening their familiarity with, and use of, the Case-Management Software which had been introduced the previous year.

Range of supports accessed by families

Nadine Gatt, Community Social Worker: “Working in the context of a community-based social work service gives me exposure to multiple lenses of how crucial it is to have strong community networks in Malta. Despite us being made up of small localities, each community has its own character with its own needs and concerns. As a community social worker our ‘tool kit’ needs to be efficiently and effectively equipped, to build the building blocks towards social change.



Working with volunteers, community members, community-based and national agencies, donors, parishes, practitioners, and professionals from different sectors and all treasured resource persons in the community, has shed light on how crucial it is to work together in partnership in the community. Without unity between us, we fail to be agents of change. Without unity, the needs and concerns of the complex dynamic entities within the community would not be able to function effectively.

This was more so highlighted after experiencing forced social isolation of the pandemic. The sense and strength of togetherness is more so of value and importance if communities in the Maltese society wish to work towards a common goal.”

Marthese Schiavone, Community Social Worker: “My work as a community social worker is very varied and a daily challenge. We work with all types of individuals of all ages, and with families needing various types of support. We help with guiding service users to access services provided that best meet their particular needs. Our aim is to work towards a more equitable and just society where everyone is respected and protected.

As social workers we come across many difficult situations that get worse due to financial problems, mental health issues, problematic relationships, discriminatory practices, lack of education, and the impact of traumatic experiences. We do our utmost to rise to the challenge of looping in many other professionals involved in family support services and offer our support to the rest of the family members of individuals that come to us for help.

The best thing about social work is that every day is different. It can be very rewarding because it gives us a breath of understanding of the social realities we live in the midst of and a sense of accomplishment. From experience we know that no social worker can work on their own and supervision and support from colleagues and management is paramount.”

SOAR SERVICE

peer mentoring and support by survivors of domestic violence

“Since early 2012, working very closely with survivors of domestic violence and their children, the silent shattering of their collective hopes keeps rumbling and impacting our daily lives. We suffer endlessly with them. Sleepless nights, fear and anxiety, mental ill health, ill health, poverty, homelessness, over-indebtedness, hopelessness and helplessness blacken the rich splashes of colours that should gladden their and their children’s hearts, minds and souls.

There are many of us practitioners that do our utmost to support victims and survivors of domestic violence and intimate partner violence. However, in our experience at SJAF, the healing and transforming power of SOAR’s Peer Mentoring is undoubtedly a key trigger of mental wellbeing in survivors’ lives. Our SOAR Service is run by supported, trained and mentored survivors of domestic violence who commit themselves to nurturing and supporting the forward journey of so many women still bearing the weight of abuse by someone they loved. SOAR Peer Mentors are the ones who continue supporting women’s recovery from the trauma of an abusive relationship – assisting them to pick up the pieces, summon the energy needed to commit to moving forward – despite the suffering, loss and continued vexatious tactics, stalking and threats.

This commemorative book is testimony to the unlocked potential of many women who boldly embarked on a journey of rebuilding their lives and helping others. Each chapter unfolds more layers of their collective journey towards recovery, healing, forgiveness and service to the community. We are often humbled by SOAR women’s faith in God and in the possibility of a better future for themselves, for their children and for so many other beautiful souls.

I will forever treasure this 10-year SOAR journey.”
Nora Macelli, SJAF CEO

SOAR offers support to help survivors maintain their sanity and peace of mind with constant coaching, understanding, nurturing and guidance.

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF SOAR

On the 23rd November, SJAF celebrated 10 years of the SOAR service and its range of supports. Survivors, SJAF Staff, SOAR volunteers, partner donors got together for an evening programme full of testimonies, an overview of achievements, social activities for SOAR members’ children and a get together. It was a memorable event which included the dissemination of a book chronicling the 10 year history of SOAR titles: SOAR – unlocking human potential. The publication was funded by the RAISE Foundation.



ISBN NUMBER:
978-9918-0-0375-4

2022 – range of services offered by SOAR

- One-to-one Peer Mentoring sessions for women.
- Matching vulnerable survivors with a Volunteer Mentor.
- Running of a survivors' online group (by screening and invitation).
- On-going Support Groups and Workshops.
- An online support group.
- A Saturday Social Club.
- Range of fun and therapeutic self-expressive arts and crafts initiatives, groups, courses.
- Outreach work.
- Advocacy work at national policy levels.
- Liaison with other key national service providing agencies active in the field of DV: Po-lice, VSA, FSWS, Schools, other NGOs.
- Depending on availability, training workshops to other organisations.
- Triple R – Trauma-informed Domestic Abuse Programme – training to survivors enabling them to become engaged in supporting other survivors.
- MERAKI start-up social enterprise.
- Provision of a wide range of in-kind supports to enable survivors to grapple with difficult situations without falling further in over-indebtedness, ill-health, anxiety and mental ill health, and abandonment of life-goals.

INTRODUCTION

During 2022 SOAR offered a range of supports to 139 women who experienced domestic violence. Those women who contacted SOAR who were still at risk of harm, were guided until they made the difficult decision to file a report with the GBDV Hub at Police Headquarters, approach the Victim Support Agency for other supports and start accessing social work support from the Domestic Violence Unit of Agenzija Appoġġ for themselves and their children. For survivors who were still attempting to rebuild their lives, SOAR continued to offer Peer Mentoring, other individual and group-based supports, advocacy, non-formal education and in-kind supports to tide them over the crisis.

SOAR Peer Mentors continued to regularly meet women for one-to-one sessions at the St Jeanne Antide Foundation's family services hub in Tarxien or at a safe space (such as a tea shop), in service users' own home, or online. Peer Mentoring is proving its effectiveness as SOAR is today receiving requests by its members to become volunteers or mentors themselves. For these SOAR members, training is being provided before, and subsequent to, matching with a Mentee.

MORE SURVIVORS BEING TRAINED FOR A PEER MENTORING ROLE

In 2022, 33 women completed a course titled Triple-R or trauma-informed domestic abuse programme. This was possible following a Train-the-Trainer course titled Safer Spaces organised by the NGO Victim Support Malta (VSM). VSM trained 6 survivors, 4 of whom were from SOAR. In turn, on completion of the train-the-trainer course, the group split up into teams of 2 each with each duo conducting a Triple R course for survivors. Triple R is the first psycho-social-educational course of its kind being offered to survivors of domestic violence. Triple R consists of 12 sessions of 90 minutes each. At present, SOAR is planning to hold another Triple R course for 12 interested members.

When it comes to working with survivors of domestic abuse, one size does not fit all as each woman and her children has a different pathway to follow. It takes much longer to build a trusting relationship with a woman facing multiple disadvantages. Past traumas will dictate where to go for support and who she feels safe with to explore her onward journey. SOAR therefore continued to invest in group-based planning activities to prepare SOAR Peer Mentors (staff) and SOAR Volunteers for their sensitive role of supporting women lacking a support system. SOAR Peer Mentors, especially the new ones under training, will be followed-up on regular basis. Coaching in peer mentoring is being provided by experienced Peer Mentors.

Most of the potential peer mentors have been receiving one-to-one personal self-development sessions. SOAR requires all of them to have allowed at least 5 years to have gone by since they were in an abusive relationship. Of the existing 11 Trainee Peer Mentors, 4 have divorced their perpetrator; 4 are back in education; 3 are raising young children by themselves and hence are not able to find a job yet.

"I know what it feels like when I had no one to turn to after I got out from an abusive relationship. It was so difficult for me not to return to what I used to call 'home', despite the abuse that went on there. SOAR helped me to re-find myself, re-build myself. The support I am receiving helped me stay away from the abusive relationship I had. So, If I could be of any kind of support to a woman who is willing to build a healthy support network, I am here, happy to support her - with the continuous support of SOAR" – SOAR Trainee Peer Mentor.

The involvement of survivors in the delivery of domestic abuse support services is invaluable as it provides positive and inspiring role models for women embarking on their journey towards recovery.

NON-SURVIVOR VOLUNTEER MENTORS

We meet persons who wish to become Volunteer Mentors who have NOT experienced abuse in an intimate relationship. The CEO and SOAR Coordinator interview such persons to assess their aptitude for such a sensitive role - in line with the organisation's policy and procedures on the screening of volunteers. Once accepted, training and matching is provided. Volunteer Mentors are followed up regularly to safeguard all parties concerned.

MATCHING SURVIVORS WITH COMPLEX NEEDS WITH A VOLUNTEER MENTOR

Case 1: The most recently engaged Volunteer Mentor is a Nurse who is ably supporting a survivor suffering from cancer while raising a young child by herself. During the month of December, we introduced the matched Volunteer Mentor to the survivor by undertaking a long home visit. We learnt how much the survivor was struggling as she had no one to talk to, no one to meet, no one to support her. Apart from needing emotional support, the mother had stopped working because of her cancer and needed basic food supplies; a new uniform for her son who had a uniform too tight to wear; money to cover unpaid bills. The Volunteer Mentor immediately linked the woman to cancer-support services. We have helped her build a support network of new friends by creating a team of 3 Volunteers to meet up with her regularly and assist in any way possible, including by accompanying her to appointments. She does no longer feel isolated and lonely.

The Volunteer Mentor wrote us, saying: "By giving a couple of hours a week of my time I am helping another person meet her needs and being closer to reach her goals. From this volunteering experience I am learning that charity is not about giving money but about giving time and sharing. Some people need simple support – company, listening, guidance. These make a huge difference in their lives. The amount of appreciation that I get gives me so much satisfaction."

Case 2: Another Volunteer Mentor is a teacher by profession. We have matched her with a single mother of four children. The mother is a potential peer mentor. Being a muslim migrant, we plan to train her to support Arabic speaking female survivors of domestic abuse. We have matched her with a Volunteer Mentor with much teaching experience so that her 4 children stand a better chance of making it through school as the mother lacks the ability to assist them with their learning. She speaks no English herself and we are encouraging her to learn it herself. After a couple of office-based meetings, the Volounteer Mentor felt comfortable enough to start home-based learning support with the children. The children got used to her quickly and are always eagerly waiting for her tuition. Having no support network, the children see the Volunteer Mentor as a positive role model in their life. Her impact on the children and their mother's lives is tremendous. Recently, the Volunteer Mentor informed SOAR that the mother is sitting with her children to learn English as well.

The Volunteer Mentor wrote us, saying: "Fil-ħajja mgħaggla tal-lum jista' jkun diffiċli ssib ġin għall-volontarjat. Imma jien xorta īassejt ix-xewqa li nipprova nsib dan il-ħin. Qed nagħmel volontarjat ma' famila mill-isbah u nhoss li mhux biss qed nagħti imma qed nircievi ħafna. Il-ferħ u s-sodisfazzjon li nhoss huma kbar u bizzejjed biex inkompli għaddejja b'aktar enerġija. Il-fatt li ltqajt ma' din il-familja u qed nghaddi l-ħin magħhom nara li hawn nies li jridu jegħlbu d-diffikultajiet u juruk minn qalħhom li jipprezzaw dak li tkun qed tagħmel magħhom għax huma jridu xi ħaga aħjar mill-ħajja."

MOTIVATING SURVIVOURS TO KEEP TO THE PLAN SO AS TO MOVE FORWARD IN LIFE WITH RENEWED HOPE AND DETERMINATION

There can be a significant issue about the readiness, or recovery of the survivor of domestic abuse in terms of how healed or ready that individual is when agreeing to support another vulnerable person traumatized by their own experiences. An understanding of risks to self and period of recovery is essential to sufficiently prevent them from impairing the efficacy of the support offered. Time, Dedication, Resilience, Non-judgmental approach, and Empathy are the main key to support women and children through such a difficult time. Resilience can be learned so it can be passed from one successful survivor to another. The approaches involve a development of thoughts, behaviours and actions that allow the survivors to recover from a traumatic or stressful domestic violence events in one's life.

SOAR sessions support survivors to grow on a number of levels to develop resilience and preserve it in the long healing journey for themselves and their children. For survivors, resiliency involves these elements and mindset:

1. Viewing change as both a challenge and an opportunity, despite the fact that the out-comes may not be the ones hoped for.
2. A commitment to forge ahead with dignity and hope.
3. Recognition of the limitations that need to be overcome.
4. Readiness to tap into the support of others.
5. A closeness with, and safe attachment to, others while shaping new healthy relationships.
6. Having personal goals.
7. Self-efficacy.
8. Learning to manage stress.
9. Acknowledging things that went well in the past and being grateful for them.
10. Having a realistic sense of control and assessing choices before decision-taking.
11. Cultivating a sense of humour.
12. Not being passive but mapping actions to be taken.
13. Being patient.
14. Being tolerant and making a difference between a person and their unacceptable behaviours.
15. Adapting to change.
16. Optimism.
17. Having faith.

These aptitudes are discussed during one-to-one or group-based support sessions through the long-term support plan that SOAR is able to provide for its members. There are times when members stop attending and regress to the cyclical process of self-sabotage. This phase is quite common. In such cases, space is provided for a period. Subsequently, SOAR reconnects with these members. History has shown SOAR that members get back in contact with SOAR after they realize that they still needed support. SOAR then helps them to re-connect with their support system while helping them understand why they needed to go back.

BEING AWARE WHEN THE ABUSER IS NOT MAKING ANY EFFORT TO CHANGE

Research has shown that one of the most common reasons for a victim to decide to go back is because they lack financial and other resources. Drastic changes following a separation are traumatic and overwhelming. Change of school, change of locality of residence. Leaving one's belongings behind. Judgmentalism of relatives, friends, colleagues. Having suffered years of abuse and psychological violence, it is common for victims to fall into a depression and become physically sick. The majority of new cases of women referred to SOAR have mental ill health conditions, physical exhaustion and illnesses ranging from cancer to fibromyalgia.

Typical examples of referred women in 2022 include the following:

- Survivors who have managed to get out from the abusive relationship.
- Perpetrators who still remain in the house, even though the woman owns 50% of the property and has custody of the children.
- Survivors constrained to seek alternative accommodation (often going into a private rental) as the perpetrator refuses to agree to the sale of the commonly owned house, notwithstanding a court decree.

- Survivors who are single-handedly raising children who refuse to spend time with their father because of his abusive behaviour. Although the court refused child access to the abusive father, the court process took years to reach a conclusion. The resulting anxiety was tortuous to the children.
- Survivors who have to take days off from work in order to deal with false reports made by the abusers to state and other agencies. These vexatious reports often allege that the mother is neglecting or maltreating the children.
- Survivors must constantly prove themselves during countless meetings, home-visit inspections, and follow ups from state agencies.

The most painful part of a Peer Mentors' work is the fact that practically all SOAR members disclose that court hearing delays, and a 'one size fits all' protection procedures, demotivate survivors from reporting domestic violence and taking the abuser to court. An example:

"What is the use of reporting the abusive father of my child for harassment, when I know that the Police will be calling him a month after the Incident? A month after the incident I would have managed to suppress the abuse into my nervous system, and it would add to my anxiety and sickness. When called, he would be calm. After each court session, he becomes so riled that he escalates the harassment and intimidation. Am I believed? Nooo! Why? Because he very well knows that psychological intimidation is hard to prove. He fails to pick up our children from school on purpose so that I am constrained to ask my employer to leave work suddenly. He fails to pay child support in time so I call him to beg him to do so. Then he takes the opportunity to shout at me. I can go on and on! He wears me down. I become depressed, disheartened, demotivated, anxious, insecure. How can I provide security and safety for my children. How can I prove these subtle tactics he uses to the court. Apart from all this, court decisions are mostly a mere slap on his hand! All this indignity when my life would be falling to pieces, my heart full of splinters, eyes wanting to shut tight. The system is failing to protect women in our position, mothers in our position, children in this situation."

SOAR Survivor - having a career but very tired.

FROM COLLECTIVE DISCLOSURES OF SURVIVORS

What do perpetrators have in common?

- They minimise the abuse or deny how serious it really is.
- They continue to blame others for their behaviour.
- They claim that the survivors are the ones who are abusive.
- They put pressure on the survivors to attend counselling as a couple.
- They repeatedly tell survivors that they owe them another chance.
- They claim that the survivors are forcing them to stay in therapy / counselling / treatment.
- They insist they cannot change unless the survivors stay with them and support them.
- They seek sympathy from the survivors, their children, family, and friends.
- They expect something back from the survivors in exchange for seeking help.
- They put pressure on the survivors to make decisions about the relationship and then blame them.

STRENGTHEN SURVIVORS' DETERMINATION TO STAY AWAY FROM ABUSIVE RELASHIONSHIP DESPITE THE TEMPTATION TO GO BACK

SOAR Peer Mentors have been through it all. They know, first hand, how difficult it is to stay out of the abusive relashionship, put an end to it and navigate around it safely as most of the times abuse does not stop but it changes, especially in those cases where the couple have children, when the abuse will become invisible but malicious on many levels. SOAR has been supporting a number of survivors to leave the abusive relashionship. It is very important that survivors are taught how to protect themselves and their children after leaving the perpetrator. Such protection is particulary needed when survivors are still living in shelters or have become homeless.

SOAR has been supporting survivors by giving them the following advice:

Keeping one's new location a secret:

1. Get a prepaid mobile ("burner") phone or an unlisted landline.
2. Use a post-office box rather than their home address. (Survivors have reported that their post has gone missing from their letter box many times).
3. Cancel their old bank accounts and credit cards, especially if they shared them with their perpetrator. When they open new accounts, it was suggested to use a different bank. Nowadays, this is becoming more difficult to do as the process of starting a new bank account is difficult.

The most common advice given to survivors who remain living in the same area is to change their routine in order to minimise stalking and harassment. Follow a different route to work, avoid places where their perpetrator might think to locate them, change any appointments the perpetrator knows about, and find new places to shop and run errands. Another advice to survivors is to keep a cell phone handy at all times and be ready to call the emergency services number when they spot their former abuser and they feel that they are at risk. Between January and March, SOAR were approached by five survivors that are still at risk. Even though we do not cater for women who are still at risk, SOAR follows a safe procedure how to listen, motivate and refer.

The scars of domestic violence and abuse run deep. The trauma of what survivors have been through stays with them long after they have escaped the abusive situation. They may struggle with upsetting emotions, frightful memories, or having a sense of impending danger that they just can't let go of. Or they may feel numb, disconnected, and unable to trust other people.

Through the past months, SOAR has referred and paid for survivors' private therapy, and kept support groups for survivors of domestic abuse by helping them to process what they have been through and learn how to build new and healthy relationships.

SOAR encourages its members to remember that:

1. They are not to blame for the battering and maltreatment they endured.
2. They are not the cause of their partner's abusive behaviour.
3. They deserve to be treated with respect.
4. They deserve to live a safe and happy life.
5. Their children deserve a safe and happy life.
6. They are not alone and there are people always ready and waiting to help them.

TRAINING FOR PEER MENTORS

Effective peer mentor training is a key dimension of SOAR. Training gives guidance and maps out the path to a successful relationship. An induction 3-hour individualised or group-based training is provided covering:

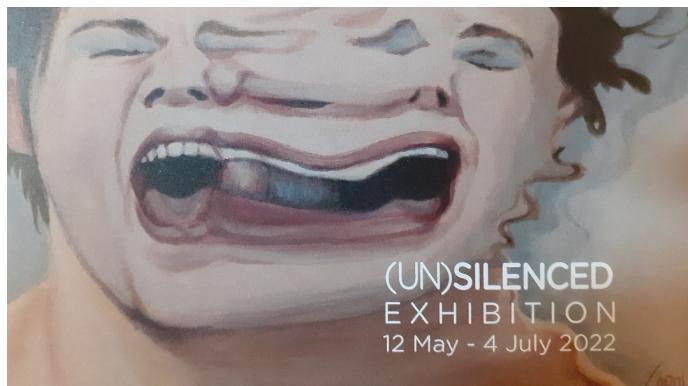
1. What is Mentoring?
2. Personal aptitudes and boundaries to keep.
3. Impact of Mentoring on the lives of Mentees.

Many real-life examples of successful peer mentoring relationships are used.

(UN)SILENCED – an art exhibition highlighting the link between mental ill health and domestic violence - a joint initiative of APS Bank plc and SJAF

Through a partnership agreement with APS Bank plc, an important exhibition was organised and launched on the 12th of May. Artworks by two women supported by the St Jeanne Antide Foundation exhibited their life experience of living with a narcissist through their artworks and poems. A video was also produced featuring a team of female actresses who brought to life extracts from the poems appearing in the exhibition catalogue. The exhibition at the APS Bank's head office in Swatar was open from the 12th of May until the 4th of July 2022.

The exhibition, video and artworks plunged the viewer into the unjust and devastating reality faced by so many women supported by SOAR and the Foundation in general. Foundation supports. (un)SILENCED coincided with the European Mental Health Week and its theme of: SPEAK UP FOR MENTAL HEALTH. Through this exhibition, APS Bank and the St Jeanne Antide Foundation jointly spoke up for mental health by sharing survivors' journey towards resilience and faith. Nora Macelli, CEO of the St Jeanne Antide Foundation said of the exhibition: *"Art and writing are truly powerful tools. For us family support workers, our work becomes truly meaningful when the people we support find their 'voice' and express it courageously – like today. Thank you, APS Bank, for being there for us since 2018. Your support gives us the energy to forge ahead. Partners like you sustain us and energise us to further highlight contemporary social issues through art and writing."*



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(UN)SILENCED
EXHIBITION
12 May - 4 July 2022

Link to (UN)SILENCED exhibition video and catalogue: apsbank.com.mt/unsilenced

SOAR ACTIVITIES IN 2022



CONCLUSION

Shakira Fenech, SOAR Service Coordinator, writes:

“I believe that entering the family services centre of the St Jeanne Antide Foundation was meant to be. The decision to commit myself to invest in my education and to eventually start full-time work with the Foundation was a direct result of the loving-kind and empowering approach of the Foundation and how it reaches out and serves humankind.

Before setting foot in the Foundation, I had never experienced a place like it in my life.

SJAF management, especially the transformative leadership of its CEO Nora Macelli, is the heart of the foundation. Her loving and nurturing approach shows us all how we should relate and support people who have multiple and complex needs, people who would need a holistic approach full of creativity and patience to untangle the tight knots around their undignified circumstances. The approach speaks volumes. The approach is passed down to each one who works closely with the St Jeanne Antide Foundation.

Looking back to the past five years, I have seen many people regaining their dignity. I have seen children turning into young adults who have learnt how to support others. All this comes from the ingrained holistic approach leaving a myriad ripple effects to the coming generation.

SOAR helps families experience a safe place, where healthy relationships are modelled for self-empowerment. SJAF is an instrumental organization led by people who are not afraid to invest in anyone who is willing to improve their situation and become frontliners themselves. Moreover, the people at the heart of SJAF are people rich with values of serving others in distress – they do good for the sake of doing good rather than to show the world their act of goodness. Such people restore our belief in humanity and give us the strength and inner resources to forge ahead together.

The SJAF legacy speaks for itself – witnessing service users becoming volunteers and donors joining in as volunteers and supports with one common aim.”

The future looks bright for SOAR. It has grown and thrives because the women that started it and worked to make it grow found the right system through which to make things happen. SOAR is now taking things to the next level – of having its own space to reach many others. The SOAR Hub constitutes this next level of growth. SOAR is working on the refurbishment of an old town house which, once completed, will have all the different SOAR services and initiatives under one roof.

SOAR is also working hard to influence and empower the younger generation to understand and prevent Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and other forms of abuse. Education is the key to prevention. We are not what happened to us. We are whom we choose to become.

THANK YOU to all those who invested and will continue to invest in SOAR.”



LWIEN SERVICE

guiding and supporting family caregivers of mentally ill persons

Broad aims:

- To fill a gap in community mental health care in Malta.
- To acknowledge, affirm, guide and support family caregivers of mentally ill persons as key providers of community mental health care.
- To combat stigma and reduce self-stigma.
- More specifically:
 - To prevent caregiver burnout, depression, job loss and family break-up.
 - To bolster caregiver resilience, caregiving stamina and commitment through a range of interventions that include family consultations, emotional freedom therapeutic work, support group and mediation with the wider state mental health care system.
 - To model an interdisciplinary practice at community level in support of caregiving families.

Connie Magro, Senior Mental Health Nurse: “When we set up LWIEN 13 years ago, we wanted to support, educate and encourage relatives of mentally ill persons to take an active role in their loved ones’ care with attention to their own physical and mental care and wellbeing. We had read copious research papers that showed that family involvement can reduce relapse and enhance the quality of life of persons afflicted with mental illness. To do all this, families need to see to there is no deterioration of their own mental health.

The first ten years of support to family caregiver was given from Centru Antida. However, since the Covid-19 pandemic, we have switched to offering our support and education online. This has its pros and cons. A disadvantage is the inability to touch the suffering caregiver. An advantage is the ability to see many more service users each day. Given appointments are almost always kept. When asked, most caregivers state that they really appreciate the ease with which they can access support online rather than navigating traffic and parking.”

Family caregivers of mentally ill persons constitute a category of Maltese citizens who lack support in fulfilling their challenging and overwhelming caregiving responsibility.

As is evidenced by SJAF practice and research carried out by the European Union Federation of Associations of Families of the Mentally Ill (EUFAMI), family caregivers of mentally ill persons are prone to become highly anxious and depressed. Constant caregiving becomes a major family stressor. Through the LWIEN service, the Foundation comes in regular contact with distressed family caregivers whose financial means are diminished, constraining the family to sell assets, abandon their job or switching to a less demanding one, close a business and doing whatever it takes to pay professionals privately so as to cope with the constant strain of caring for the mentally ill family member. It is the experience of the Foundation that primary family caregivers rarely seek help for themselves, limiting their access to state and private mental health services for their ill family member.

The Service

The LWIEN Service is run by a Senior Psychiatric Nurse who provides family consultations via the IT-mediated tools such as facebook messenger, WhatsApp facetime and skype. The focus of the service is the relative who has assumed primary caregiving responsibility of a loved one needing guidance, advice and support. In 2022, the Psychiatric Nurse held 1,383 sessions with family caregivers during weekdays including during 368 weekend days.

Caregivers supported came from all over Malta. In those cases where sufferers themselves try to access the service, the Psychiatric Health Nurse meets up with them to determine whether they are already linked to mainstream state mental health services. If it is determined that they are not, efforts are made to help the sufferer access support as quickly as possible. In cases where the sufferer insists on accessing private mental health services and has no other community-based support, the Mental Health Nurse monitors the sufferer from the point at which they visit a psychiatrist until a period of six months to ensure that the person is doing well. At that stage, the case is closed unless, during that period, and with the sufferer's consent, the service succeeds in reaching out to the sufferer's family to offer guidance and support.

The Emotional Freedom Service, linked to the Lwien Service, was partly suspended in 2022 for reasons beyond pur control, serving 15 persons who wished to release their emotional distress.

Caregiving families supported in 2022

During 2022, the Lwien Service provided intense support to a total of 193 individuals from 166 families. Of the 193 individuals supported, 130 were females and 63 males: 127 shouldered primary caregiving responsibilities.

	Total Families
New families referred in 2022	67
Families who continued to be supported from previous years	76
Re-opened cases	23
TOTAL	166

Types of mental illnesses suffered by family members cared for by the 84 families* referred in 2022

Depression	49
Schizophrenia	31
Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) (21) + Paranoia (6)	27
Severe Anxiety	26
Bi-polar disorder	11
Severe ADHD	13
Autism	11
Borderline personality disorder	10
Addictions	6
Dementia	4
Narcissim	4
Oppositional behaviour	3
Schizo-affective disorder	2
Mood disorder	2
Other	15

* families having more than one member suffering from a mental illness

Effective liaison with the mental health system

Maintaining effective links with existing community mental health services is crucial to the wellbeing of family caregivers. Hence, the service liaised closely with state and NGO service providers in this key sector. Referrals both ways continued to take place throughout 2022. Liaison with mental health services for sufferers was maintained to maximise positive outcomes for the families involved.

Some messages sent to us by family caregivers:

“I was at a loss how to take care of my son but, through the Foundation, I found much needed support, care and the knowledge I needed.”

“I found a mother that understood my pain...”

“Because of the help I received, I managed to keep my job and did not quit.”

“After coming for help, we managed to convince our daughter to seek the specialist help she so badly needed.”

“You did not only help us but showed us the way to make use of other services.”

“All my friends and family left us alone. But the Foundation is always there for us, even during a crisis on Christmas day.”

INTERRUPTING VIOLENCE TOWARD YOUTH (IVY) GROUP

Interrupting Violence towards Youth (IVY) stepped up its online presence, organising events and taking part in fairs. IVY obtained first position in its funding applications for the BE ACTIVE and A4U schemes of Agenzija Zgħażaq.

IVY GROWTH, SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM PRESENCE & CONTENT



104 Posts 379 Followers 978 Following

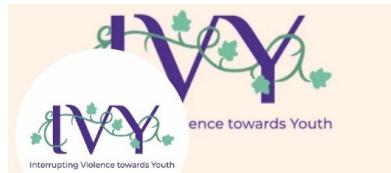
IVY

Community organisation

● **Interrupting Violence towards Youth** ●

Non-violent futures for our youth & young adults 🧑‍🤝‍🧑

🔗 www.facebook.com/mlt.ivy/



Interrupting Violence towards Youth

Introducing IVY

IVY - Interrupting Violence towards Youth

241 likes · 270 followers



GROWTH ON SOCIAL MEDIA

IVY mainly operated via two social media platforms - Facebook and Instagram. Weekly posts are created and uploaded by the IVY Leader.

IVY CONTENT

Through various educational and awareness raising posts, IVY highlighted the reality of interpersonal violence and domestic violence. Posts included definitions of both terms; the different types of abuse; and statistics.



RED FLAGS CAMPAIGN!

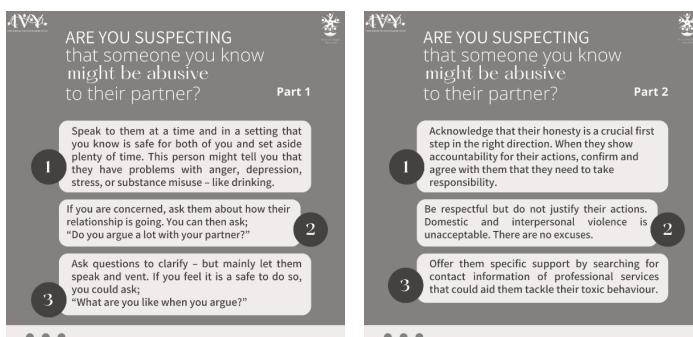
IVY mascots were created for IVY by well-known artist and book illustrator Marisa Attard. These were used in many educational posters to highlight the 'red flags' one ought to be warned against. A red flag is a symbol of a threat. It is meant to enable a person to stop, become cautious, and reflect about particular behaviours that are a sign of abuse.



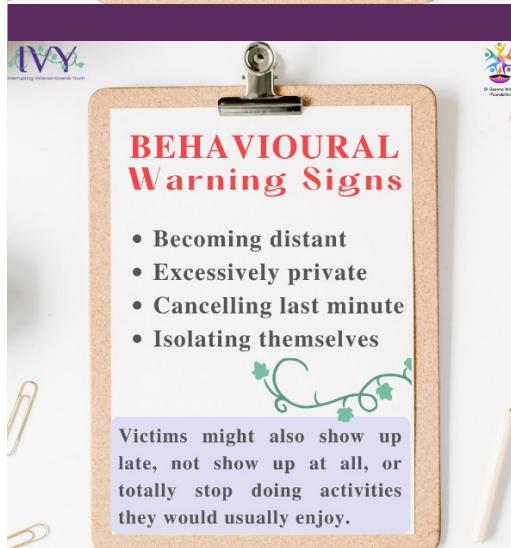
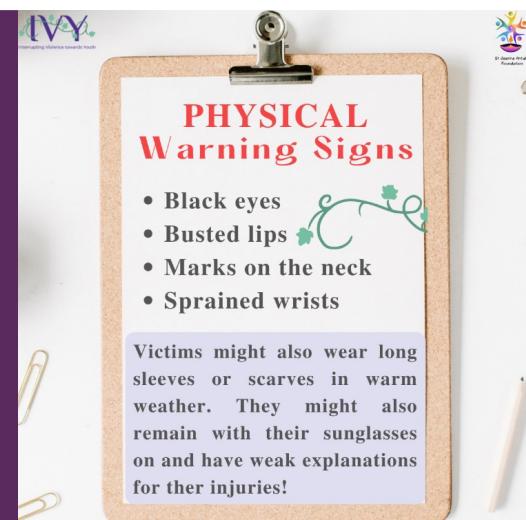
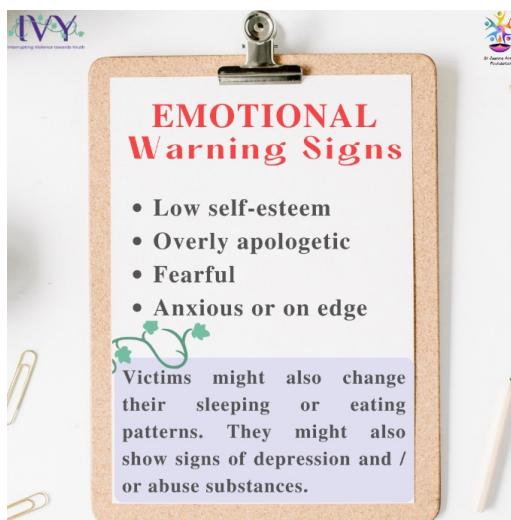
IVY also worked with artist Marisa Attard to emphasise the mascots' facial expressions so that followers and viewers further perceive and absorb that what they are reading is not something positive or acceptable. All IVY posts emphasised the importance of stopping to reflect on one's relationships with others and how others relate and behave towards oneself.

HOW TO POSTS!

The aim of these posts were to serve as guidelines and/or look out for signs where someone they know might be undergoing interpersonal or domestic violence and/or might be the one carrying out the act themselves.



WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR AND WARNING SIGNS THAT SOMEONE MAYBE UNDERGOING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OR INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE



Sinjali ta' imġiba abbusiva

- Ikunu distanti
- Ma jagħtu ebda dettal dwar hajjithom
- Jikkancellaw fl-aħħar minuta
- Jiżolaw lilihom infushom

Vittmi jafu wkoll jaslu tard jew ma jaslu qatt, jew jieqfu totalment jattendu attivitatiet li qabel kienu jieħdu gost jagħmlu.

INFORMATION ON SERVICES AND HELPLINES!

Understandably so, IVY is conscious that these online tips should not be the only means of information IVY followers and the Maltese community ought to be aware of. Hence, a post indicating key helplines and services available regarding domestic violence, inter-personal violence and mental health.

**There are people who care
It's Okay to Ask for Help**

POLICE EMERGENCY 112	KELLIMINI UNIVERSITY MENTAL HEALTH 3240-2226
POLICE GENDER-BASED & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE UNIT 2294 2717/77	MCAST OUTREACH & STUDENT AFFAIRS 2398 7188
24/7 MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES MALTA 2141 5183	VICTIM SUPPORT MALTA NGO 2122 8333
FREE LEGAL AID 2567 4330	ST JEANNE ANTIDE FOUNDATION 2320 8916
SOCIAL WORK UNIT GOZO 2155 6630	VICTIM SUPPORT AGENCY (VSA) 2568 9700
	SUPPORT LINE 179
	MENTAL HEALTH HELPLINE RICHMOND FOUNDATION 1770
	SEDOA ADDICTIONS SERVICES 2388 5110
	OASI ADDICTIONS SERVICES GOZO 2156 3333
	RESPONSIBLE GAMING FOUNDATION 1777
	UZURA / USURY CARITAS MALTA 2219 9000

GIVING THANKS TO AĞENZIJA ŻAGħżagħ

Through the 2022 A4U scheme of AĞENZIJA ŻAGħżagħ, IVY had the opportunity to further raise awareness about the reality of coming face to face with domestic violence or intimate partner violence and abuse.

The grant enabled IVY to procure DSLR equipment to record events professionally and to prepare team members for the future recording and uploading of vlogs.

New Equipment!

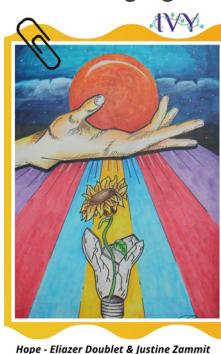
IVY has just purchased new equipment to be able to reach out to youth and young adults even more!

Funded by Aġenzija Żaghżagħ

IVY TEAM BUILDING, ORGANISED EVENTS & OUTREACH

ART COMPETITION

During the month of June, IVY organized an Art Competition at The Meeting Place in Marsa. The artists were asked to create an artwork over the two days that surrounded the theme of ‘Hope’ in the face of domestic violence and/or interpersonal violence. With DV/IPV being topics of a horrific and traumatic nature, IVY committed itself to focus on the hopeful dimension of being able to interrupt violence towards youth in the future and the resiliency that can stem from people who experience DV/IPV successfully seeking support and managing to move forward on the path to healing.

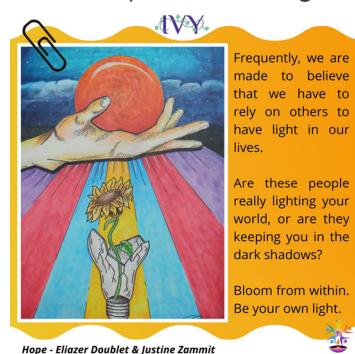


Hope - Eliazer Doublet & Justine Zammit

Frequently, we are made to believe that we have to rely on others to have light in our lives.

Are these people really lighting your world, or are they keeping you in the dark shadows?

Bloom from within. Be your own light.

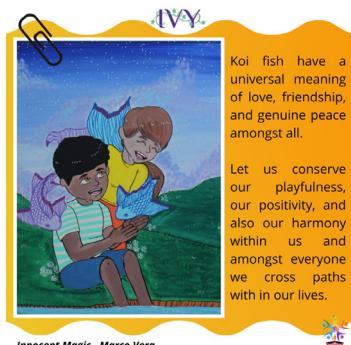


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Innocent Magic - Marco Vera

Applicants did not have to go into the competition blind as IVY coordinated with two SOAR members who are artists to showcase their creative work during the event itself and to be present at the event for guidance or suggestions.

The two SOAR members themselves had participated in an art exhibition of paintings, drawings and poetry related to the realities of Domestic Violence and Interpersonal Violence.



PARTICIPANTS WITH IVY MEMBERS
(starting from the left handside)

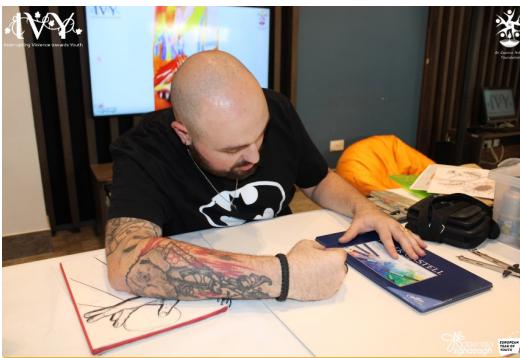
Nicole, Marco,
Erica **IVY LEADER**,
Nadine **IVY COORDINATOR**,
Justine, Eliazer



ARTWORK IN PROGRESS DURING EVENT



PARTICIPANTS RECEIVING
COMPLIMENTARY IVY MERCHANDISE



ARTWORK IN PROGRESS DURING EVENT

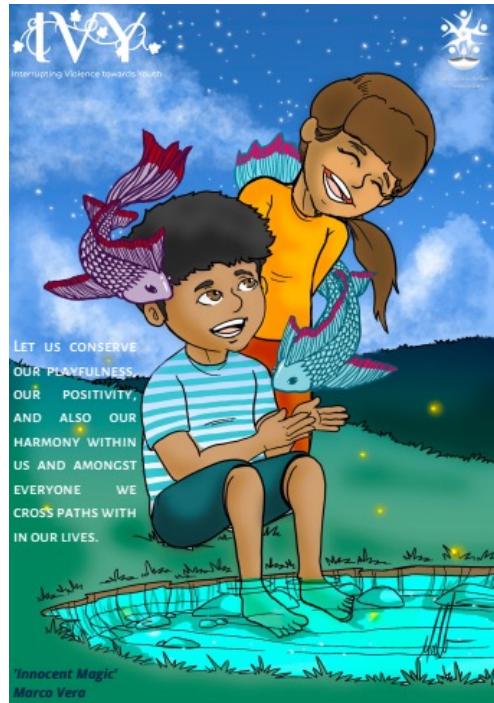
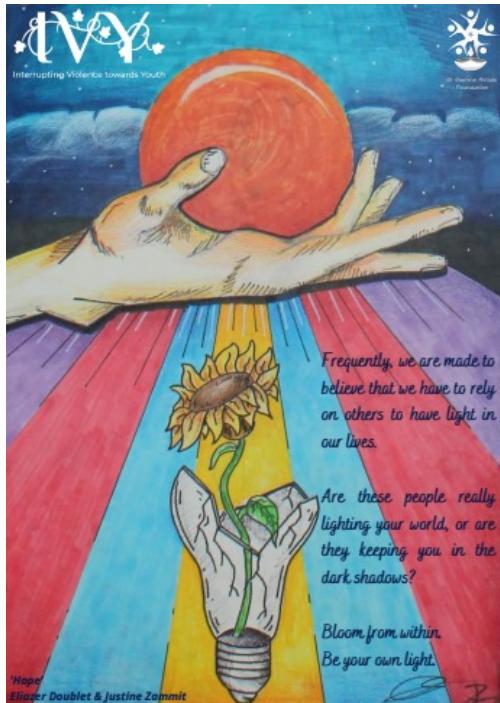


QUOTES OF SURVIVORS FOR INSPIRATION



These two artworks were chosen to be distributed to Primary and Secondary schools and Youth Groups to encourage Youth to discuss relationships and violence in a light of Hope and Action.

The artwork of ‘Homosapiens’ which emphasized the feeling of togetherness, is being used by St Jeanne Antide Foundation for its 2022 annual report.



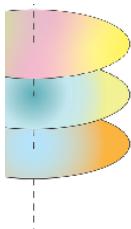
ESCAPE ROOM AND ONLINE PRESENTATION

Besides functioning as a team building activity, ‘The Escape Room’ was also an opportunity for IVY to further place themselves in the shoes of a victim leaving a relationship or household to survive. Where IVY had physical barriers to get a step closer to survival stage and escape. The team reflected on how the person is left feeling after energy is exerted to overcome the multiple barriers faced when trying to leave a perpetrator.



IVY AT ESCAPE ROOM TEAM BUILDING

Additionally, IVY organized a presentation and discussion with for its own members with the participation of SOAR members to delve further into the realities of the barriers faced when trying to escape domestic violence or interpersonal violence.



CONTENT

01

02

03

04

05

WHO IS IVY?

Interrupting Violence towards Youth – a group of young adults taking a stance against any form of domestic violence endured indirectly/directly by young adults.

WHAT IS IVY's AIM?

To interrupt the cycle of abuse and lessen the probability of reoccurrence whilst educating and empowering young adults.

TEAM-BUILDING

Being a newly formed group IVY is organizing activities to further get to know one another. Additionally, we saw an opportunity to further put ourselves in the shoes of a person undergoing DV/IPV.

ESCAPE ROOM

Metaphor for the barriers experienced by victims to get to the 'survival' stage. How does this leave the person after?

REFLECTIONS

Bigger picture is how it may feel for a young victim to undergo DV/IPV, and trust a group of fellow survivors or professionals & to believe in the systems even when presented with visible & invisible barriers.

Moreover, IVY could further understand the realities of survivors who manage to escape, and the hardships and milestones reached as survivors. Hence, as IVY continues to ask itself what more it could do as a Youth Group within SOAR in the future, to minimize the barriers of seeking help. Measures include awareness raising and information provision; tips on the nature of healthy relationships when compared to a non-healthy relationship or, as indicated in the presentation, it could focus more intensely on precautions one should take when dating. Ultimately, the session created a sense of togetherness and commitment - as members of the Maltese society – to combat DV and IPV, especially if everyone concerned, together with governmental and non-governmental organisations across the board work towards minimizing the oppression and barriers faced by victims and survivors.

ACADEMY OF GIVERS BOOTH at THE IMPACT FAIR

St Jeanne Antide Foundation was present at the Impact Fair organised by the Academy of Givers this Summer, 2022. At the Impact Fair the Corporate World and NGOs were brought together and welcomed to form meaningful and social partnerships. IVY took it as an opportunity to advocate and network with other entities about our mission and aims whilst also getting feedback on their views regarding relationships during one's Youth, both domestically and when dating.



IVY AT EUPA SUMMER FAIR IN QAWRA

EUPA and Aġenzija Żgħażagh organised a Summer Fair with multiple stands run by Youth Organisations. This gave IVY an opportunity to network with fellow Youth Groups. IVY was present with its own stand having an IVY giveaway totebag, thermos mug and notebook funded through Aġenzija Żgħażagh Be Active Scheme.



IVY totebag giveaway procedure:

1. Individuals were encouraged to take a photo at the IVY stand with the IVY banner as backdrop.
2. Post the photo on their social media platform - Facebook or Instagram - either through a post or a story.
3. Tag IVY (@ivy.malta) in the photo.
4. Follow IVY on one of our platforms.
5. IVY would announce winner in subsequent days through a random online generator.



This event provided IVY with the opportunity to give back to the community, to engage visitors in an informal chat that generates more interest and to further spread awareness about DV and IPV whilst discussing IVY's aims and objectives. The Giveaway Totebag was also seen as an opportunity for IVY's name to be further prodcasted through tagging on social media platforms on multiple social media accounts.

IVY also prepared some questions that were made to visitors especially young ones. It did this to obtain opinions from the Maltese community regarding Domestic Violence, Interpersonal Violence and what a healthy or non-healthy relationships look like. With the consent of those who agreed to participate in the Vox-Pop, some discussions were recorded. The questions asked during the Vox Pop were:

- a) What would you say are some characteristics of an unhealthy relationship?
- b) Is it just physical violence that constitutes domestic violence and inter-personal violence?
- c) Do you think domestic violence and/or interpersonal violence is a comfrotably discussed topic in Maltese society?
- d) Is there enough education and awareness in the Maltese education system about the dangers of toxic relationships and behaviours?
- e) In your opinion, is the rate of domestic violence and/or interpersonal violence on the higher or the lower end of the scale in Malta?

FEEDBACK FROM THE VOX-POP

Regarding questions (A) and (B) the Youth who are emerging adolescents in their 20s felt like there was and is not enough trained individuals in schools to provide workshops to the students. With the topic being a contraversial topic in itself it is difficult to bring DV/IPV about in schools without individuals being triggered or hurt. Additionally, there was mentioned that in the cirriculum there are not enough focus on the social skills of what a healthy relationships looks like as it is felt that there are.

SHS PROMOTING IVY AT THEIR UNIVERSITY OF MALTA FRESHERS STAND

Although IVY could not be physically present during Freshers' Week to stimulate a conversation regarding DV or IPV, IVY collaborated with SHS (Studenti ta' Harsien Socjali) to have the Youth group promoted on the stand through its brochure and with the participation of IVY members who are also members of SHS. The latter networked and advocated on behalf of the IVY team



UM FM RADIO (Erica and Nadine)

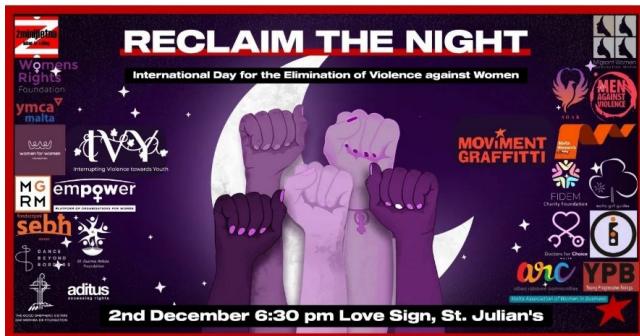


COMPILATION OF EDUCATIONAL ARTICLES FOR YOUTH

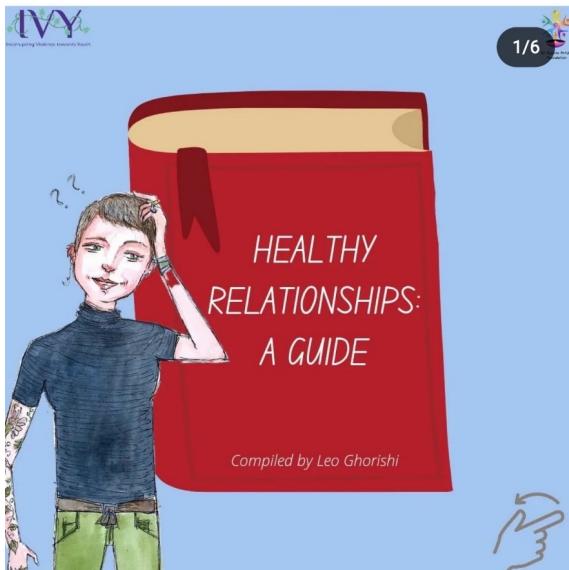


16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

- 1) Posts with information.
- 2) Participation in MOVIMENT GRAFFITI's protest - RECLAIM THE NIGHT.
- 3) Post to commemorate the life and horrifically unjust murder of Bernice.



Erica Micallef Filletti, IVY Leader: "As the leader of IVY – Interrupting Violence towards Youth - I have the privilege to lead a team that prioritizes healthy relationships and self-worth amongst youth and young adults. The St Jeanne Antide Foundation is a true testament to the power of compassion and empathy. Its unwavering support and dedication to all of service users is truly remarkable – and its support is manifestly extended towards every individual who forms part of its committed staff and all of IVY's team. It is extremely fulfilling to work with people that share the same passion and commitment towards such important causes."



Liked by [redacted] and 329 others
ivy.malta 🇲🇹 ! LAST NIGHT @ivy.malta joined
@movementgraffiti to make our voices heard - to reclaim
the night - FOR THE ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN ! 🇲🇹

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