GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

PRESS RELEASE

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Social Development Department Raises Awareness of Cerebral Palsy

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The Social Development Department is joining the global community today, October 6, in observing World Cerebral Palsy Day.

The observance provides an opportunity to increase understanding of cerebral palsy and promote greater inclusion of persons living with the condition.

Cerebral palsy is a physical disability that affects movement and posture. Symptoms vary depending on the type and severity of the condition. These can include delays in reaching developmental milestones, unusual muscle stiffness or floppiness, muscle spasms and difficulties with movement.

As part of the observance, the Social Development Department's Disability Services Division is increasing public education on cerebral palsy throughout October.

The Division hosted an information session in Virgin Gorda on October 5. A second session is being held today from **9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at CIBC Bank on Tortola.**

Residents can visit the information station to learn more about cerebral palsy and the support available through Disability Services. Brochures and awareness pins will also be distributed.

The Ministry is also using the observance to encourage families to pay attention to developmental milestones. Parents and caregivers should seek professional advice if they have concerns about a child's development.

World Cerebral Palsy Day also places focus on inclusion. Persons living with cerebral palsy should have opportunities to participate fully in education, employment and community life.

The Social Development Department can provide support to individuals with cerebral palsy by assisting them with obtaining equipment, providing intervention support for developmental challenges and case management. To access services, individuals should schedule an intake appointment with the Department.

Residents are encouraged to learn more about cerebral palsy and challenge misconceptions surrounding the condition. Families and caregivers are also advised to seek information and support when needed.

The Ministry of Health and Social Development remains committed to promoting the dignity, inclusion and well-being of persons with disabilities throughout the Virgin Islands.

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