GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

PRESS RELEASE

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Social Development Promotes Understanding and Support for Persons with ADHD

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The Social Development Department is joining organisations around the world in observing ADHD Awareness Month throughout October.

This year's theme, **"A Community of Support,"** highlights the importance of understanding, connection and access to appropriately support persons living with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

ADHD is a condition that begins in childhood. It is defined by behaviours related to inattention and or hyperactivity and impulsivity. ADHD continues into adolescence and adulthood, though hyperactive symptoms can lessen with age.

ADHD does not look the same in everyone. Some persons experience greater challenges with attention. Others may experience hyperactivity and impulsivity while some experience a combination of both.

Signs include difficulty staying focused, disorganisation, restlessness and excessive talking. Some persons may also have difficulty waiting their turn or controlling impulsive behaviour.

ADHD may also be overlooked in women and girls. Their symptoms can sometimes present differently and may be less noticeable than commonly recognised behaviours associated with the condition. For example, women and girls more frequently display inattentive symptoms, which are less easy to observe. Their hyperactive symptoms may also look like excessive talking, rather than more commonly recognised behaviours like running and climbing.

The Social Development Department is encouraging parents, caregivers and educators to pay attention to persistent patterns of behaviour that affect every day functioning.

Occasional distraction, restlessness or forgetfulness does not necessarily mean that a person has ADHD. An appropriate assessment should be conducted by a qualified professional when there are concerns.

Throughout October, the Disability Services Division of the Social Development Department will share educational information to increase understanding of ADHD. The campaign will also highlight signs of ADHD and encourage persons to seek

appropriate assessment and support.

The Ministry is also encouraging the community to challenge misconceptions surrounding ADHD. Greater understanding can help reduce stigma and create more supportive environments at home, school, work and within the wider community.

ADHD Awareness Month reminds us that support matters. With greater awareness and appropriate intervention, persons living with ADHD can be better supported to participate and thrive in their everyday lives.

The Ministry of Health and Social Development remains committed to promoting awareness, inclusion and access to support for persons with disabilities and their families.

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