

Help & Shelter starts follow-up to Pickney Project

HELP & Shelter (H&S) has taken another initiative, called the Child Protection Project, which promotes the rights of children through public education and support services.

Coordinator Colin Marks said it was officially started last January 31 in the Conference Room of the National Library, on Church Street, Georgetown. He said it is being undertaken, in collaboration with the European Union (EU) in four communities, Hague, Zeelugt, Good Hope and Sophia, where, in each, stakeholders were given a clear layout and understanding of what is required of the community.

Mr. Marks said they were told the purpose and mandated to receive feedbacks of community desires and expectations.

He said H&S would, usually, report every three months at meetings which would take place community centres or other available venues, such as schools.

Marks said a soft launch of the undertaking is yet to take place at Sophia.

A release said H&S has entered into an agreement with the European Commission (EC) for the implementation, building on the 'Pickney Project' which was executed in partnership with Every Child Guyana, now named 'Every child Link Inc.'

The release said the project complements other work that is being done by H&S that provides counselling for children who are survivors of abuse and co-funding is being provided by donations through support of the Concerned Citizens against Domestic Abuse based in Atlanta, Georgia, in the United States (U.S.).

The statement said the general objective is to develop the human rights agenda in Guyana as it relates to children, by using a rights based approach to strengthen child protection systems, policies and mechanisms which have been established to provide services for children whose rights have been violated.

More specific objectives are to promote children's safety in the four identified communities, Hague and Zeelugt in Region Three (Essequibo Islands/West Demerara); and Sophia and Good Hope in Region Four (Demerara/Mahaica), through community based actions.

Hopefully, the community based actions will improve the lives of children who have experienced abuse and violence through prevention education.

The actions of this proposal will involve parents and service providers from the education, health, judicial and social service sectors and other relevant groups, such as faith based organisations.

The groups will increase awareness, change attitudes and behaviour in child protection and the knowledge gained will be shared, so as to stimulate similar types of community based accomplishments across Guyana, the statement outlined.