



Empowering Communities: SVSG and UNICEF's Collaborative Effort in Preventing Violence Against Children

5th April 2024

Samoa Victim Support Group is continuing its Community Child Protection Program to combat violence against children in Samoa, targeting an additional 5 communities (3 villages and 2 colleges). In partnership with UNICEF Pacific, the program kicked off in Asaga in Savaii. Notably, this is the first time SVSG has conducted a specific workshop in the village of Asaga, responding to a special request from the community.

The request is a recognition by the village leaders of the urgent need for a preventive and early interventions program, and their enthusiasm speaks volume. SVSG President Siliniu Lina Chang aptly mentioned “This request marks the importance of the workshop we do in the community; people are starting to realize how effective these programs are in the villages and especially in their homes.”

The workshop is divided into two parts, catering to the two different groups targeted for the workshop.

The Positive Parenting Program focuses on arranging and delivering effective parenting strategies for parents. While some of the parents were initially taken aback by the information presented, a few of them engaged in dialogue. “For Asaga parents this information was very new, and it goes against everything there were raised and believed

in. However, the parents patiently and eagerly listened in and diligently took notes, absorbing the new information that was presented.” Siliniu Lina Chang commented.

The second part of the program teaches Life Skills Development for Adolescents, focuses on equipping the adolescents with essential life skills that enables them to handle mental and social challenges they may face in life. The adolescents from Asaga who participated in the workshop, benefited for their personal growth and helps them build positive relationship with each other and especially their parents. “Samoan youth often engage in playful banter, even if it hurts them, the program aims to help them distinguish between playful jokes and hurtful ones, preventing the development of low self-esteem.” Chang quotes.

From 2020 - 2022 SVSG and UNICEF Pacific piloted the inaugural community prevention program with 7 communities. The goal is to utilize sustained community dialogue to influence social and behavior change Communications at community level. This is through meaningful engagement of key stakeholders such as parents, matais, women village council members, faith leaders, adolescents, children and youth. SVSG acknowledges the support of UNICEF Pacific through these past years in combating violence against children in Samoa. The program has made a difference in each community and we eagerly anticipate continuing this journey towards positive discipline and empowering our young generation with invaluable life skills.