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**MENTORING | TRAINING | ADVOCACY**

**Mighty Men of Valour**

### **Fathers For Life Campaign**

On Thursday 23rd April 2009 at the House of Parliament Mighty Men of Valour held their annual "Men, Faith and our Community" event. We have held this event over the past two years in succession in Croydon where we have had the Mayors of Croydon preside at our events.

Each year we have looked at various initiatives to develop community cohesion, for example, reducing crime in our communities or by encouraging active engagement by faith groups to be part of the local government initiative such as "Faiths together in Croydon" or "Street Pastors" or even working directly with prisons on their "Through the Gate" and "Community Chaplaincy" projects in Downview Prison and Feltham Prison respectively.

This year we have been working on our "Fathers for Life Campaign", which we launched last year on Thursday 8th May 2008. We wanted to continue the momentum of developing a strategy to engage men in our community to actively support their children, their partners and their community. We asked **Ms Dawn Butler MP** *Member of Parliament for Brent* who supported our launch last year to sponsor and host this event at the House of Parliament, entitled "A celebration of Fathers and Fatherhood" on St George's Day.

The significance of us hosting this event of St George's Day was to highlight the history of our Patron Saint England, and if "we" as a people really love our nation, we need to do so collectively.

At the event we had various contributions from; **Rt. Hon. Malcolm Wicks MP** *Member of Parliament for Croydon North* and **David Lammy MP** *Member of Parliament for Tottenham*, to name a few.

We also had a special guest. Jamal Rhoden Stevens from Croydon Supplementary Education Project spoke about his life a young man growing up with his parents. This young man who spoke exceptionally well about the needs for parents to work together for the benefit of their children and to avoid forcing children to decide which parent to love more than the other.

Jamal received a standing ovation as he spoke from his heart about his father, his family live and about his expectations as a young man and future father. It was great to see this young "Mighty Man of Valour" speak in the House of Parliament. Hopefully, he will be one of our future advocates for the family.

The event was well attended, and the itinerary was well received.

We asked five questions on the day which were:

1. Is there a need for men or fathers in a "family" unit?

2. Is there a correlation between faith, moral values, UK laws and community cohesion?
3. Is there a need to establish moral values in young men (children) before the age of seven years old?
4. Would a Pre-Fathers Day Parade help focus the nation on the need for fathers and moral values in our homes?
5. Can those of us here today make a difference?

The answers to all of these questions were a resounding "YES!"

For the fifth question "Can those of us here today make a difference?" the answer can be as "YES WE CAN" make a difference in our children, to our wives/partners lives and also to our community as a whole.

In addition we also asked "Can the Government help us to make a difference by supporting our initiatives?" and we said that "Our hope is = Yes they Can"

We hope to start this process by conducting our a Pre-Fathers Day Parade Pray walk from Trafalgar Square, then to No. 10 Downing Street and then to the House of Parliament. This was held on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2009. This was a great event where we saw men pray and Praise God for fathers, past, present and future; for our Government and leaders (Central and local) and for our families and our communities. For more information on this event visit OBV website link:

[http://www.obv.org.uk/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=1376&Itemid=152](http://www.obv.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1376&Itemid=152)

Whether you male or female and you would like to be support our "Fathers for Life Campaign" please email Mighty Men of Valour at: [info@mightymenofvalour.com](mailto:info@mightymenofvalour.com).