

## PRESS RELEASE

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### Local Centre of Excellence to Start Learning Revolution

A joint project between Birmingham based company Go-Woman! Ltd and Adderley Children's Centre Birmingham, has been successful in securing funds from the Government's new Transformation Fund. As part of a 'learning for pleasure' innovation spearheaded by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) the joint project "First Steps – New Opportunities" is one of over 213 winning projects and will engage adults, particularly women, in learning, through taster sessions in a variety of subjects, helping to fulfil the recommendations of the Government's Learning Revolution for informal adult learning

The First Steps – New Opportunities project will provide short, fun, interactive taster sessions in subjects such as First Aid, Sewing, Childminding, IT and Running Your Own Business. An Internet Café will also be run where participants can book a computer and explore the internet with guidance available from a member of staff. Held mainly at the Adderley Children's Centre, the sessions are up to 3 hours long and will provide women of all ages and backgrounds an exciting opportunity to find out what is on offer, and encourage engagement with learning establishments. In particular, there will be encouragement to seek out further opportunities in learning via colleges, local centres and support agencies.

Farzana Amin, who attended one of the first sessions said "I really enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere at the session I went to. I have not been to any classes or anything for a long time since giving up work to look after my children. I was a bit worried at first but the tutors were very friendly and helpful. It was good to be able to learn about something without having to go on a long course over many weeks, or to have to face an exam or test at the end!"

Yasmin Akhtar, Director of Go- Woman! Ltd said "We are so pleased to have been awarded this grant to help women in this community. We need to raise their skills and confidence. To entice individuals to engage with learning, we need to breakdown a number of barriers including social and cultural" she added. "These taster sessions are an ideal way of encouraging women to explore the first steps into learning without the pressure of a long term commitment and in a safe environment" said Yasmin

From the Adderley Children's Centre, Rosina McGuigan, project coordinator, commented "We have fantastic resources here at Adderley Children's Centre and this project complements the work of our Family and Learning Support Unit. We are really excited that the wider community will have an opportunity to explore what we offer by attending any of these sessions or coming to use our internet café (which is available for men to use as well!)" she added. "Learning is so important and we recognise the difficulties for our local community in accessing it, this is a great opportunity for people to take the first step to begin to change their lives" she said.

Claire Robinson, Transformation Fund Project Manager on behalf of the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE), said: "NIACE is very happy to be supporting the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills in the management of the Transformation Fund to fulfil the recommendations of the Government's Learning Revolution for informal adult learning."

She continued, "The hundreds of bids we have received have displayed high standards of quality, highlighting the vast breadth of projects that are out there with an adult learning focus. The innovative nature of the winning projects is sure to transform the way adults learn, improving well-being and building confidence along the way. The projects have the potential to not only help individuals, but to benefit communities as well."

Anyone who want to find out what sessions are available or book to use the Internet Café, should contact the Adderley Children's Centre directly on 0121 464 4183

E N D S

**For further information please contact:**

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**Notes to Editors**

1. For more information about the Transformation Fund visit <http://www.dius.gov.uk/transformationfund>

Go-Woman! Ltd is a company that offers information, support and events to assist women thinking of starting up or who are, running their own business. With its extensive knowledge of working with women's enterprise and network of role models it exists to help to inspire women from all backgrounds and ages. It publishes a magazine Go-Woman! giving help and advice on running a business. See [www.go-woman.com](http://www.go-woman.com)

Adderley Children's Centre, based in Saltley, Birmingham is a fully integrated Children's Centre, which provides early education, care, and family support for children aged 0-5 years. In addition it provides adult education and crèche provision and is a training centre for early years practitioners. An appointed Early Excellence Centre in 2002 the centre has a Family and Learning Support Unit which now has its own designated team. See <http://www.addleyn.bham.sch.uk/home.htm>

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