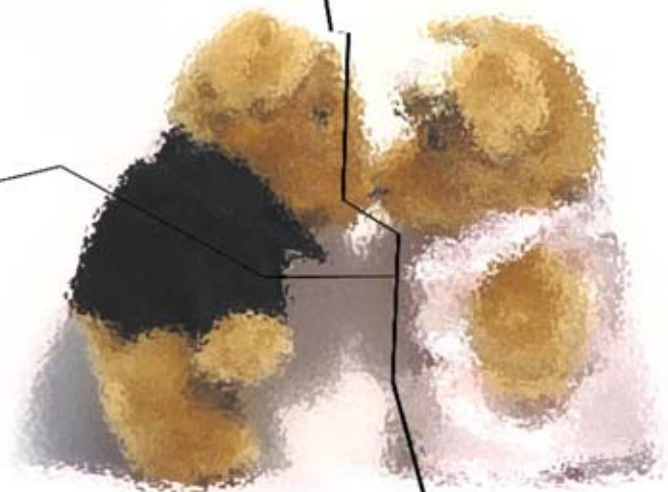




The new life news

MITA (P) No. 210/09/2003



Restoring Hope to the Broken

"Hospitality means primarily the creation of a free space where a stranger can enter and become a friend instead of an enemy. Hospitality is not to change people, but to offer them space where change can take place."

- from the renown author Henry J. M. Nouwen in his book *Reaching Out*

The **Family Life Centre** (FLC) of New Life Community Services Centre aspires to be a place of refuge where people can feel safe. It provides casework-related functions such as **counselling, financial assistance and legal advice**, as well as an information-and-referral service. Counsellor Bin Juat Wah says many come to New Life with a "broken hope" and seek a place of solace in the midst of their confusion. New Life provides the hospitality to make a stranger feel welcome and can become a place where they find comfort and support.

The FLC has seen many breakthroughs in the lives of Bukit Panjang residents. Juat Wah notes that counselling changes, not the problem, but the person's perspective; and oftentimes, helps the affected person to persevere rather than to quit. One female client, for example, finally found the courage to talk to her husband in spite of her earlier plans to leave the family. Another male client learnt to open up to his wife and to sit down and talk with her, finally deciding to abandon his initial plans of divorcing her.



Taking a more preventive approach to enhance well-being of families, the FLC also conducts **family life enrichment** programmes such as parenting talks, pre-marital workshops and courses to enhance spousal relationships.

Programme Co-ordinator Christine Kang says the FLC is embarking on a youth-oriented approach in the coming months, with an upcoming 2-week parent-teen workshop in June entitled "Y U So Like Dat?".

Led by Mrs Valerie Chan, the interactive workshop aims to bridge the communication gap between parents and teens, promote gelling within the family, and impart skills to strengthen bonding within the family. Teens will come to realise that their parents are not so "alien" afterall.

Families then return a month later for a casual, follow-up session in a "coffee-table" atmosphere, to share the fruit of their learning with one another.

For more details on "Y U So Like Dat?", please see upcoming events on back page.



Moving on, New Life will work towards equipping parents and teens to partner as facilitators for future runs of such programmes, so as to better serve the community.

Mark Lim



THE FAMILY MAN

For the first time in Singapore, a **Diploma of Family Life Education** was conferred by Edith Cowan University in Perth, Australia; in collaboration with the Academy of Human Development. The 18-month part-time course, which began in January 2002, consisted of 7 units on human development, interpersonal relationship matters, and people helping skills, and a 150-hour fieldwork practicum. Associate Pastor-Designate of Covenant Evangelical Free Church and New Life's Vice-President, **Rev. Tan Kay Kiong**, was one of two students (from a class of 23) who received a full scholarship by the **Ministry of Community Development and Sports (MCDS)**. On 9 March 2004, Rev. Tan flew to Perth with his family, for the graduation ceremony. Rev. Tan shares his thoughts with New Life.

It was as if I learnt a new "language" – to view family life from an integrated point of view.

Rev. Tan Kay Kiong
Vice-President, New Life Community Services Centre



New Life: What have you learnt from the course?

Rev. Tan: It was very insightful to interact with my lecturers and various classmates, all of whom are in different stages of life. Some are social workers; others from the civil service or involved in church and community work; there were also businessmen in the class. The course was valuable as it taught me how to approach people from a larger framework than what I was previously trained. I am also more able to speak the lingo and better understand the value system of people in society.

New Life: Can you share some insights from the practicum?

Rev. Tan: During my practicum in a primary school, I realised that teachers are very stressed and that it's important to encourage them. In another setting, I also saw how pro-family policies can encourage their workers. Besides that, I deeply appreciate our Government for their proactive support in Family Life Programmes.

New Life: We understand that the course was very demanding – you had to attend night classes twice weekly for 18 months. Was it difficult for your own family?

Rev. Tan: Yes, it was tough having to juggle my study in the midst of my work and family. Thankfully, I have a very supportive family and Church who accommodates to my needs. That is why I brought them to Perth for a time of extended holiday to make up for lost time.



New Life: Now that you're a certified Family Life Educator, how do you think this will help your involvement with New Life?

Rev. Tan: New Life is venturing more into schools and into the community. The new knowledge and skills I've learnt will be helpful as I'll be working with the staff to provide training in this area. Also, companies are warming up to pro-family policies and New Life will be better equipped to provide assistance in this area.

New Life: Thanks for your time Rev. Tan. Congratulations! We wish you all the best as you share your insights with the community.

Mark Lim

Partners in Action

New Life & Fajar Secondary School



In less than 3 months' time, **Fajar Secondary School** will see the launch of a family life centre in the very heart of the school. A critical component of the School Family Education (SFE) programme that New Life is privileged to partner with Fajar Secondary School in, this family life centre will be a resource hub and contact point, bringing family enrichment – through the school – to families in Bukit Panjang. This partnership is a visible demonstration of New Life's continuous effort to partner with community leaders and resource organisations to better serve the Bukit Panjang community, as well as a testimony of Fajar Secondary School's commitment to the welfare of not only its students and staff, but that of their families as well.



The **Fajar Family Life Centre** will be officially opened on **24 July 2004** by Guest-of-Honour Mayor for North West CDC and Member-of-Parliament for Holland-Bukit Panjang GRC (Bukit Panjang), Dr Teo Ho Pin. New Life fondly remembers Dr Teo, who, until the recent General Election in 2001, was the Member-of-Parliament representing New Life, and who had also graced the occasion of New Life's official opening at 10 Jelapang Road, as Guest-of-Honour, in October 2000.

In conjunction with this special occasion as well as with the School's **10th Anniversary** celebrations, Fajar Secondary School will hold a landmark public seminar emphasising the importance of family bonding, and **ALL ARE INVITED!** So mark **24 July 2004** on your calendar and come join the celebration at Fajar Secondary School, not only to witness the milestone opening of the Fajar Family Life Centre, but also to learn how to further enrich your family life!

For enquiries and registration, please contact Christine at 6892-0937 or christinekang@newlife.org.sg.

Be An Influence to Your Teenager

Adolescence may look easy — friends, sports, school, computer/internet games, TV, parties. But the fact is, adolescents are engulfed in an enormous struggle — transiting from childhood to adulthood, and facing enormous pressures. The greatest pressure comes from within: the pressure to fit in with their peers and develop a comfortable social identity. Youths therefore often impose strong internal pressure upon themselves as they try to gain acceptance among friends and peers.

Refusing to fit in carries the risk of being teased, taunted, stigmatised or simply ostracised. And since peers are such vital, significant others in the lives of adolescents, non-conformity is often not an option. Depending on the child's level of self-confidence, such pressure can oftentimes be very hard to resist. Is it really any wonder then that youths watch the appearance and behavior of peers, and do likewise thinking that this will help them to fit in — hair styles, language, clothing, music, drinking or smoking?

Take the quiz — which of the following methods do you think will help you to better influence your teenager positively?

1. Criticise him for being wrong.
2. Address differences and work together toward a solution.
3. Shout at and condemn her.
4. Listen, empathise and continue to be involved in his life.
5. Give her enough space to be independent.
6. Show interest in his interests.
7. Fault her effort for lack of commitment.
8. Stay involved only to the extent he wants you involved.
9. Help her set realistic goals.
10. Show support and, regardless of performance, continue to love and encourage.
11. Belittle his lack of maturity.
12. Communicate with her.
13. Help build her self-confidence.
14. Try to understand the reason for his actions.
15. Throw your arms up in complete surrender.

The quiz was easy, wasn't it? Does it surprise you how much you already know? But how about putting it into practice? For more such articles on helping your teenage kids cope with peer pressure and peer influence, see the website below.

Article adapted from "A Parent's Guide to Helping Young People make the Right Decisions"
www.rightdecisionsrightnow.com

Staff News



She sensed God's calling, so when New Life was recruiting, she applied. That is how **Serena Tan** landed herself as New Life's **Finance and Human Resource Officer**. Joining New Life on 15 March 2004, Serena has considerable HR experience, and has both practised and taught accounting, with a career spanning over 20 years. Giving up freelance practice to serve full-time in New Life, Serena's wealth of knowledge and experience will help poise New Life for significant growth in the next lap. A resident of Bukit Panjang herself, Serena and her daughters, Pei Ting and Pei Shan, worship in Covenant Evangelical Free Church.

Jackii Lau graduated with an Accountancy degree from RMIT in 2003, and, with keen interest in accounting, she sought to find work congruent with her passion. That was when she responded New Life's advertisement, and eventually joined New Life as **Finance and Human Resource Assistant** on 12 April 2004. Working in support of the wide spectrum of New Life's social service programmes, she looks forward to opportunities beyond her regular job to serve, as a volunteer, in some of New Life's direct services. Jackii attends Covenant Evangelical Free Church regularly, and is actively involved in the youth ministry.



Recipe for Better Sex

Seminar (in Mandarin) on Sexual Intimacy and Planning for Babies, jointly organised with Singapore Planned Parenthood Association.

Date: 22 May 2004 (Sat)
Time: 2.00 pm – 6.00 pm
Venue: YMCA Function Room, Level 4
Contact: 6892-0937 or christinekang@newlife.org.sg

Discover Character! Camp - Forgiveness

A 1-day character building camp for kids 7-12 yrs old.

Date: 4 June 2004 (Fri)
Time: 10.00 am – 6.00 pm
Contact: 6892-0979 or joshuacheng@newlife.org.sg

Y U So Like Dat

An interactive Parent-Teen Workshop led by Mrs Valerie Chan and team where parents and their teenage children can come together and learn to get REAL with one another

Date: 19 & 26 June 2004 (Sat)
Time: 2.30 pm – 6.30 pm
Contact: 6892-0937 or christinekang@newlife.org.sg

Creative Learning Programme

A 2-day day camp to unleash the creativity of your kid (7-12 yrs old) thru arts, creative thinking, team building activities, and music.

Date: 24 & 25 June 2004 (Thu & Fri)
Time: 9.00 am – 6.00 pm
Contact: 6892-0979 or joshuacheng@newlife.org.sg

Our Programmes & Services

CHILDCARE CENTRE

Playgroup
Nursery
Kindergarten

YOUTH CENTRE

Kidz Club
School Social Work
(Zhenghua Primary School)
STEP-UP Programme
(Zhenghua Secondary School)

FAMILY LIFE CENTRE

Counselling
Legal Advice
Family Assistance
Family Life Enrichment
School-Family Education Programme
(Fajar Secondary School)

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

Home Care
Health Care

How Can I Give in Support of New Life?

BY CHEQUE: Payable to "NEW LIFE COMMUNITY SERVICES CENTRE". Please furnish your name, FIN/NRIC number, address, and contact number.

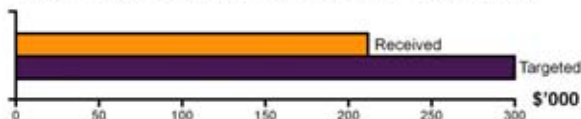
BY CREDIT CARD: Follow on-line instructions at www.donation.org.sg/call_newlife_frame.html (requires credit card number)

DONATE YOUR ERS SHARES: www.ers.org.sg
"Cash Exchange Instruction" and follow on-line instructions. (requires SingPass ID and password)

Donations received in current year are eligible for tax deduction in the following year. Until further notice, tax deduction will be twice the value of donations made. Individual donors need not claim tax deductions if they have furnished their full name and FIN/NRIC number, as New Life will submit details directly to IRAS.

For more help, contact 6892-0849 or ngkimleong@newlife.org.sg.

Funds Targeted and Received (as of 15 April 2004)



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