

Our School-Based Work

School social work To Empower Pupils to Utilise Potential (STEP-UP) is an initiative by MDS to support VWOs in their delivery of school-based social work programmes to students in school at risk of juvenile delinquency, or of dropping out of school.

New Life has partnered with the following schools for STEP-UP:

- Zhenghua Primary School – since January 2007
- Zhenghua Secondary School – since March 2004
- West Spring Secondary School – since January 2007

School Family Education (SFE) aims to enhance the quality of family life of parents, students, teachers and other school staff through specially tailored family life education programmes, and making family life education resources easily available in schools.

New Life has partnered with the following schools for SFE:

- Taze Secondary School –
1 April 2004 to 31 March 2006
- Greenridge Primary School –
1 April 2005 to 31 March 2007

How Can I Give in Support of New Life?

BY CHEQUE Payable to "New Life Community Services Centre". Please furnish your name, PAN/ABC number, address, and contact number.

BY CREDIT CARD Follow us on-line instructions at www.donationsupport.org/newlife_donations. Inquiries: 6892-0849.

Donations received in support year are eligible to be deducted in the following year. Under further notice, tax deduction will be given the value of donations made. Individual donors receiving their tax deduction if they have furnished their full name and PAN/ABC number, as New Life will submit details directly to IRD.

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

Our Programmes & Services

CHILD CARE CENTRE

Playgroup
Nursery
Kindergarten

YOUTH CENTRE

New Life Youth Hub
Youth Drop-In Centre

SUPER Kids Club

STEP-UP Programme
(Zhenghua Primary School)
(Zhenghua Secondary School)
(West Spring Secondary School)

FAMILY LIFE CENTRE

Counselling
Legal Advice
Family Assistance
Family Life Enrichment

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

Home Care
Health Care

New Life Community Services Centre is
affiliated to



Mastering
Life's
Missions

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The new life news

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"A good character..."

the trainer would begin, placing his hands to his ears, prompting the audience to complete the sentence.

"... brings out the best in you!"
the pupils would respond in unison.

"So that we can be ..."

"... the best that we can be!"

This often-heard-till-now familiar refrain was repeated, time and again, by pupils, teachers, parent volunteers, and trainers alike throughout the 4 days of **Character First! Workshops** conducted for **Zhenghua Primary School (ZPS)**. It brilliantly integrated, and drove home, the key takeaway of the Character First! Workshops – that good character brings out the best in people – with ZPS' school motto – that pupils are to be the best that they can be.

While **New Life Community Services Centre** may have been providing school-based counselling to ZPS since 2001, and though New Life has been running countless character-building holiday programmes, this is the first time that New Life has ever mounted a programme for an entire school!

Character First! Workshop
16 - 19 January 2007



New Life Youth Centre Manager, Mr Nelson Ong, recalled with much gratitude to ZPS for granting such an opportunity, this short runway of 2 months they had from initial discussions in early November 2006 to actual implementation in early January 2007.

Incidentally, a monarch butterfly – the object lesson used in this series of workshops to illustrate good character – takes about the same length of time to complete its developmental process from egg to larva to pupa and finally into a radiant adult butterfly! Indeed, something beautiful can emerge from tough times of trial and struggle.

To this end, ZPS pupils not only learnt about the arduous metamorphosis process of the monarch caterpillar and the valuable life lessons one can draw from it, they also learnt the 5 "I Wills" in the Character First Workshops that concretised what it meant to be of good character. Cleverly strung into a rap with cool accompanying actions, pupils surprised themselves by promptly memorising the 5 "I Wills" successfully.

Behind the monumental decision to make this programme available to every pupil in the school was none other than the Principal of ZPS, A visionary educator at heart, Mr Martin Koh believes that the key to education is in character

development. In fact, he believed it so strongly that he set aside one school day per level, dedicating valuable curriculum time – and at the beginning of the year at that – for New Life to lay a virtuous foundation for the school to build upon for the rest of the year.

"If pupils have good character, everything else falls into place, both academically and culturally, because pupils understand why they do what they do," expressed the headmaster

with conviction. "If we can inculcate good values in our next generation, we would have gone a long way in educating our children."

It was with such a fervor that ZPS jumped onto the bandwagon of the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS)-supported STEP-UP Programme. Aimed at helping pupils at risk, this 5-year MCYS-funded programme enables participating schools, such as ZPS to partner with a dedicated community service agency such as New Life to strengthen the resilience of its pupils.

The Character First Workshop is one such platform to impact all pupils and stakeholders in a meaningful and fun way so as to instil and reinforce good character. Parents, teachers, student leaders, New Life staff and volunteers alike failed to impart virtue to the pupils, enabling them to understand how character development and its resulting attitudes, actions and habits impact the people around.

Mr Mars, ZPS' most dedicated parent volunteer – having served alongside New Life at the Character First Workshops for all four days – had this to say, "The Character First Workshop is the first step in the right direction to develop good character in pupils. While pupils tend to forget what they learn in school, involving parents in this process helps to reinforce and instil the same set of values in the homes as well."

To put it in Mr Koh's words, "A well-defined set of values will serve as a lighthouse to guide pupils to lead meaningful lives as caring, respectful and responsible citizens and people."

With the Character First Workshop, New Life aims to instill a sense of responsibility and caring in the pupils. The workshop is designed to help pupils understand the importance of good character and how it can help them to become a better person. The workshop is designed to help pupils understand the importance of good character and how it can help them to become a better person. The workshop is designed to help pupils understand the importance of good character and how it can help them to become a better person.



我会全力以赴， 做到最好！

在4天的“品格优先”学习坊后，正华小学的师生、家长和义工们都深刻的体会到拥有良好品格的重要性：好品格带出人性的善良与美好。这也鼓励同学们全面发挥他们的潜能，而把任何事务都做到最好。

虽然新生民众服务中心已多次举办品格塑造营的假期活动，“品格优先”学习坊却是首次全校性的项目。活动内容轻松有趣：通过蝴蝶的成长过程，同学们学习到美好的成果往往必须经历困境和苦难的。同学们也发挥创意，用有趣的方式背下活动的主题（5个“I Wills”）。

正华小学校长许振通先生认为好品格是学习和处世的基石：“如果能把好的价值观灌输于下一代，那我们对于学生的教育方已迈向一层楼”。“品格优先”学习坊正是跨进界线的一个平台，让同学们体验品格发展的必要和意义。



BE THE BEST THAT I CAN BE!

All 2,170 pupils of Zhenghua Primary School had a blast at the Character First Workshops held from 18 - 19 January 2007. With stories, games, craft and memory work galore, here are some snapshots!

The 5 "I" Wills"

I will use my free time wisely.
I will try till I succeed.
I will never interrupt someone
When they begin to speak.
I will never nag and nag until
I get the things I plan.
I will bear the things I cannot change
And change the things I can.
My character is what will make
A leader out of me!
So next time through, let's say it more
ENTHUSIASTICALLY!

A Good Character Brings Out The Best In You

Doing The Zhenghua Wave



Creative Ideas Drawing

Teaching Time



Blow, Girl, Blow



Hip-To-Hip Like A Computer



I Will Try Till I Succeed



Pupils Say "Today, I Will..."

"I will not interrupt my parents when they speak."

Dania Umairah, 4K

"I learnt to be a person of good character. I want to be a good sister."

Ehsa Ow, 3F

"I have learnt to show respect and care to my friends and family and I learnt to be more responsible through the 5 I Wills."

Iradania, 4L

"I have learnt that if we must work as a team, we must not argue or shout at our members and we must discuss about our work and listen to everyone's idea."

Eng Ti Lin, 4N

"I want to go home and learn my spelling until I succeed!"

Wong Ting, 2K

"I will not shout at my sister or scold my sister when she does something wrong. I should talk nicely to and not argue with her."

Ho Se Wei, 4N

"I learnt more about the life cycle of the caterpillar and butterfly."

Syawaluddin, 4N

"When someone touch my shoulder, that means I'm being too noisy - I need to keep quiet and let the person speak."

Nicholas Lin, 3K

"I will stop complaining, grumbling and nagging when I lose in a game."

Ry Se Wen, 3V

"Can you extend the workshop timing?"

He King Lee, 3F

"I scold my parents before but now I will not do it again."

Victor Ry, 4K

"Today I go home I want to do my homework first as I have learnt to be responsible."

Tip Ma Ting, 6S

"Character always come first. Be it coming in first or last in a competition or you're in the best class whatsoever, the character you display will give people the deepest impression. Good character means showing care, respect and responsibility."

Aminda Yen, 6K

THE STORY-TELLER'S OWN STORY

by Poo Wai Cheng

But I never gave up!" she announced. As with any mother, it was heartening for me to hear these words from my five-year-old daughter, precious validation that the foundation of determination had been laid in her little heart.

And so it was that this and other desirable character qualities were brought alive to more than 2000 pupils of Zhenghua Primary School through an inaugural series of Character First Workshops conducted for each level of students over 16 - 19 January 2007.

Just as my little girl had gasped the character traits of patience and perseverance from the story of the caterpillar's trials and challenges, I sincerely hope that the pupils, too, have understood good character qualities through the story-telling, rap, craft, games and various interactive activities conducted.

Poo Wai Cheng is one of New Life's long-serving volunteers. Having honed her story-telling skills through countless New Life's in-house "Discover Character" Camps, Wai Cheng served as the keynote story-teller in all six of the Character First Workshops at Zhenghua Primary School, bringing life to the butterfly's metamorphic journey. Her story, demonstrated with heart-stopping action when her brave five-year-old daughter (another New Life's youngest volunteer), Michelle, suspended herself upside down to unflinchingly demonstrate how the caterpillar wriggled out of its cocoon.

What makes it an immeasurable joy for me to volunteer with New Life? It is this very opportunity to deposit these priceless virtues into the mouldable hearts of our pupils. Since my first experience in a New Life character workshop in 2002, conducted in-house, all the time taken and stress of preparation I endured have invariably been worthwhile, because of the worthy life principles that have been imparted to the impressionable young.

Indeed, when I spoke with different parent volunteers during this series of workshops, this heartbeat resonated strongly amongst many. A common refrain was that values and character qualities needed to be taught alongside academics, to moderate the generational trend towards meritocratic self-centeredness and even callous pragmatism.

Thus, I was thrilled and encouraged to learn that an overwhelming 92% majority of the pupils rated the programme enjoyable, and more significantly, that 79% had committed to practice the character qualities imparted at the workshop.

Additionally, I marvelled at how enthusiastically the youth volunteers with whom I co-laboured served as facilitators or assistants. In my five years or so volunteering with New Life, this must have been the Character First programme of the largest scale, planned down to the finest detail, in the most limited timeframe. I was privileged for the opportunity to have been a part of this dedicated, competent and united team. And so, in volunteering, I have in turn been blessed, perhaps much more richly than I had initially thought.



After a bustling week of conducting Character First Workshops at Zhenghua Primary School (ZPS), New Life had a quick chat with Mr Faizal Bin Abdul Rahim, the teacher-in-charge of the workshops. Mr Faizal is the form teacher of Primary 5D and he is just passionate about his students!

New Life: What is distinct about the Character First Workshops for ZPS?

Mr Faizal: The Character First Workshops brought about great synergy on various counts for ZPS. Different stakeholders were brought together in partnership, namely, ZPS teachers, parents, New Life and MCYS - all for the great cause of character-moulding in our next generation!

This was also a programme that tied in well with the funding requirements for MCYS' STEP-UP programme. The funding enabled the rolling-out of Character First Workshops to all 2,170 students at ZPS.

New Life: How do you think the children benefited from the workshops?

Mr Faizal: Pupils not only gain knowledge through the programme, but they also gain skills and the necessary motivation to be a pupil of good character.

New Life: How does the objective of Character First Workshops - developing good character - tie-in with ZPS' vision and values?

Mr Faizal: The Character First Workshops have great impact because they further reinforced ZPS' vision and values. The "5-T-WITH" definitely remind pupils how to be caring, respectful and responsible pupils of ZPS.

Through fun and meaningful activities, the children got to internalise the school values of Care, Respect and Responsibility. Besides that, they also gained valuable exposure on what teamwork means.

Teachers also gave positive feedback on the workshops!

New Life: What other plans for 2007 do ZPS have?

Mr Faizal: For 2007, the Character First Workshops are the first in a series of activities lined up where we want to engage pupils to be of good character.

A smashing good start to 2007 for both ZPS and New Life!



Every Stake Placed On Our Next Generation!





"It makes me look forward to more volunteering opportunities to help people around us."

Kim Lin, Volunteer

Builds Patience



"Through this experience, I've worked with different people everyday and that was the greatest challenge for me... An eye-opener as compared to other school programmes I have helped out in."

Erin Ng, Volunteer

FASCINATING



"Character development is definitely important because character determines the habits of a child. Having the Character First! Workshops run in Zhenghua Primary is the first step in the right direction."

Mr Mani, Parent Volunteer

"Both my kid and I were having a very good time and it really benefited us. Look forward to see you guys again at the next workshop."

Noraini Bte Zaini, Parent Volunteer

FUN



"It affirms my belief that moral character training should start from young. I'm grateful for the opportunity to be part of this life-transforming workshop."

Ingrid Lim, Volunteer

Enjoyable

Wonderful

REFLECTIONS... 27 NEW LIFE STAFF & VOLUNTEERS MOBILISED!

"Zhenghua Primary has taught the pupils the school values of 'Care, Respect and Responsibility' well and created an environment where they are free to express themselves within the boundaries of the school's mission and values. Because of this, it was a joy to work with the pupils."

Adeline Ang, Staff

EYE-OPENER

"I am impressed by the teachability of the pupils, their unwavering trust and faith in their teachers and their creativity. How they cheered their peers on and helped one another really made my day."

Isabel Wong, Staff

"Volunteering with New Life at the Character First! Workshop has taught me a lot about the values of life, especially the 9th I Will - I will bear the things I cannot change and change the things I can!"

Devi Ang, Volunteer

Fulfilling

"It was a significant experience for me as it widened my perspective of things, gave me the chance to be in the shoes of a teacher and understand how pupils of different ages behave/think."

Merissa Ang, Volunteer

