



The new life news

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SHARPENING its Saw for the Long Haul

by **Jasmine Koh**

A sanctuary for youths in the community, New Life Youth Hub sees 20 – 30 youths stream through its doors each week day since its opening in 2005.

Youths enjoy 5 free hours of play time at the New Life Youth Hub every month. After which, they can earn bonus points by revising their work in the study room on site. Upon earning sufficient bonus points, these youths can then roar away at Xbox consoles or pit their skills at the pool table, thus learning to strike a balance between work and play. Youth workers are always there to let their hair down alongside them, befriend and guide them towards gaining a healthy perspective of life.

Indeed, their efforts have not gone to waste. Assured of the warm and accepting environment at New Life, youths have been forthcoming in sharing their examination results

with and asking for advice from the youth workers, evidence that a foundation of trust has been established in these relationships. Some youths even return to serve as helpers themselves, giving just as cheerfully as they have received. But what tops the cake is that quite a few youths have come to receive a new faith in Christ and a fresh purpose in life. All thanks to how the youth workers have demonstrated God's love through spending time with, giving advice and showing care and concern to these youths.

But the good work does not just stop here. As it is, there are many youths in the community, the majority of whom are sequestered in bad company, who have not been reached yet. Nelson Ong, Youth Centre Manager, is not content to see them slipping off their radar into further violence and aimlessness.

He thus shared with us the exciting vision of New Life which embodies a four-pronged plan to further impact the youth community:

Equipping Youth Workers

Youth workers will undergo intensive training to be equipped with relevant knowledge and skills to reach out to those youths teetering at the borderlines of society. These training plans have been in the pipeline. As New Life gears itself towards becoming an expert in youth issues, we can expect old barriers to be broken and more youths to be brought back to safer pastures.



Ho Souk Heng



Dawn Ang



Florence Chia



Nelson Ong

Expanding the Youth Hub

In time to come, New Life also hopes to expand the physical facilities of the Youth Hub to include other exciting features such as a youth café, a sports centre and even a music studio, where youths can unleash their boundless energies in creative and constructive ways.



Joshua Cheng



Ivan Chew

Extending Services To Schools And Families

New Life partners with schools and families to deepen the impact made on the lives of youths. School social work programmes empower students to realise and reach their full potential. To address common behavioural patterns and needs of at-risk youths, New Life engages in collaborative discussions with schools to further enhance the partnership and communication. New Life also runs parenting workshops which seek to offer parents creative ideas and insights for successful parenting. There are plans to extend this service to the parents of youths whom New Life is in direct contact with. New Life also desires to position themselves as a physical hotline accessible to parents who need advice on issues regarding their teenage children.

Entering The Turf Of Youths

This upcoming project involves extending beyond the physical boundaries of the Youth Hub to befriend the youths in the community where they congregate in their own spaces; at the basketball courts or in the local kopitiam. While the recruitment of befrienders who have a heart for youths is high on the priority list, it is also important that these volunteers catch New Life's vision and understand the nature of our work. Afterall, the process of building relationships is a slow and sometimes arduous journey and the transformative results may seem, for a while, tenuous and intangible.

For all that has been said, one thing is certain: New Life is gearing itself to meet future challenges head on with as sharp a saw as can be!

为将来 做好准备

Translated by Charlotte Choo

一个社区青少年的避风港--新生青年中心
自从2005年开始，每个周日都接待
20~30名青少年。

这些青少年在中心的影响下，学习如何
在功课与娱乐间取得平衡。中心的工作
人员与青少年们交朋友，建立起融洽和
谐的关系，引导他们树立正确的人生观。

他们的努力并没有白费掉，透过新生的
环境而确保青少年们感受到温馨、被接
纳，他们逐渐地乐意打开心灵的窗户，
与他人分享生命中的点滴并寻求指导。
这充分的说明中心的工作人员和青少年
之间已经建立起一个互相信任的友谊。
他们当中也有人后来成为中心的义工，
回馈社会。更令人欣喜的是：在上帝的
关爱下，有好几位认识了耶稣成为基督
徒。这一切都应该归功于中心的工作人
员，是他们化费了宝贵的时间和心血，
陪伴他们走过了这段路程。

然而，我们社区中仍有许多青少年面对
损友的影响，正堕落于暴力和无目标的
生活之中。为了能帮助这些年轻人，青
年中心的经理Nelson Ong就提出要从4
个方面来加强中心对青少年们的影响。

1 装备青年中心的工作人员：
让他们接受积极的培训，具
备相关的知识和技能去帮助
那些徘徊在社会边缘的青少
年。也让中心成为青少年问
题的专家机构。

2 将服务对象延伸到学校和
家庭。新生正与学校合作，
也主办家庭工作坊提供父
母亲们管教的点子。将来，
新生希望成为青少年问题
的咨询中心，为社区中的
家庭服务。

3 踏出青年中心，进入青
少年们常聚集的地方与
他们接触。让他们树立
起人生的奋斗目标。

4 扩充青年中心，增设咖啡
座，运动中心和音乐室。
这些设施能让青少年发挥想
象力，参与有创造性的、
建设性的活动。

总而言之，我们深信新生
青年中心正在积极地作准
备，以迎接未来的挑战。



Like strong oak trees, parents desire their children to grow into...

by Jasmine Koh

Few will deny that adolescence is a confusing and bewildering phase for both parent and child. A growing sense of the need for independence often impels teenagers to break the boundaries once set for them, sometimes at a rapid pace, leaving the parent in a state of helplessness and despair.

To the child, the parent becomes unreasonably dictatorial; to the parent, the child is increasingly unresponsive and unruly. Attitudes become judgmental, communication breaks down into a series of sharp retorts, tempers flare, voices are raised, and a once healthy parent-child relationship stands in danger of being shattered.

So it was with the aim of empowering parents to skilfully guide the relationship with their children through this calamitous stage that New Life started the "Parenting with Confidence" workshops -- a parenting workshop adapted from Focus on the Family. Held over a series of six sessions, this workshop combines interactive videos, case-studies and stimulating small-group discussions to drive home the message that parenting, though seemingly an elusive art, can really be as simple, and essential, as learning the first six letters of the alphabet.



Adapted from

Focus on the Family
Singapore Limited

Nelson Ong, key facilitator of these workshops, shares with us the A-F of parenting:

Parenting with Confidence

Atmosphere

Boundaries

Communication

Discipline

Esteem

Future



Firstly, it is important that an empathetic and inviting **Atmosphere** is set up at home.

Secondly, as a child moves towards greater responsibility and independence, the **Boundaries** imposed on them must also be revised. Just as the letter 'V' in the word 'Love' is tapered at the bottom such that it opens up gradually as it is filled, so too are parents encouraged to release more choices *gradually* to their children as they grow older.

Thirdly, as the child grows up and starts to develop his own worldview, **Communication** skills must also evolve, with parents learning to listen more to what their teenage children are thinking, considering and exploring.

Fourthly, **Discipline** must be upheld via a 'CPR technique' – parents must not only spell and mete out the **Consequences** when boundaries are crossed, they ought to also **Plan** ways to help the child overcome his weaknesses. After the consequences are meted out, **Reconciliation**, with a reaffirmation of parents' love for the child, is important to ensure that the child will not feel resentful towards them.

Fifthly, since it is natural that teenagers will listen to those who affirm them, parents ought to boost the **Esteem** of their children, lest this task (and tool) falls into the hands of bad company.

Finally, parents need to discuss the **Future** of their teenagers with them, and help them work towards it, without imposing their own expectations.

Yet, Nelson stressed that all these tips put into motion will still fall short if parents fail to understand that children spell love as 'T-I-M-E'. There is no hands-free or time-saving way of parenting! Raising children is more than

simply laying down rules or speaking token words of love and encouragement; rather, it is all about spending time to create a wonderful medley of memorable moments together as a family. Only then can children truly grow into strong oak trees, and the true riches of parenting be reaped with joy.

New Life has been conducting the "Parenting with Confidence" workshops in the schools at Bukit Panjang under the school social work programmes for the past 3 years.



The Next Lap

by Zhou Junlin

With New Life entering the 8th year of community work in Bukit Panjang and the handover in leadership for the Vice-Chairman and Centre Manager positions in January this year, the New Life leadership surfaced 5 fundamental areas for an organisational review:

1. Long-Term Direction – to determine what New Life is called to be and to do, and continue to be relevant in the community.

2. Human Resources – to assess, redeploy and hire the right people in the right place for optimal contribution within the organisation.

3. Volunteers Base – to develop staff-led and volunteer-driven programmes to mobilise people possessing a 'heart' to help the community. A clear infrastructure and vibrant strategy are pre-requisites for programmes that impact the community.

4. Fund-Raising – to garner the partnership of organisations and members of the public who believe and embrace New Life's mission and fund its programmes.

5. Leadership – to maintain a visionary board by clarifying board-staff roles and responsibilities to propel New Life towards its vision and mission.



Following New Life's 8th Annual General Meeting held on 4 May 2008, there were some human resources changes made to the Board. Reverend Dr Chua Chung Kai was elected as Vice-Chairman and Seong Koon Wah Sun was elected as Treasurer, replacing Mr Raja Segran and Mr Tam Chee Chong respectively. Other new Board members include Mr George Lee and Mr Cheah Sin Hean. In addition, New Life also welcomed 5 new members into its society, namely, Mr Cheah Sin Hean, Dr Benjamin Mow, Dr Ong Sea Hing, Mr Sebastian Quek and Dr Stacey Tay.

Going forward, New Life is gearing up to extend its services beyond Bukit Panjang to

Woodlands. New Life will focus on meeting the needs of the children and youths in Bukit Panjang and Woodlands. A review of New Life's existing programmes is also in the pipelines, to ensure that we major on what is major to New Life and apportion the appropriate resources with due diligence.

Since its inception in 2001, New Life has been committed to serve the community by empowering people to master life's transitions through providing quality social services. If you are interested to partner New Life in reaching out and leaving a lasting impact in lives, be it by serving as a volunteer or financial help, please contact us @ 6892-7191.



John Lim
Chairman

Chua Chung Kai
Vice-Chairman

Sim Choon Siong
Secretary

Seong Koon Wah Sun
Treasurer

Patrick Lim
Assistant Treasurer



Tam Chee Chong
Board Member

George Lee
Board Member

Cheah Sin Hean
Board Member

Lawrence Chua
Board Member

2008 NEW LIFE Annual General Meeting

STAFF NEWS

Previously an Administrative Assistant with New Life Community Health Centre, **Jacquelin Wee** has been redeployed, in the same capacity, to New Life Childcare on 1 March 2008. Jacquelin replaces Ruby Zhang who left us on 9 March 2008.



Our Programmes & Services

CHILDCARE CENTRE

Playgroup
Nursery
Kindergarten

YOUTH CENTRE

New Life Youth Hub
(Youth Drop-In Centre)
S.U.P.E.R. Kidz Club
STEP-UP Programme
(Zhenghua Primary School)
(West Spring Secondary School)

FAMILY LIFE CENTRE

Counselling
Legal Advice
Family Assistance
Family Life Enrichment

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

Home Care
Health Care

Send Us Your Feedback



For feedback and suggestion on "The New Life News", simply send us an email to email@newlife.org.sg.

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)

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 simmuliang@newlife.org.sg

New Life Community Services Centre is
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Mastering Life's Transitions

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