



Steady Readers

Our Book, Our Story

Every child has a story to tell or at least heard a story told by others. But what if you can barely read at all?

Two years ago, Kishan, 9 years old, struggled in reading simple words and recognising the sounds of vowels. He browsed the pictures from the books while scratching his head because he could not fully grasp what the words meant.

This greatly affected his self-esteem and confidence. His mother Mdm Santhi Palaniturai became so worried about his reading difficulties, she had him checked in KK Women's and Children's Hospital. The doctor suggested that her son may have to delay one academic level to catch up.

"I heard about Steady Readers (SR) Programme from Greenridge Primary School. I sign my son up after hearing about what the programme will do to build my son's confidence apart from his reading challenges," she modestly recounted.

"Three months into the programme, I started observing him read new words. Not long after, he began completing sentences which caught me by surprise," Mdm Santhi proudly shared.



Kishan and his volunteer mentor Yap Yi Liang

Two years after the intervention programme, Kishan's story of improvement has been remarkable. He recently performed a skit at the Steady Readers graduation to a standing ovation from the audience.

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Building confidence on stage during graduation



Enrichment class on creative designing

SR at a Glance

Kishan's story is just one of the 459 children reached by Steady Readers Programme since 2006. This intervention programme caters to pre-screened K2 to P4 students with reading difficulties.

"Studies consistently show that reading proficiency is highly correlated with a child's academic success, social skills, and character development. Steady Readers Programme aims to equip children to adapt to their required reading proficiency levels in school resulting to their increased confidence," said Wendy Sim, New Life Children Acting Head.

Aside from the usual reading literacy worksheets and exercises, children never get bored during each session. Through interactive and educational games like Scrabble, they learn in a fun way while bonding with their volunteer mentors.

Volunteer-Driven

New Life's key to the successful running of Steady Readers Programme is the driving force of the volunteers.

All mentors of the programme are volunteers from different professions. They selflessly commit their time and energy to mentor the children in reading.

"Volunteering can be tiring at times. But seeing improvements with the children's reading comprehension makes it fulfilling and worthwhile," shared Kenneth Lwi, a volunteer mentor since February 2013.

Steady Readers Schedule

First Run----- January – May

Second Run ----- July – November

Total Sessions ----- 25 (with Enrichment Class & Graduation)

Number of Hours per session ----- 1.5 hours

Frequency----- Twice weekly



The 27-year-old dentist said, “Anna* is one of the children I’m mentoring in Steady Readers. She started with very few words and can barely finish a sentence. In only four months, I was blown away to hear her read an entire paragraph on her own.”

SR’s Vision

“Clearly, there are children in Singapore who struggle in reading at their required academic levels,” said Diana Ooi, New Life Community Services Director.

“This need is further confirmed by the increasing number of children being mentored since 2006. And to reach more children, this intervention programme must expand. Steady Readers looks forward to further widen its reach nationwide to see every child in Singapore succeed academically and become character champions,” she added.

Seeing improvements with the children’s reading comprehension makes volunteering fulfilling and worthwhile. - Kenneth Lwi

There are more stories of children waiting to be told. More books are waiting to be read.

To find out more how you can participate in Steady Readers, email volunteer@newlife.org.sg or call 6892 4366.

**name has been changed to protect the child’s privacy*

Steady Readers Programme has been steadily growing.



More and more children are being mentored to get them on track with their required academic levels.

230 children
targetted for
2013

TALES FROM THE

Liang Pin Not an Accident

Who would have thought that a chance encounter with a friend wearing a New Life shirt during National Service would lead me to Steady Readers Programme?



Liang Pin is a Steady Readers volunteer since February 2013.

I was looking for an opportunity to volunteer. Lo and behold, my bunkmate wearing this colourful neon green shirt encouraged me to sign up.

Since then, there's so much joy in serving and seeing the children progress in reading.

I've seen some children struggle in expressing themselves at first. They are very shy and have limited vocabulary. But I've seen great potentials in them waiting to be unleashed. After a few months, some can already utter new words and converse in complete sentences. This motivates me to volunteer each week despite a very long and tiring day.

Surprisingly, volunteering has helped me remove to manage my time better. No matter

how busy I am, I can find ways to squeeze out some time to make a difference in other people's lives. It has been undeniably rewarding.

Zhi Yun Then Hub Member, Now a Volunteer

I have improved tremendously since I first stepped foot in New Life four years ago as a youth hub member. Through the mentors, I became more confident in my abilities.

Hence, I told myself after reaching the maximum membership age of 18, "It's now time to contribute back."



Zhi Yun helps in Ex³ Girls Club and befriends youths in Bukit Panjang Youth since 2011.

I began volunteering knowing that I can also positively influence youths who go through a lot of teenage issues like I had. By sharing with them my experiences about peer pressure, they can develop the courage to say 'no' to vices.

Volunteering in New Life Youth has been an unforgettable experience. I have matured and formed a tenacious attitude towards life.



VOLUNTEERS

Edwin Khoo Building Character Champions

I started volunteering in Kids Champ Club (KCC) with my girlfriend who has been raving about mentoring children. Honestly, I thought it was only about playing. It turned out to be a lot more than playtime. It's about mentoring children and helping them become character champions.



Edwin Khoo is a volunteer for Kids Champ Club for two years. He is also serving as a photographer in some New Life events.

Over time, I found myself building bonds with the children while imparting good values through workshops. I see them not only having genuine fun but also putting to use values such as graciousness and respect.

Every child in KCC has something unique in them. They come from diverse family backgrounds. They have different personalities. They also encounter a variety of issues. Mentoring children has humbled me and opened my eyes to tackle issues from different perspectives.

Ten years from now, even if the children no longer remember every activity we had in KCC, I believe that the programme's impact would shape them to become character champions.

Fulfilling New Life's mission to mentor the young is impossible without our volunteers.

To find out more, email volunteer@newlife.org.sg or call **6892 4366**



SPORTS DAY JUNGLE JINGLE



They ran. They crawled. They jumped. Everyone was cheering at the top of their lungs for their teams. And it's not only the children. Mommy and Daddy too!

Now this is what parental partnership is all about.

New Life Childcare together with the parents celebrated Sports Day in a rainy morning on 19 January by stretching their muscles with high energy and excitement. With the theme Jungle Jingle, animals came to life as everyone battled for parent-child tag team races.

"I commend New Life Childcare because they encourage parents to be deeply acquainted with their children's school life. It makes



Parental partnership



Mrs Yeow enjoying bonding time with her children



Excited parents running to the finish line



Yes, we won!

a world of difference when your children know you are as interested as they are in the games”, Mr Terence Lee, one of the parents said.

“More than a dad, I am a friend to my children. Days after the Childcare Sports Day, we still chat about how I almost fell down from the frog race. It’s been a hot topic on weekends or family gatherings,” this father of three childcare students added.

Another parent, Mrs Esther Yeow recounted how her two sprightly children, Emma and Wesley, almost cried when the rain began to pour minutes before the event.

“Any child would get disappointed if a much-awaited event with their parents gets cancelled. Their sad faces literally turned to cheerful smiles upon hearing that the Childcare Sports Day is on. Knowing that I have a busy schedule, I know how important it is to be present in their activities,” she added.

“To nurture wholesome children in partnership with parents is New Life Childcare’s mission. Parental participation in school activities leads to increased motivation and improved self-esteem in children. The Childcare Sports Day is one of many activities that exhibit our mission. It builds their character and fosters healthy family relationships” said Ms Yvonne Lee, New Life Childcare Supervisor.



For.Your.Interest.

Know Your Love Language

Quality time? Giving gifts? Youths in Bukit Panjang identified their love languages through a workshop on 7 February aimed in helping them understand differences and improving relationships with others. They also made handcrafted cards to appreciate their loved ones.



Enriching Creativity

54 children from Steady Readers learnt how to creatively design t-shirts and confidently present their ideas in an enrichment workshop during school break from 18-20 March.

Gong Xi Fa Cai!

New Life Childcare welcomed the year of the snake on 7 February. All colourfully dressed in Chinese costumes, the children enjoyed Chinese food items, games, story-telling, music and lion dance.



New Life Friends' Day

New Life honoured and saluted its friends on 5 May. These unsung heroes contributed in achieving the mission of mentoring the next generation. Thank you to all volunteers, donors and partners.

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 2013

Ex³ Girls Club Workshops

Girls of Bukit Panjang Youth will be mentored on a series of workshops and one to one sessions on understanding and dealing with family issues.

11 & 18 June 2013

School Holiday Outings

Children from New Life Children & Student Care will unwind from school by enjoying recreational and educational tours at Hay Dairies and Kidz Amaze (SAFRA Jurong).

6 July 2013

To the Max

Youths in Northwest District will once again channel their high energies into sports, performing arts and flea market at Marsiling Mega Sports Park. If you want to volunteer, please email volunteer@newlife.org.sg.

17 August 2013

SWD Parent-Child Bonding Day

Social Work Department is organising a celebration for parents and their children to spend quality time and strengthen their bonds through outdoor activities.

OUR SERVICES

New Life Childcare (Bukit Panjang)

Nurturing Wholesome Children in Partnership with Parents

New Life Children

(Bukit Panjang & Woodlands)

Love Children by Mentoring them to become Character Champions

New Life Children & Student Care

(Bukit Panjang)

Mentor Children to become Disciplined and Confident Individuals

New Life Youth

(Bukit Panjang & Woodlands)

Building Character & Developing Resilience

Support New Life!

Your support allows young lives to be transformed, dreams to be realised and destinies to be changed!

New Life Community Services is a not-for-profit voluntary welfare organisation committed to Mentor the Young and Meet the Needs. Join us to Make the Difference!

Donations received by 31 December will be 2.5 times tax deductible the following year. Kindly provide your NRIC, FIN or CRN to enjoy tax benefits.

For more information, call **6892 4366** or email donate@newlife.org.sg

By Cheque: Payable to

New Life Community Services.

Please furnish your name, NRIC/FIN no., address and contact no. on the back of the cheque.

By Credit Card: Please go to

<http://www.newlife.org.sg/donate.htm>

By Interbank Transfer: Kindly contact us at

6892 4366 or email donate@newlife.org.sg

By Interbank GIRO: Please download a GIRO

form from our website or call 6892 4366.

Please furnish your full name and NRIC/FIN number in order to enjoy tax deduction.