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caring & sharing



A Newsletter by Leong Hwa Monastery and Viriya Community Services



**Continuity gives us roots; change gives us branches,
letting us stretch and grow and reach new heights.**

Pauline R. Kezer

Caring & Sharing newsletter is available for download at <http://www.viriya.org.sg>.

Please email us at whfsc@viriya.org.sg if you wish to update your mailing address or would like to receive the newsletter via email.





Message from Executive Director

Dear Readers,

It is with great pleasure as we present to you another edition of our newsletter, updating you of the various programmes and activities of Viriya Community Services.

Since Viriya Community Services was founded in 2001, our mission has always been to bring joy and enhance the quality of life by providing care and assistance to families and individuals in need of support regardless of race and religion. As our organisation develops and our passion to make real differences in the society grows, we focus our programmes and services on not just bringing joy but creating real and sustainable improvements to the quality of life of our beneficiaries.

In this issue, we would like to share how our staff, volunteers and partners have all come together with our beneficiaries and members to improve their lives and create a better society. We will also be sharing some upcoming programmes and projects.

As you read our newsletter, we encourage you to join us on this fulfilling journey of making a difference in the lives of others. Everyone can do something, and every bit counts. As Arnold Glasow said, 'improvement begins with I'.

May you enjoy reading our newsletter and we look forward to your continued support in our efforts to bring joy and enhance the quality of life of those in need.

Yours truly,

Evelyn Lai
Executive Director

执行董事序言

亲爱的读者，

除了为您介绍这一期的时事通讯之外，也会与您分享进觉福利协会的各项最新方案和活动。

进觉福利协会成立于2001年，我们的使命始终是提供照顾和帮助，不分种族和宗教为那些有需要的人或家庭带来欢乐和提高他们的生活素质。随着组织的发展和我们的热情，我们集中我们的方案和服务，不只为我们的受益者带来喜悦，也持续改善他们生活的素质。

在这一期，我们将与你分享我们的工作人员，义工和合作伙伴，如何与我们的受益者和家庭成员一起改善生活及创造一个更美好的社会。我们也会分享一些即将举行的活动和项目。

当您阅读我们的时事通讯时，我们也鼓励您跟我们一起为他人服务。所谓‘天生我才必有用’，不论事件的大小，每个人都可以做出一些贡献。正如 Arnold Glasow 先生所说的：‘改善从我开始’。

希望您对我们的时事通讯爱不释手，且继续支持我们为那些有需要的人带来欢乐和提高他们的生活素质。

您忠实的，

赖淑慧



Raising a happy child: Play

At Whispering Hearts Infant and Child Care Centre, our teachers promote holistic development through one of our children's greatest ability, PLAY. Through purposeful play, we provide opportunities for our children to learn about themselves, the environment and promote cognitive, social, emotional and psychological development.

We hope that parents will appreciate the value of play and continue purposeful and supportive play to maximise the learning of our children. This article shares with you how parents and caregivers can raise a happy child through engaging in play with the child!

Why is play important?

Play is a very powerful tool to enhance the child's learning and development and to build relationships with parents and playmates in a fun environment.

Play promotes holistic development in a child. The active four year old boy refines his motor skills playing catch. The three year old girl learns new words through nursery rhymes.

When parents play with their child, they are able to guide and shape their child's character and values in a non-threatening manner. You can teach your child how to regulate her emotions when she gets angry with her sister for spoiling her favourite doll and inculcate the value of sharing through sharing toys with other children.

How to play?

It is important to play WITH children, not just around children. Adults often have difficulties suspending their adult worldview to experience play from the child's perspective. While there is no correct way to play, there are definitely some helpful things to consider when we engage in play with our child.

As long as it is safe, allow the child to explore and lead. Unless you are playing a variation of "Simon says", it is not cool for you to dictate everything in the play.

- Allow plenty of time especially with young children.
- Allowing your child adequate time to complete his play promotes a sense of accomplishment and mastery.
- Leave space for experimentation and mistakes. Do not take over unless help is requested by the child. It is ok that your child's Lego robot has three legs instead of two. Anyway, who said a robot has to have two legs?
- Be curious and be supportive. Talk to your child and find out his thoughts. You may just be surprised by the creativity and great ideas happening within the little mind! Your encouragement will also boost your child's confidence and expressive abilities.



Playing together teaches children the value of sharing.



Play need not be expensive. Children can learn through everyday household items.



Allowing children to build their own Lego models promotes creativity while training their motor skills.

Last but not least, it is important for parents to realise that play does not have to be costly nor through the latest toys at the malls. Some of the best playing experiences can occur through pretend play using a used carton box as a doll house or a fabulous day out at the beach full of laughter from the sandcastle building and water splashing.

Ms Goh Yan Ling
Senior Social Worker



TAP



Our Youth Workers building rapport with youths at a popular youth hangout.

Dreams is excited to put a name to our outreach efforts. Building on our years of experience in street outreach and the strong networks formed with our community partners, Dreams hereby announces a new collaboration with Whispering Hearts Family Service Centre and Nanyang Police Centre, TAP.

TAP is the acronym for Teens Action Project. TAP signifies a gentle touch on the shoulders of at risk youths to build rapport. TAP as a form of dance, signifies the energy and vibrancy of youths. TAP also signifies the project as a tool for us to channel at risk youths

away from negative street influences towards positive engagements.

Still believing strongly in youths, TAP youth workers will seek to reach out to youths hanging out on the streets, get to know them, their interests and provide opportunities for the youths to pursue their dreams and fulfill their potential.

TAP aims to address some of the existing service gaps such as lack of inter-agencies coordination, lack of youth work capability and youths falling through the sparse safety net. TAP will

build an integrated database with the stakeholders, work closely to monitor street youth activities and send our dedicated youth workers to reach out to the youths before channeling them into appropriate programmes. TAP hopes to prevent youths from falling into delinquency through developing an integrated localised safety net.

TAP aims to provide every youth with the support and guidance to maximise his potential and develop into good and socially desirable adult.

Evelyn Lai



An active and vibrant community in Moulmein

一个积极与充满活力的摩绵社区

My Centre @ Moulmein is going the extra mile to help our elderly members enhance their quality of life. Going beyond Active Hearts, Active Minds, we want to provide the opportunities for our elderly to be active socially as well.

Since 2013, My Centre @ Moulmein has enhanced our programmes and activities to promote holistic wellness. For example, during our popular Bingo sessions, not only do we provide mental stimulation to keep our elderly cognitively healthy, we have introduced simple exercises as part of the filler activities to promote physical agility such as throwing balls into a target. To round it all up, we have a simple tea gathering for all members to share their stories happening over the week. The fun and laughter the elderly have together have spurred them to bring their friends along for the weekly Bingo sessions, hence allowing more elderly to be connected in the community.

To find out more about the elderly, we have also conducted a community survey with more than 150 elderly in Moulmein. The outreach effort has allowed us to understand the needs of the elderly better and develop more appropriate programmes and services that will bring maximum benefits to the elderly in the neighbourhood.

Through the community survey, we have identified some elderly in need of greater social support and connection. Our social workers have been working with these elderly to link them up to appropriate resources and also engaging them in our centre. We have also created more programmes and activities to meet

the various interests of our elderly such as handicraft and calligraphy. For the already socially active elderly, we are even engaging them as volunteers to bring their level of social engagement to a higher level.

My Centre @ Moulmein is excited about all the upcoming activities and events to create a more vibrant and supportive environment for the elderly in Moulmein.

Evelyn Lai



Cognitive stimulation through a game of Bingo.



Physical stimulation through simple ball games.



Building friendships through a simple meal together.

心意中心 (My Centre @ Moulmein) 将全力以赴, 希望能帮助我们的年长者, 提高他们的生活素质。跨越《活跃人生》, 我们想为年迈成员提供更多机会参与活跃的社交活动。

自2013年, 心意中心全面性地强化现有的节目与活动, 以为年迈者促进整体身心健康。例如, 在参与“宾果 (Bingo)”游戏时, 这项活动不但能为长者促进智力发展, 也保持年迈者健全的认知力。在游戏当儿, 我们也不忘加入些简单的体育活动, 如把球投掷目标, 这项活动有助于增强长者体力的灵活性。活动接近尾声, 年迈者也通过简单的茶聚, 与其他成员分享一周内所发生的趣事。节目就在年长者的喜悦与笑声中, 圆满结束。因此, 通过这方式, 许多长者都很乐意带朋友一起到心意中心参与“宾果”项目, 导致许多年迈成员借机融入社区。

此外, 我们也向一百五十多位年长者进行社区调查。这项推广行径, 使我们多方面了解年迈成员的需求, 并制定更适当的社区服务计划, 一心一意为社区的年长者带来最大的福利。

通过社区调查, 我们确定某些年长者需要更多的社交活动与社区支持。我们的社工不仅帮助有需求的年长者与有关的资源部门联系, 也积极地鼓励年长者到我们的中心参与活动。希望通过特制项目, 如手工艺与书法, 能满足他们各别的兴趣与需求。至于那些社交已活跃的年长者, 我们也鼓励他们参与义工项目, 让他们能踊跃的为社区与居民奉献。

心意中心切望在即将举行的一系列活动与项目中, 能给予社区的年迈成员更多支持, 也希望为年长者带来更充满活力的人生。



Viriya Family Service Centre

Coming Q4 2013, Viriya Family Service Centre (VFSC) will start its operations at Block 142 Potong Pasir, conveniently located behind the Potong Pasir Community Club and within 5 minutes walk from Potong Pasir MRT.

As a Family Service Centre, VFSC will be a professional social service agency that promotes and strengthens the social well-being of families and help them work towards self-reliance and stability. VFSC will serve the residents of Potong Pasir Constituency and Joo Seng area as a convenient one stop station where residents can approach for any support on family-related or personal challenges. Residents are free to call, walk in or email the FSC when faced with challenges and they will be attended to by professionally trained Social Workers and Counsellors.

To start off, VFSC will provide the following services:

Information and Referral: Linking residents to appropriate services to address their challenges;

Casework and Counselling: Helping individuals and families manage their personal, social, emotional difficulties such as marital issues, family violence, child management, and financial difficulties etc; and

Financial Assistance: Providing interim financial support to families while partnering them to work towards self-reliance.

To be updated about our programme and services leading to our opening, please visit and like our Facebook page by searching for 'Viriya Family Service Centre'.

Clement Cheong



VFSC staff (from left to right) 进觉家庭服务中心的工作人员 (从左到右): **Clement (Social Worker 社工)**, **Danny (Senior Counsellor 资深辅导员)**, **Kailing (Social Worker 社工)**, **Evelyn (Executive Director 执行董事)**, **Dorothy (Social Worker 社工)**, **June (Administrator 行政管理员)**, **John (Social Work Associate 助理社工)** and **Roger (Centre Manager 中心经理)**



进觉家庭服务中心

进觉家庭服务中心将在今年第4个季度开始为区内的居民服务。我们座落在波东巴西社区俱乐部附近的大牌142波东巴西3道。只需步行5分钟就可到达波东巴西地铁站。

进觉家庭服务中心是一个专业的社会服务机构。我们的宗旨是促进和加强家庭的凝聚力，并帮助家庭实现自力更生和取得稳定。进觉家庭服务中心将为波东巴西选区和裕成区居民提供一个方便兼一站式的服务。居民若面临任何个人或家庭问题时，可通过打电话，发電郵或者直接到进觉家庭服务中心，向受过专业训练的社工和辅导员寻求帮助。

进觉家庭服务中心首先将提供以下服务：

信息和转介： 连接居民到适当的服务，帮助他们解决难题；

个案工作和咨询： 帮助个人和家庭解决在个人、社会、情感上的困惑，例如婚姻问题、家庭暴力、儿童管理和财政困难等；

财政援助： 帮助个人实现自力更生，同时向家庭提供临时的财政支持。

请上面簿搜索“进觉家庭服务中心 (Viriya Family Service Centre)”，同时记得在我们的面簿 (Facebook) 选择喜欢 (Like)，以取得有关我们为区内居民服务的最新消息。



Bringing Joy and Enhancing Lives of Families

June 2013 was an exciting time for Whispering Hearts Family Service Centre (WHFSC). We witnessed the fruits of our efforts, and definitely celebrated the achievements of our clients and their families. We are glad to share some of the exciting programmes and events and the achievements of our clients with you.

Evelyn Lai



Our children and their shopping

Celebrating Successes, Motivating for Greater Successes

31 children from WHFSC participated in the GSS Shop-for-a-wish day, sponsored by the Singapore Retailers Association. These children were selected from the families receiving assistance from WHFSC. Each child was given a \$100 shopping treat and was allowed to shop for what he or she desired. Volunteers accompanied the children as they shopped to their hearts' content. It is definitely hoped that the happiness of fulfilling their wishes will motivate the children to continue to work hard and achieve their potential.



New watch

New clothes



New stationeries



New toys



Creating a Better Home Environment

Two of our lucky families were selected for yet another meaningful project, the GSS Home Makeover, sponsored by the Singapore Retailers Association. The families were selected based on their needs. Another selection criterion was that a child from the family must have done well in their English Examination in 2012. The identified families were given a shopping budget of \$2,000 to do up their living room. One of our families, however, requested to make over their son's room instead as they wanted the son, Zheng Jie, to have a good studying environment. Their wish was granted and after the makeover, Zheng Jie happily said that he 'felt like a boss as he had a nice big chair' and also added that 'learning is a lot more fun now!'

Zheng Jie's study area before the makeover.



The family shopping for new furniture with our Social Worker, Ms Phoon Pui Yee.



Zheng Jie is definitely happy with his new study area.

Making Dreams Come True

Two children under our programme, Bright Owl Project, who also participated in the STEP-UP programme showed excellent improvements in their academic performance. To reward and motivate them towards greater academic achievements, the two were rewarded with an all-expense paid trip to Hong Kong Disneyland, organised by the School Pocket Money Fund. In addition, they were allowed to bring along a parent to enjoy the fruits of their hard work and share in the pride and joy of their achievements. Together with three other children from other centres, they had an enjoyable trip, and more importantly, reminding them of the Walt Disney quote, 'All our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them'. It was definitely dreams come true for one of our children, Nurain, 12, who fulfilled her wishes of going to Disneyland and travelling overseas by plane.

Travelling on a plane.



Going to Disneyland.





Viriya Elderly Medical Fund

进觉乐龄医疗基金

Madam Saemah Bte Masuk, aged 54, and her husband, aged 72 are stricken with chronic health conditions. Madam Saemah has high blood pressure and hypertension and her husband has a heart condition. Both require regular medical checkups and long term medication.

Despite their personal health condition, the elderly couple are more concerned about the well-being of their three grandchildren whom they are looking after and staying with them in a one-room rental flat. Two are girls aged 4 and 3 and the youngest is a 6-month-old boy.

During the interview, Madam Saemah constantly expressed worry about feeding the children, especially the youngest grandson who drinks formula milk and still requires diapers. The family survives on the income of \$1,000 from her husband who works as a security guard. She shared how her husband's income is often insufficient to cover the basic needs of the family and her husband would have to borrow from his employer. However, that would also mean that they would have less to spend for the next month. Madam Saemah would walk with the three young children in tow to her medical appointments while her husband would cycle to work despite his old age and heart condition. Travelling by public transport is a luxury.

Despite subsidised healthcare and medication, Madam Saemah and her husband would often delay their medical appointments as they may not even have the few dollars to pay for the remaining amount or for transportation. Hence, their medication is also disrupted. When asked about how the family situation is affecting their health, Madam Saemah would say, 'never mind, care for the children first.'

Evelyn Lai



Madam Saemah and her two grand daughters at the corridor where they usually spend the afternoons.

Saemah女士，现年五十四岁，与丈夫，现年七十二岁，欲绝健康状况。Saemah女士患高血压，丈夫的心脏也出了状况。夫妇俩都需要接受定期体检并且长期服药。

尽管健康状况欠佳，老夫妇俩其实最关心的是他们的三个孙儿，年龄四岁与三岁的女孙，还有一个六个月大的男孙。祖父母与三个幼儿同住在一房一厅的政府租赁组屋。Saemah女士的丈夫是一名保安人员，一家就靠着他一个月大约1000元收入来维持生活。

Saemah女士在社工进行家访时，不断表示为喂养孙儿担心烦恼，尤其是最幼的孙子，还有一段时期需要昂贵的配方奶粉与尿片。她也透露丈夫极低的收入，无法照顾到家庭的营养需求。并且长长得向雇主要求预支工资。当然，这也意味接下来的月薪入不敷出。

为了维持生活，老夫妇省吃减用。Saemah女士经常拖着三个幼儿，走到医疗所复诊。尽管脏状况欠佳，Saemah女士的丈夫也只能骑脚踏车上班。搭乘公共交通对老夫妇俩来说是一种奢侈。即使两人受益于医疗和药物补贴，老夫妇俩还是无法抽出多余的钱搭乘公共交通，往往延缓到医疗所复诊。当社工向她关心健康情况时，Saemah女士坦然地说“没关系，孙子们的需求比较迫切。”



Madam Saemah's story tells us how the elderly often neglects their personal medical needs when resources are tight. Due to financial difficulties, poor family support and sometimes even mobility issues, many elderly delays visit to the doctors, skip medication or are even unable to meet their own nutritional needs.

As Singapore's population ages, more attention has been paid to the needs of elderly in the past years. A recent study done by the Lien Foundation on the needs of the elderly in Singapore highlighted a need for greater integration of healthcare and social services.

My Centre @ Moulmein also conducted a community survey to understand the needs of the elderly in Moulmein. Charity sees the need, not the cause. Hence, arising from the identified needs of the elderly, Viriya Community Services is pleased to introduce the Viriya Elderly Medical Fund.

The Viriya Elderly Medical Fund aims for all elderly to receive appropriate care and assistance to age in place with dignity. Our social workers will be working with the healthcare providers, and community stakeholders to ensure that the needs of the elderly are adequately met to provide them with the basics to live their golden years to the fullest. The

social workers will also assist to link the elderly to the nearest Family Service Centre and other community support and services. The fund will also provide financial assistance to cover non-subsidised medical consumables or necessities to allow the elderly to receive the required care and meet their basic needs.

The Viriya Elderly Medical Fund will be launched at My Centre @ Moulmein on 13 July 2013. We are pleased to have the Member of Parliament for Moulmein-Kallang GRC and Minister for Transport, Mr Lui Tuck Yew as our guest-of-honour to launch the Viriya Elderly Medical Fund.

Saemah女士的遭遇让我们了解到年长者，尤其当资源有限时，如何忽视个人的医疗需求。由于经济遇上困难，或缺乏家庭的支持，或甚至是行动不便，这种种的原因往往导致许多年长者延迟去医疗所复诊，无法按时服药，也无法满足自己的营养需求。

由于新加坡的人口足见老化，年长者的需求在过去几年收到更多的关注。例如，新加坡连氏基金会最近的一项研究强调需要更大的整合医疗保健和社会服务。

心意中心（My Centre @ Moulmein）通过社区调查，也对于年迈成员的需求有多方面的了解。做慈善，不单看原因，认为有必要时，也会慷慨

解囊。因此，进觉福利协会将推举进觉乐龄医疗基金，让更多有需求的年迈者受益。

进觉乐龄医疗基金宗旨为所有有需求的年长者领取适当的照顾与协助。我们的社工也将与医疗服务提供者和各社区协会合作，以确保年长者的基本生活需求能得到最妥当的资助，提高生活素质，以让他们安享晚年。医疗基金也提供金钱援助，让年长者有能力买非补贴医用品，以及得到所需的医疗照顾。

进觉乐龄医疗基金将在七月十三日，在心意中心正式举办开幕仪式。我们很荣幸邀请交通部长兼国会议员（摩绵选区）——吕德耀部长，为典礼嘉宾。



The Ullambana Festival

The Buddhists celebrate the Ullambana Festival in the 7th lunar month. It is a month of joy and **NOT** a month of hungry ghosts.

The 15th day of the 7th lunar month is often known as the Buddha's joyful day and a day of rejoice for Sangha community. The origin of this joyful day can be found in various Buddhists' scriptures.

When the Buddha was alive, his disciples meditated in the forests of India during the rainy season of summer. Three months later, on the 15th day of the 7th month, they emerged from the forests to celebrate the completion of their meditation and reported their progress to the Buddha. Hence on this day, Buddhists make offering to the Sangha community.

The Buddhists also observe this festival based on the story of Maudgalyayana and his mother. Maudgalyayana discovered through his meditative power that his mother was reborn in the realm of pain and suffering and sought the Buddha's advice to help his mother gain a human rebirth. The Buddha then instructed him on how to obtain liberation for his mother including making food offerings to the Sangha community on the 15th day of the 7th month. Through the merits created, Maudgalyayana's mother finally gained a human rebirth. This is expounded in the Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva Sutra.

The Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva Sutra is fundamentally a teaching on 'karmic retribution' and it describes the consequences one creates for oneself by committing undesirable actions. This is especially beneficial for future beings in this dharma ending age, to help them to perform more good deeds and avoid being reborn in the lower realm.

盂蘭盆法會

本院将在农历七月初一日至七月廿五日每天由法师领众诵念地藏菩萨本愿经以此功德普施法界众生，超度各姓祖先，十方方法界孤魂，冤亲债主离苦得乐，早登莲邦。七月廿六日顶礼三昧水忏，放焰口全堂。

大愿地藏王菩萨是佛教徒口中所称的“娑婆三圣”之一——“地”在事上讲是大地，大地是一切万物所依赖生存的，所以“地”有能持、能育、能载、能生的意思。“藏”就是宝藏，财宝足以救济人的贫苦，圆满人的事业。这位大菩萨有无量的法财，布施一切苦恼众生，且使他们都能修行成就，好像宝藏一样，所以叫做“藏”。

地藏菩萨在因地中，多次为救母难，而发大誓愿：“众生度尽，方证菩提。”以此功德愿力，令多生父母离苦得乐，转凡入圣，《地藏经》是佛门孝经，而地藏菩萨更是“孝”的代名词。

It was spoken by the Buddha to beings of Trayastrimsa Heaven as a mark of gratitude and remembrance for his beloved mother. Hence this sutra is also known as the canon of filial piety, dealing with not only the filial responsibility between oneself and his parents but a universal code of responsibility for all living beings, all of whom the Buddha regards with same kindness, compassion and respect as one should accord to his parents.

Jenny Lim