

ANNUAL

REPORT

2008



REACH
Community Services Society

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PRESIDENT'S M E S S A G E

The key purpose of REACH Community Services Society is to extend a helping hand to the disadvantaged, to the hurting, and to the broken in our Community, to share with them the message of hope, of love and of encouragement. Through education and counseling, we strive to help people prevent good situations from getting bad, and the bad ones from getting worse. For those fallen, we hope to provide the support to help them get up and regain the dignity and confidence to continue life's journey.

In an abbreviated form, it is about helping people to transit from anxiety to hope.

All through 2008, the Society continued steadfastly on its vision of "Touching Hearts, Reaching Lives", and on her mission, to provide help and support to the needy and hurting through a range of professional services that seek to bring enhancement and growth to individuals and their families, maximizing on resources placed in our hands by our various stake holders, which include MCYS, community partners and Grace Assembly Of God.

REACH Family Service Centre in Bishan continues to be RCSS's flagship charity, meeting the needs of the Community in Bishan and beyond. Working in collaboration with Grace Assembly of God, RCSS was also actively engaged with helping Communities around Grace Assembly Of God's facilities. In 2008, RCSS continued to administer the bursary awards supported by Grace Assembly Of God, to financial needy students from schools and Communities around Tanglin and Bukit Batok.

The Management and staff of RCSS are proud to share details of these with you. Highlights of some of these activities can be found in the following pages of this annual report.

With thankfulness and gratitude for all these years of achievement, the Management Committee is taking time to strategize for growth into the future. Much time was spent in 2008 strengthening the organization structure of RCSS, and to sharpen various aspects of our corporate governance. The Counseling Service in RCSS for instance was reorganized, with more resources being brought on board to enable us to provide even higher quality services in counseling. The new structure also provides a stronger platform for growth into the future.

We want to thank God for providing us the opportunity and the means to serve the Community. We see this as our calling as well as our privilege. We also want to take this opportunity to thank our many donors, volunteers and community partners for their generous support of our activities, their dedicated service and their well wishes and words and deeds of encouragement.

I am looking ahead with excitement in 2009, for what RCSS can do for the Community.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ho Siew Cheong'. The signature is stylized and fluid.

Ho Siew Cheong
President
REACH Community Services Society

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S

M E S S A G E

2008, I believe has been a year filled with unexpected changes that had caught most of us by surprise in one way or another. Likewise for REACH, we were in for a year of pleasant surprises...!

The year began with a big bang of "REACH Goes On Air – 93.8 LIVE". We were surprised by an invitation to host a 13-week series of talk shows "Family Matters" from January to March. It was a wonderful experience for all of us involved, management committee, staff and volunteers, sharing passionately on practical issues concerning counselling, youth, marriage and parenting. To those of you who have been a part of this, "Thank you for taking up the challenge of being on air enthusiastically! We (Falicia & Ai Ling) would not have been able to complete the show without your invaluable support! We would also like to thank MediaCorp Radio for their gracious invitation and to Ms Bharati, Senior Producer-Presenter of 93.8LIVE for her professional guidance throughout the 13 weeks."

On 25 April, we were glad to have Dr David Stoop to be the speaker at our very first Professional Seminar "Making Peace With Your Past". The seminar was well received by the group of 145 fellow social workers, counsellors, therapists and psychologists. We would like to thank Grace Assembly Of God for supporting REACH in this seminar.

On 12 May, we were excited to host Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports, RADM (RET) Kwek Siew Jin, President of NCSS, Ms Tina Hung, Deputy CEO of NCSS and other officials for a dialogue session at REACH FSC.

On 31 May, REACH sent 30 teams of youths to compete in ROMP! 08. A sporting carnival that drew a crowd of more than 800 youths. During that carnival, some of our youths won top prizes in the sports category. Our youths had the chance to socialize and introduce Joule Mentoring Club to many other like-minded youths.

On 19 July, after six months of fruitful work, the Management Committee and Staff gathered for a retreat at The Legends Fort Canning Park. It was a time for reflection, fellowship, food and fun. Together as a team, both the management and staff reflected on our positive core and expressed our wishes for REACH as she turns 10 in 2009!

On 28 Oct, we bade farewell to Mr Calvin Lee, our Executive Director. We are grateful for his dedication, visionary leadership and 'never-say-cannot' spirit towards serving the needy during his nine years at REACH.

The year ended with an overwhelming response to our Footprints Expedition! We had 45 youths who wanted to go on this overseas mission. Our youth staff had no choice but to leave behind 12 disappointed youths, leading our biggest expedition team, 33 youths on the mission to See in Love, Speak in Love and Serve in Love at Cambodia.

As you read this report, join me to savour "the best of our present" that will lead us to "the best of our future" in 2009.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Ai Ling". The signature is stylized and written in a cursive-like font. It is located to the right of the portrait and above the printed name.

Ng Ai Ling
Executive Director
REACH Family Service Centre

REACH COMMUNITY SERVICES SOCIETY

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

President:	Mr Ho Siew Cheong
Vice President:	Mr Lim Han Seng, Andrew
Honorary Secretary:	Mr Ajinderpal Singh (till Feb 08) Mr Tay Teng Pong (appointed wef Sep 08)
Honorary Treasurer:	Mr Teo Tze Wei
Committee Members:	Ms Chow Juo Wei, Pauline Ms Khoo Seok Lin Mr Koh See Heong Mr Tay Teng Pong
Co-opt Members:	Ms Tan Yan Loo, Katie Ms Ivy Teng (wef Oct 2008) Mr Clement Chung (wef Nov 2008)
RCSS Executive Director:	Mr Calvin Lee (till Oct 2008) Ms Ng Ai Ling (wef Nov 2008)

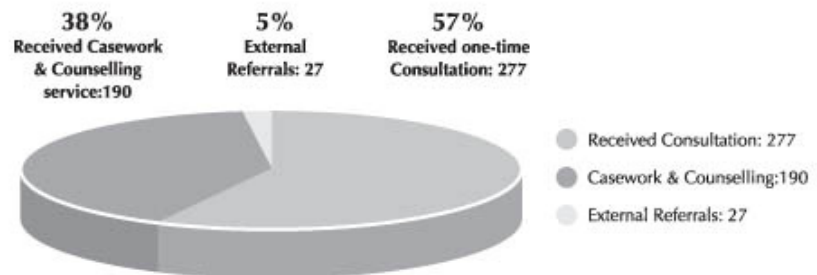
REACH FAMILY SERVICE CENTRE (FSC)

Executive Director:	Ms Ng Ai Ling
Senior Social Workers:	Ms Grace Lim Mr Joe Chan
Senior Counsellor:	Ms Falicia Tan (till June 2008)
Administrative Officer:	Ms Gloria Lui
Counsellors:	Ms Lee Yoke Mey Ms Mok Sin Lai Ms Angeline Jayanthi
Social Workers:	Ms Joanne Fu Ms Serene Tan Ms Jaslyn Tan
Administrative Assistant:	Ms Tay Lay Tshin
Part-Time Cleaner:	Ms Lew Kee Mui

ENHANCED INFORMATION & REFERRAL SERVICE

REACH Family Service Centre provided information and referral service to 494 callers in 2008. There is a 6% rise in the callers compared to 2007. Amongst those who called, 38% of them received casework and counselling service from our social workers and counsellors while 57% of the callers received a one-time consultation on their enquiry. Another 5% of the callers were referred to other social service agencies for assistance.

Outcome of Information and Referral (I & R)



An enhanced I&R referral system was established to ensure a more proactive referral process as well as prompt response to the referrals.

The Bishan-Toa Payoh GRC ComCare Local Network was set up in 2008 to improve the current referral process between agencies. A standardized referral form was designed to facilitate referrals from community agencies to the FSCs in the Bishan and Toa Payoh region. The main intention was to tighten the social safety net so that those who needed help do not fall through the cracks. The school-FSC referral process is also further strengthened to ensure a more seamless referral process, benefiting the students and their families who may require casework and counselling from the FSCs near their house.

In November 2008, we had a networking meeting with the Bishan East CCC Chairman. In the month of December 2008, we also hosted a networking session with the social workers of Bishan Home for the Intellectually Disabled. Such meetings helped to foster a greater understanding of the services provided by the various agencies and open doors to future collaboration opportunities.

In addition, we conducted a needs assessment at four blocks of flat located at Sin Ming to understand the needs of the children in the estate. From this needs assessment, we have identified a mentoring project for the upper primary school children from the financial needy families. The project will kick off in March 2009.

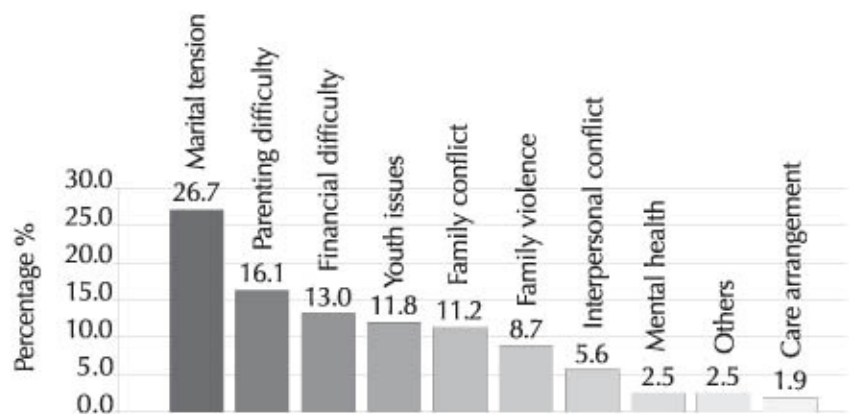
CASEWORK & COUNSELLING SERVICE

Casework & counselling service were extended to individuals and families to assist them with their social, emotional, financial and relational issues. There is a 25% increase in the number of new cases compared to the previous year. This could be the result of the set up of the inter-agency referral protocols. With a higher caseload brought over from the previous year as well as the increase in the number of new cases, the total number of cases handled in 2008 increased by 48%.

	2008	2007
Number of active cases in Jan:	127	65
Number of new/re-opened cases:	161	129
Number of closed cases:	113	67
Number of active cases at Dec:	175	127
Total number of cases handled:	288	194

Presenting problems of new cases in 2008

Below is a bar chart (in percentage value) of our various presenting problems

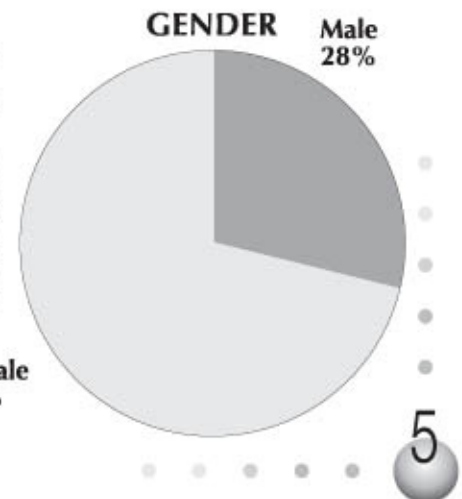


The most common presenting problems are marital tension (26.7%), parenting difficulty (16.1%) followed by financial difficulty (13.0%). Most of our cases have presenting issues related to marital and parenting concerns as indicated by the sum total of presenting issues like marital tension, family conflict, parenting difficulty, youth issues and family violence. These 5 presenting issues form 74.5% of our cases.

Clients' profile of new cases in 2008

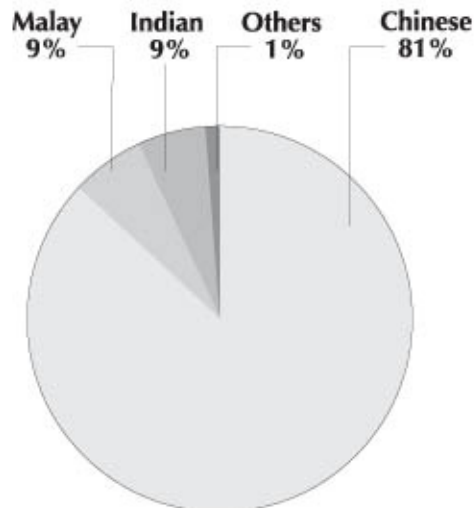
Below are the pie charts of our clients' profile:

Among our clients, more females (72%) tend to be the one who initiate seeking our casework and counselling services. However, in the process, their spouse or other family members are often engaged.



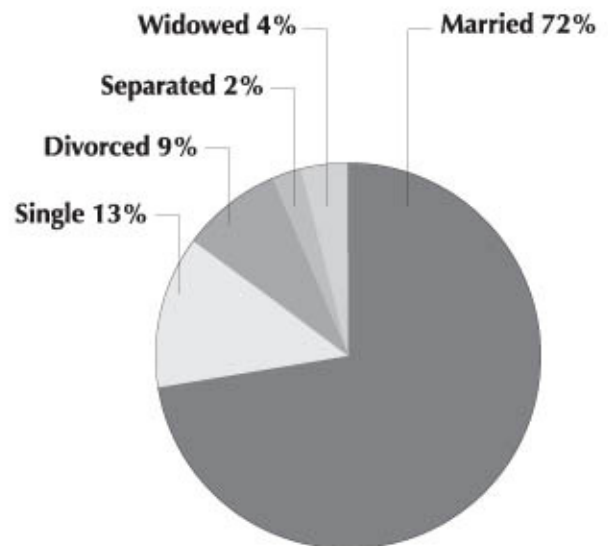
CASEWORK & COUNSELLING SERVICE

RACE



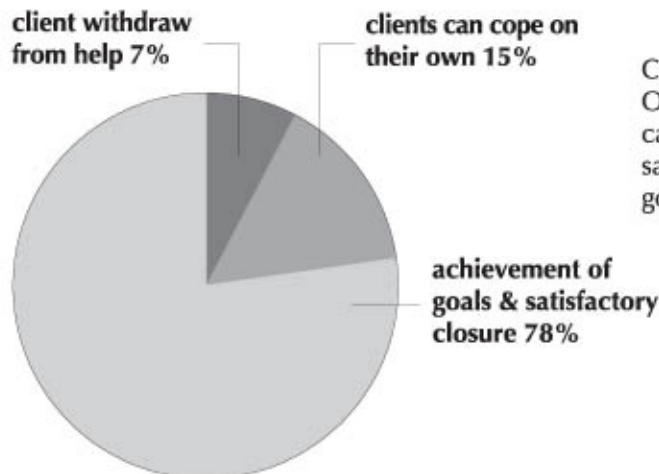
Among our clients, 81% are Chinese, followed by 9% of Malay and 9% of Indians.

MARITAL STATUS



Most of our clients are married and they tend to seek help regarding marital, family and parenting issues.

CASE CLOSURE OUTCOME



Case closure outcome in 2008
Out of the 113 close cases, most cases (78%) were closed satisfactory with achievement of goals.

Family Violence Mandatory Counselling Programme

The Family Violence Mandatory Counselling Order is given by MCYS and the Family Court to help married couples facing family violence in their relationship. Most of the perpetrators were men, who had difficulty managing their anger. In 2008, we handled a total of 34 mandatory cases of which 32 are newly referred in the year. The main objective is to help clients stop the violence and find alternative ways to cope with their anger. Beyond the primary goal of reducing violence, we also provide counselling to married couples who would like to deal with their marital conflicts and the underlying issues.

The School Pocket Money Fund

The FSC continued to administer The Straits Times School Pocket Money Fund to students of low income families to support them in their schooling expenses. For 2008, a total of \$9,135 was given to 14 primary school and 13 secondary school students.

MARITAL PROGRAMME



MARRIAGE PREPARATION WORKSHOP (MPW)

The marriage preparation workshop (MPW) aims to equip couples with clear expectations of marriage and skills to build a stronger lasting marriage. Five workshops were conducted in 2008 at REACH FSC in February, April, June, August and October 2008 with a total attendance of 46 couples. Each run consisted of five sessions which spanned over three weeks.

The workshops were conducted by a team of experience MPW trainers. Each session allowed the couples to acquire practical skills in husband-wife communication, building strong marital bond and intimacy, overcoming personality differences, handling marital challenges positively and resolving conflicts non-violently.

Thoughts from participants:

"Marriage is for a lifetime; the wedding is only a day."

"Marriage needs a lot of work and cooperation by both spouses."

"Understand more about my partner and to adapt to each other differences."

"Better understanding of marriage roles and expectation."

"I learn how to listen and communicate with my partner."

"To understand and not to take things too personally when in conflict as we are initially different people with different personalities."

"It is useful to find out what marriage entails besides the lovey-dovey courtship days."

LOVE STORY RETREAT 2008

In 2008, the LOVE STORY marriage enrichment retreat was held at Desaru Beach Resort from 30 May to 1 June. Nine married couples took the weekend away off their usual routine to spend quality time together to rekindle their love and intimacy with one another.

Thoughts from participants:

"Time to do task together that is beneficial for our bonding and romance. Workshop to increase our knowledge about marriage."

"This is a very good retreat for couples. The individual activities are designed to help couples discover, enhance, and strengthen the promise to cherish each in marriage always."

"A rewarding trip that enriched and refreshed our relationship in a leisure way!"

"A fun and enriching trip spent together. Even though it is a group and with facilitated programme but the focus and time was given to each other as a couple. Experience it and I guarantee there will be no regrets! Fantastic programme not to be missed!"

"A good course enhanced and enriches the mind with tips and technique of maintaining a good marriage for life."



MARITAL PROGRAMME

MARITAL WORKSHOPS

A total of four marital workshops were conducted in 2008. Two of the workshops were conducted in REACH FSC, with a total of 40 participants. The other two were external workshops where the staff of REACH FSC was invited as trainers.

Date	Topic	Participants	Speaker	Venue
30 Aug	MBTI – Overcoming Personality Difference: When Ms Loud Tidy meets Mr Quiet Messy	21	Ng Ai Ling	REACH FSC
11 Oct	Fighting for your marriage	19	Grace Lim	REACH FSC
22 May	Conflict Management	4	Lee Yoke Mey	WINGS
8 Nov	MBTI – Overcoming Personality Difference: When Ms Loud Tidy meets Mr Quiet Messy	4	Ng Ai Ling	Punggol Secondary School

MARITAL GROUPWORK

A groupwork of four sessions was conducted on 17, 24 Nov & 1 Dec for eight participants. Through the different group activities and discussion, the participants learnt the power of connecting with their spouse through empathy. The participants learnt some basic skills in expressing empathy.

Thoughts from participants:

"It helps marry couple to understand each other more."

"Very enlightening, eye opening at how we see our self and others around us."

"Interesting to use MBTI concept into understanding spouse."

"Using understanding words to express empathy."



PARENTING PROGRAMME

PARENTING PRE-TEENS GROUPWORK

Two runs of Pre-Teens Groupwork were conducted in March and August 2008, with a total of about 25 participants. The 4-session groupwork was targeted at parents of children between 10 and 14 years of age and was conducted weekly at REACH FSC. Besides trained facilitators, experienced parent volunteers were also invited to share their successes, struggles and tips in their parenting journeys which proved to be very insightful to the participants. Through these groupwork, parents learnt about developmental issues, how differences in personality can affect parent-child relationship, how to broach the topic of sexuality education, setting healthy boundaries and tips on better communication.



Thoughts from participants:

"Very practical tips on communicating and connecting with teens."

"Interactive, informative and innovative!"

"Sharing from experienced parent volunteers was really useful."

Date	Topic	Participants	Speaker	Venue
24 Mar 31 Mar	Conflict Resolution Workshop	8	Falicia Tan Mok Sin Lai	REACH FSC
29 Mar	Freedom vs Responsibility – Setting Boundaries with Your Teens	13	Falicia Tan	REACH FSC
26 Apr	How Do I Get Through to You ?	8	Falicia Tan	REACH FSC
24 May	Connect@YouthCulture.sg	23	Joe Chan Joanne Fu	REACH FSC
21 Jun	The Straw That Broke the Camel's Back	10	Falicia Tan Lee Yoke Mey	REACH FSC
25 Oct	How to Talk to Your Child about Sexuality Issues	19	Joe Chan Joanne Fu	REACH FSC

Thoughts from participants:

"Good topics and clear presentation by speakers."

"Interesting topics and practical experiences of speakers enriched the talk."

"Good and relevant topic shared by speakers with good understanding of our youths today. Speakers were knowledgeable and able to connect theory with reality."

Date	Topic	Participants	Speaker	Venue
13 Jan	Communicating with your child using NVC (Non-Violent Communication)	15	Lee Yoke Mey	Sembawang Library
15 Mar	Major on the Majors	39	Ding-Khoo Seok Lin	OnePeople.sg
18 Apr	Communicating with your child using NVC (Non-Violent Communication)	25	Falicia Tan	Henry Park Primary School
10 May	How To Talk So Our Child Will Listen	46	Ding-Khoo Seok Lin	OnePeople.sg
12 Jul	Coaching Your Child To Be A Responsible Thinking Child	29	Ding-Khoo Seok Lin	OnePeople.sg
16 Aug	Conversation beyond Yes and No The straw that broke the camel's back	45	Mok Sin Lai Lee Yoke Mey	Zhenghua Secondary School
20 Sept	Raising Resilient and Capable Children	25	Ding-Khoo Seok Lin	Catholic High School
4 Oct	Understanding Your Child Using Human Dynamics	32	Ding-Khoo Seok Lin	OnePeople.sg
1 Nov	Raising Resilient and Capable Teenagers	40	Ding-Khoo Seok Lin	St Hilda's Secondary School
9 Nov	Conversation Beyond Yes and No	20	Mok Sin Lai	Sembawang Library

Thoughts from participants:

"The speakers gave very down to earth examples and easy to relate to daily life."

"The talk was very useful and added to my knowledge."

"Speaker was able to share the knowledge clearly and in an interesting manner."

LEARNING PARENTING SERIES BY MRS DING-KHOO SEOK LIN

Back by popular demand from parents, Mrs Ding-Khoo Seok Lin conducted another round of Learning Parenting Series workshops for 2008. Topics such as Major on the Majors, How to Talk so our Child will Listen, Coaching our Child to be A Responsible Thinking Child to be a responsible thinking child, Understanding your Child – using Human Dynamics, were well received and popular among the parents.

Parents felt that the topics were very relevant to them in helping to build stronger bonds with their children. There were a total of about 150 parents who attended this series of workshops.

REACH FSC was also invited by to several schools to conduct these workshops for their parents in schools. Schools such as Henry Park Primary School, Zhenghua Secondary School, Catholic High School and St Hilda's Secondary School benefited much from these workshops as their parents were equipped with the necessary skills to communicate and build bonds with their children.



Thoughts from participants:

"Mrs Ding is a wonderful speaker, connecting well with her audience, glad to have attended this talk."

"The speaker is very knowledgeable who inspires me in coaching my child."

"This talk is a must for all parents and teachers."

"Speaker is very energetic, funny, shared lots of real-life experiences and very motivating."

"The talk is very interesting and with lots of parenting

YOUTH PROGRAMME

JOULE MENTORING CLUB

Joule Mentoring Club celebrated her second year with a 32% increase in her membership to 75 youths in 2008. As members, these youths were given opportunity to experience new challenges, to grow their potential and talent via sports, adventure and community service.

DRAGON BOAT – REACH DRAGONS

Since its formation in 2007, our dragon boat team has trained regularly on Saturdays at Kallang. The team has grown in terms of experience, bonding, challenges and collaborations with other organizations.

One of the competitions which the team participated in 2008 was the Dragon Boat Festival held on 29 June at Bedok Reservoir. Together with Geylang West T-Net Club, we joined the 300m T-Net Club Race Category and won second place with a timing of 2:01.25 min.



YOUTH PROGRAMME

From September to December 2008, the team reorganized to cater for future growth. Mr Ray Chua, President of the NUS Alumni Dragon Boat Team came on board as the team coach. The team has been restructured into two groups namely the novelty and intermediate rowers.

A new jersey has been designed for this team of 20 young rowers, age ranging from 14 to 21 years old



Voices from the team:

"I think I've learnt more about teamwork and it has given me a chance to learn about dragon boating. I enjoy it very much." Jiawei, 14 years old.

"I learnt how to serve the strokes rightly such as starting the boat and gliding the boat smoothly. I've also realized the importance of strong teamwork" Ruhaya, 18 years old

"I've learnt the spirit of perseverance, i.e. not to give up but press on harder in my life, for eg, my studies" Yew Teck, 15 years old.

ROMP! 08



On 31 May 2008, the club sent 30 teams of youths to participate in ROMP! 08, a sporting carnival organised by Harvest Care Centre. Our teams competed in the basketball, soccer and captain ball matches. A few of our teams won top prizes.



Besides the competition, our club members set up booth to promote Joule Mentoring Club to the crowd of more than 800 youths. It was a memorable carnival where our youths enjoyed the competition and camaraderie with fellow sportsman.



ADVENTURE TRIP TO MOUNT OPHIR, MALAYSIA

From 3-5 June 2008, the club organised an adventure trip to Mount Ophir, Malaysia for six youths. It was a tedious trip for all of them as this was their very first attempt in mountain climbing. During the climb, the youths experienced great pain, physical exhaustion and some even suffered injury

It was indeed tough for each youth but together as a team, they persevered and encouraged one another till they conquered the summit.

Thoughts from the climbers:

"It was so long and tedious. I was determined to climb up but along the way my confidence was shaken because my legs were aching and numb." 18 years old, Poh Ee.

"When I reached the summit, I felt much fulfilled though I was totally exhausted. I was glad I persevered and didn't give up!" 15 years old, Boon Kai.

"Although I'm not fit, I still could reach the summit of the mountain. All the difficult things can be done if you work hard on it." 14 years old, Farhan.

"Although I got injured and fall on the way down, I still got up and continued my journey to the base camp." 13 years old, Terence.T



YOUTH PROGRAMME

PLAY SAVE (LOCAL COMMUNITY SERVICE)

Play Save Day Camp is a one day enrichment camp targeted at primary school children from financially needy families. The main objective is to inculcate budgeting skills to these children.

The Camp was organised by a team of student volunteers from university and three students from Raffles Institution. On the actual day, 5 July 2008, 25 children showed up at REACH FSC.

They started the morning by learning to make photo frames using coloured ice-cream sticks to bring out the creativeness in them. They also participated in an interesting station games at the void deck, and went budget shopping at Popular Bookshop and NTUC Fairprice at Junction 8. During the shopping, the children were given a budget of \$10 to \$20 and had to purchase several items on the shopping list. The goal was to spend as little money as possible yet purchasing all the items. It was an experiential learning process for the children to manage with the little they had and make informed choices based on what they saw at the shop.

The highlight of the day for the children was the Mc Donald's Happy Meal lunch and the trip to the Singapore Science Centre, where they watched the IMAX movie.

The day camp finally ended on an exuberant note as the children returned to the centre for a prize presentation, photo taking and celebration birthday. It was a truly a day filled with the children's boisterous noise and laughter, and at the same time, an enriching and learning experience for the student volunteers.



As one student volunteer summed up his experience; "Saying goodbye to the children was the hardest part, but seeing their contented smiles as they were leaving was the best part."



**FOOTPRINTS EXPEDITION 2008
"EMPOWERING LIVES THROUGH EMPOWERED LIVES"**

A total of 33 youths and 3 staff from REACH FSC went for our annual Footprints Expedition to Cambodia from 15-24 December 2008. The Expedition was planned and executed by an Executive Committee formed within the 33 youths. Under the guidance and supervision of the staff, the Executive Committee were tasked to organize the whole team on the mission to 'Speak, see and serve in love', both locally and overseas.

Prior to the expedition, the Executive Committee organized a fund-raising project. The team designed a 2009 calendar to create awareness of the expedition and for fund raising purpose. Together with other 77 volunteers, the team successfully raised about \$16,000 from the sale of 989 calendars.

During the trip, the team embarked on three humanitarian projects at Tung Kea Village, Stung Meanchey Dump and Sophea's Village. At the Tung Kea Village 45 water filters were distributed to improve health and sanitation facilities. The team also provided health education course on the usage of water filters, basic nutrition and disease prevention.



Giving out of water filters and fruits

"The thing that dawn on me is that their life may be hard, but they would not just be depressed and complain about it. Instead they face the difficulties that are thrown to them in life; they try to make money from whatever they can find. So this trip has taught me that I should actively solve my problems in life." (18 years old, tripper)

At the Stung Meanchey Dump, the team was able to touch the lives of the children, woman and the youths who are helping out at the rubbish dump centre. For the children, the team conducted English, Math, Music and Rhythm classes. As for the women, they were taught how to make earrings for sale to generate income for themselves. The youths received training on time and classroom management.



Christmas presentation

"Instead of pity, I came out of the slums feeling a sense of admiration for the people. Despite all the injustice around them, they still are able to maintain a sense of hospitality towards strangers like us. This is evident by the way they sportingly did our chicken dance and Kallang waves, and happily allowed their children to play with people they never met before". (18 years old, tripper)

At the Sophea's Village, the team painted the meeting rooms, filled the potholes in the village roads to aid transportation and to avoid flooding of roads. They also conducted a youth forum with the youth leaders and taught them how to make earrings.



Road filling project.

Team with orphanage children

Slums at the dumpsite



YOUTH PROGRAMME



Rubbish dump slum



Team affirmation session

Some post-trip reflection by the Trippers:

"To be contented and treasure my family, life, friends more"

"To chase after things that is valuable in life"

"To be more purposeful in life"

"To persevere and give my best shot in everything I do"

"To be a positive influence to people around me"

"I'll not overlook the small simple things and will take studies more seriously"

"The greatest thing in life is love and the best time to love is now"

"Heart transformation, impactful experience"

"Worthwhile trip"

"Super tiring and still enjoying every minute of it"

"The myriad of meaningful moments paint a picture worth more than a thousand words. This meaningful trip, should, if not, must be continued to expose more Cambodians to aid and also more Singaporeans to reflect upon their lives"

Parent of A tripper:

'Yes, definitely he has changed in terms of his attitude towards us, his openness to help the less privilege. He seems to gain good mentorship and said he may want to be more like Joanne and Joe. He is also more keen to be in the organizing team as his confidence is slowly picking up, definitely less rebellious, really want to thank the team for it'

PROJECT SECOND CHANCE

Recognizing the importance of academic qualifications and the struggles of three 18-year-old youths who failed their 'O' Levels last year, the REACH youth staff decided that each of them needed a second chance. Driven by a belief that they could improve, the staff decided to offer them intensive tuition.

From July 2008 to November 2008 the staff conducted 31 tuition sessions for the three girls. A typical tuition session began with a game of badminton to motivate the girls to think positively, i.e. 'if one tries, there is a chance that she will succeed'. The girls were taught to write their academic goals, dream courses and career ambition to motivate their efforts. Before the actual 'O' Levels, they also went through two mock examinations for every single subjects. In November, every staff in REACH FSC wrote their well-wishes in an 'exam goodies bag' as final encouragement to Cheryl, Pauline and Poh Ee.

In response, the girls wrote

'It was helpful as it allowed us to learn better and it was conducive environment. The program was well planned because it was a good mixture of studying and sports. Staffs were really encouraging and their words really meant a lot. And their encouragement is very much appreciated.' Cheryl

'REACH staff has done so much for us and also find the time to tutor us' Pauline

'The tuition has helped me greatly because being a private candidate there isn't much support so the tuition provide a great support and also provide a conducive studying environment. All in all, the program not only helped me in my studies but also helped me grow mentally to be more independent. I want to say a big and sounding thank you to all who have helped to make my results a good one...' Poh Ee

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK



GUANGYANG SECONDARY SCHOOL

In 2008, from February to March, a 5-session STEP UP programme was conducted for a group of eight Secondary 4 Normal Technical students.

Through the five sessions, the students were reminded that they needed to find a personal reason to change and seek improvement in their studies and lives. Many of these students struggled with at-risk behaviours due to peer influence and a lack of role models in their lives.

To help them to discover their motivation for personal change, the students were brought on a field trip to the Helping Hand Drug Rehabilitation Centre. From the sharings by the former convicts and addicts, the students realised the painful consequences and struggles of being involved in at-risk delinquent behaviours.

In 2008, from June to July, another 5-session STEP UP programme was conducted for a Secondary 2 Normal Technical class. During one session, the movie "Green Grass Project" was screened to the students. From the movie, the students learnt many precious lessons about choices and consequences. They also had an exciting heart-thrilling experiential game of "Aladdin" where they learnt about the value of working with one another, as well as with the significant others in their lives

The class also benefited from the personal life-changing testimonies of Ansel Chang and Justin Yeo. Both Ansel and Justin were formerly in similar situation like the students. From their sharing, the students realised that wrong choice reaps negative consequences. However, change is still possible if one is determined to turn over a new leaf.

PEIRCE SECONDARY SCHOOL

REACH FSC conducted a 9-session STEP UP Programme for 20 Secondary 2 and 3 students from February to April 2008 in Peirce Secondary School. The main trainer for the programme was Mr Paul Yuen who was visually handicapped. Through Paul's sharing and teaching, many of the students began to see the importance of relationships in their family and school as valuable things in their lives. Paul's personal sharing of how he overcame his obstacles as a visually handicapped person left a deep impression upon the students.

From June to August 2008, together with Paul, there was another 8-sessions programme for 24 students from Secondary 2 Normal Academic classes. During these eight sessions, the students participated in various group activities like group discussions, archery, dragon boating and a field trip to Helping Hand Drug Rehabilitation Centre. Through these activities, the students learnt the importance of a persevering spirit and setting clear goal in order to achieve the dreams in their lives.

At the end of the programme, the students wrote...

"I learnt to believe in myself and never to take drugs."
Maverick Khoo, 14 years old

"I learnt that nothing is impossible and to keep your head in the game."
Desiree Goh, 14 years old

"I learnt to make right choices for your own future and set your goal towards your dream."
Nicholson, 14 years old

"Aim and work towards my goal. Have perseverance and determination."
Seraphina Poh, 14 years old



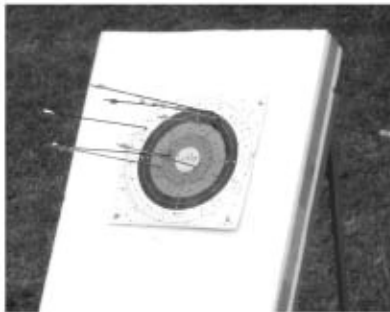
PRESBYTERIAN HIGH SCHOOL

REACH FSC conducted a 7-session STEP-UP programme for two Secondary 2 Normal Academic classes. These two classes were identified by the school for their behavioural, self-esteem and relational issues. A total of four indoor groupwork sessions and three outdoor sessions of dragon boat, archery and community service visit were conducted for the students.

The first half of the year, the STEP UP programme was targeted at a group of 22 boys and 19 girls. The boys and girls were divided into two groups because the school felt that the needs and issues were very different. The boys faced issues like self-esteem, peer pressure, low motivation, anger management and bullying. As for the girls, they faced issues like managing their feelings and emotions, self-defeating thoughts, self image and boy-girl relationships.



The boys group picked up basic skills like archery and dragon boat which they enjoyed very much. The archery session brought the boys' attention to setting goals and achieving them. It was encouraging to see several of them improving in their shooting and seeing a few of them hitting bull's eye. The boys were also challenged to apply what they have learnt in archery; focus, discipline and determination, to their school work. Through dragon boat, the boys learnt to put aside their differences and appreciate the values of teamwork and cooperation.



The girls' group responded well to journaling. Time was set aside after the sessions for them to write down their thoughts, feelings and questions. This activity enhanced the relationship, rapport building and deep sharing between the female workers and the students. Several girls shared personal issues like difficulties managing their anger, suicidal thoughts and boy-girl relationships.



In the second half of the year, the STEP UP programme was for a class of 21 boys and 20 girls. The focus was guidance and awareness with self-identity, self-esteem, self-confidence, emotional issues like resolving conflicts in a positive manner and respect, and relational issues with their families.



The highlight for this group of boys was when they watched the 'death crawl' clip from the movie 'Facing the Giants'. After watching how the young team leader managed to exceed his own physical limits, the boys were challenged to set and test their own physical limits by doing the most number of push-ups. To their own pleasant surprise, they discovered that many of them were able to exceed the target number of push-ups they set for themselves. A few of them even went beyond their target and did many more push-ups just to understand their highest limits.

The highlight for the girls was the community service visit to Sree Narayana Mission Home for the Aged. Even though many of them had never helped out with household chores at home, they showed great enthusiasm and willingness to do some cleaning and feeding of the elderly at the home. The interaction among them making cards with the residents also gave them a chance to overcome their initial apprehension and open their eyes and hearts to the interesting life stories of the elderly.

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK

UNITY SECONDARY SCHOOL



2008 saw REACH FSC's first year of STEP UP programme in Unity Secondary School. The identified groups were two classes of Secondary 2 Normal Academic classes and a Secondary 3 Normal Technical class. These students were chosen for the programme because the school felt that they needed help and guidance in their self-esteem issue and motivational struggle in school.



The staff planned and conducted a 8-session programme of indoor groupwork and experiential outdoor activities for each of the 3 classes. The theme of 'I CAN' was thus adopted as a motivational and inspiring statement in thoughts and in action for the students.



The theme of 'I CAN' was emphasized and reinforced in the programme and brought across to the students through challenging and experiential outdoor activities like dragon boat, archery, and Canopy Challenge Walk.



In the first half of the year, the programme for the Secondary 2 Normal Academic and Secondary 3 Normal Technical classes ended with two follow up activities; a visit to The Helping Hand Halfway House and dragon boat. During the visit to The Helping Hand, the students learnt about drug addiction, drug abuse and its consequences. The students were given a presentation of the various illegal drugs and their effects, and given a tour of the centre.



The students also went for a dragon boat session which put their teamwork and endurance to the test. The students were challenged to apply what they had learnt into practice, believing that 'I CAN' to achieve their goals and reach the end point when they raced against each other in a friendly dragon boat competition.

In the second half of the year, STEP UP programme was conducted for a Secondary 2 Normal Academic class. The programme consisted of five indoor groupwork sessions, one archery session, one Canopy Challenge Walk, and a visit to Teen Challenge DARE Centre (a Christian halfway house for male adults overcoming substance addictions and behavioural addictions).

The Canopy Challenge Walk was told by many students as one of the things they liked best about STEP UP programme, although it was the first time for many. This was an activity where the students had to be suspended by cables five storeys above the ground and complete four different sections of track course. The tracks varied with increasing difficulty towards the end. It was truly a litmus test of courage and overcoming fear!

Thus, it was an 'I CAN' walk for many of them as they learnt to step out in courage and overcome their own fears. The smile and relief on their faces as they reached the end point was a moment of much cheer. Three cheers to 'I CAN' via STEP UP!

YIO CHU KANG SECONDARY SCHOOL

It was the first year of STEP UP Programme in Yio Chu Kang Secondary. There were 100 students who participated in the programme. They were segregated into two boys' groups and two girls' groups by the school.

In the four sessions, the boys' group underwent a series of activities such as archery, dragon boat, high elements, obstacle course with blindfold and basketball matches. Through the activities, the boys were given opportunities to step out of their comfort zone to undertake challenging tasks and encouraged to persevere till they achieved their intended goals.

These fun, conducive and experiential experiences allowed the boys to learn the importance of self-confidence, motivation and teamwork. At the end of the programme, two boys recounted their experience ...

'The program touched my heart' 13 years old, Jian Jie

'It's a very nice program! I like it a lot. Really hope that I can have it again' 14 years old, Ivan



In the girls' group, two runs of a customized groupwork 'Girls Pillow Talk' was rolled out in the span of five sessions. Through selected movies, music videos, pop songs, group activities, role plays, personal stories from social workers, high elements and dragon boat, the girls got to re-think and re-instate their stance on boy-girl relationships.

Each participant had a journal in which they penned down their learning points and comments. This was an effective and safe channel for them to share their personal thoughts with the social workers. This allowed the social workers to know the participants on a personal level and helped the girls to feel supported in their struggles. After the programme, the girls forged a strong bond with the social workers and they keep in contact with one another till this day. Two girls recounted their experience ...

"I find the program very good. It taught us about issues regarding pre-marital sex. It was fun!" 14 years old, Shi Ling

"Very fun and makes me learn a lot of thing. I hope got second chance to have STEP UP again" 14 years old, Nicole



ZHONG HUA SECONDARY SCHOOL

The STEP UP programme in Zhong Hua Secondary School consisted of three runs of group work and a 2-day camp, targeting at a total of 73 students. The programme was run with the theme of 'I Can, You Can, We Can and They Can'.

Through various activities like archery and community service, the students learnt what it meant to set goals, to be determined and disciplined to work towards achieving their targets.

The students also visited and volunteered help at the Christalite Methodist Home for the Destitute, Sree Narayana Mission Home for Aged Sick and the Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped. The students did a fund-raising project for the Christalite Methodist Home for the Destitute.

They recycled coasters, decorated and turned them into unique beautiful candle holders. Then they set up a booth in their school during recess and lunch time to sell these candle holders to raise funds for Home. The amount raised was channelled to purchase adult diapers for elderly in the Home.

As part of a post-examination programme, 16 lower Secondary boys enjoyed a camp. During the two days, they participated in a series of exciting outdoors activities such as 'food chase', bowling, rock climbing, station games, and dragon boat and a finale of BBQ session in school. During these activities, the students were encouraged to set personal goals for the first 6 months of 2009. These goals will be mailed to them in June 2009 for them to review their progress.

When the camp ended, Alan, one of the campers, wrote...

"I really enjoy the time...thank you guys for cheering us up when we are giving up and thank you for all the support that you guys have given me :) Hope to see you guys again next year, last but not least, THANK YOU!".



SPECIAL PROJECTS

REACH FSC ON 93.8 LIVE!

REACH FSC was invited to host a radio talk show on 93.8LIVE, from January to March 2008. Each broadcast slot was broadcast 'live' every Saturday, from 1-2 pm. It was indeed a challenging task for the staff at REACH, as it was their first foray into the radio broadcast.

The theme chosen for the series of 13 broadcast slots was "Family Matters". In each weekly segment, a specific topic related to the current state of local families and marriages would be discussed thus catering to the needs of parents, married couples and even teenagers.

Besides the staff at REACH FSC, there were volunteers – couples, parents, teenagers, who joined us as guest speakers on the show. There was no denying that the volunteers' anecdotes, life stories and personal life lessons entertained and impacted many people who tuned in to the show.

REACH FSC received much positive feedback and commendations for this programme - some parents said

that they felt encouraged by the sharing; others said they enjoyed listening to the stories and practical pointers.



Some of the subjects discussed on Family Matters were:

1. How to keep the flame of passion burning brightly in your marriage
2. Knowing his needs, her needs
3. The rise of extra martial affairs in Singapore
4. Family Togetherness – setting up healthy family rituals
5. Boundaries and conflict resolution
6. How to talk so your child will listen
7. What youths really want
8. How to be a parent coach in today's society

REACH FSC would like to thank MediaCorp Radio for their partnership in this wonderful opportunity in reaching lives and touching hearts nation wide. A special thanks to all the volunteers for their courage and willingness to share life lessons with the listeners and spending their precious Saturday afternoons on the talk show with us.

PROFESSIONAL SEMINAR: MAKING PEACE WITH YOUR PAST BY DR DAVID STOOP



In 2008, REACH FSC organized her first professional seminar "Making Peace with Your Past" at Quality Hotel on 25 April 2008. The invited speaker was Dr David Stoop, a well recognized clinical psychologist and director of the Center for Family Therapy in the States. He is someone with more than 30 years of professional experience.

During the one-day seminar, Dr Stoop shared both from his professional and personal experiences that people grow up with residual baggage from the past. Some of these baggages made one stronger, more resourceful and more resilient while some baggage left others bitter, cynical or more wary. Whatever the experiences, the past experiences will create an indelible imprint on the adult nature, interpersonal relationships, marital interactions and parenting styles.

Drawing from 30 years of years' experience as a licensed psychologist, Dr Stoop taught participants on how to be an effective people-helper. He looked at the residual baggage people carry around with them, how to manage these baggage and some of the differences in working with individuals, couples and families during the process of helping them to make peace with their pasts. Dr Stoop not only taught the participants many insightful concepts on the topic, he also shared his life stories candidly – bringing life, poignancy and practicality to all who were there. About 145 social workers, counsellors, psychologists and therapists from the local helping professional sectors attended and benefited from this seminar.

Thoughts from participants:

- "Great! Case examples were excellent, good and appropriate theoretical grounding, well balanced seminar."
- "The speaker illustrated his ideas on the topic very well with life stories and personal life examples."
- "Excellent resource speaker for this subject and I greatly benefited from this seminar."
- "Thank you for bringing such a prominent and experienced person like Dr David Stoop to Singapore!"

SPECIAL PROJECTS

MINISTER'S VISIT TO REACH FSC

On 12 May 2008, REACH FSC had the privilege of hosting a group of distinguished visitors at the centre. Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports, RADM (RET) Kwek Siew Jin, President of NCSS, Ms Tina Hung, Deputy CEO of NCSS and other officials visited REACH family Service Centre. The main objective of the visit was to gain a better understanding of the sector and the programmes that REACH FSC runs.

Upon the arrival of the visitors, our senior social worker, Mr Joe Chan gave a presentation to introduce the history of REACH and the core programmes run by the centre. Thereafter, Mr Ho Siew Cheong, our President, chaired an informal dialogue session between Dr Vivian, officials of MCYS, NCSS, REACH staffs and Management Committee. Some key issues pertaining to the social service sector were raised and discussed. Future possible collaborations were also explored, to build stronger synergy between the different agencies, with the objective of better serving the neighbouring community. After the fruitful dialogue session, the visitors were taken on a quick tour of the centre. The visit ended with a simple tea reception.



LIVING WELL : INTERVIEWS ON MEDIACORP'S VARIETY PROGRAMME

Living Well was a 13-episodes variety programme telecasted by MediaCorp Channel 8. In each episode, three guests were invited during the talk show to share their expert view on mental wholeness and wellness. REACH FSC was invited to provide professional view from the counsellor's perspective for two episodes on 21 May and 30 July 2008. During these two shows, Ms Ng Ai Ling shared on the topics of 'A Positive Personality – Nature or Nurture?' and 'How To Maintain Mental Wellness In A Fast Pace Society?'

SPECIAL PROJECTS

2008 MBTI® ASIA CONFERENCE

REACH FSC was invited to make a presentation at the 2008 MBTI® Asia Conference on 1 August 2008. Our Senior Counsellor, Ms Falcia Tan, presented on the topic 'When Ms Loud Tidy meets Mr Quiet Messy: The MBTI® instrument in Family, Marital & Counselling Contexts'. The conference had participants from Africa, Australia, Europe, the Middle East and Asia. While most of the presenters were from the private and corporate sector, REACH was able to bring a new angle as Ms Falcia spoke about the use of MBTI® in the non-profit people-helping sector. She introduced REACH FSC and the use of MBTI® in our marriage preparation, family life education and counselling services. Participants were intrigued by the engaging presentation and the new perspective to the use of MBTI® and gave positive feedback.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION

'BACK TO SCHOOL' VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION 2008

REACH FSC held her annual Volunteer Appreciation Tea on 24 November 2008 at SMU Administration Building. The theme was "Back to School". To bring back some fond memories of school time, we turned the SMU conference room into a classroom filled with black boards, colourful pencils, markers and papers for drawing and writing. Gift bags with simple items like colourful bookmarks, rulers and memo pad were given to the volunteers to welcome them back to school.

Dressed in school uniform, our staff ushered all our youths and adults into the classroom. A slide show was presented to feature all our volunteers in action during the various programmes. To express our appreciation, all the staffs presented a skit and dance item "Reach for the Star" to thank them for their gift of time and service that shone like star at REACH. It was a memorable gathering for all of us, enjoying the fun, food and fellowship among friends.



STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Workshop / Seminar / Courses	Date	Duration	Staff
Civil Law for NPOs	Jan	1 day	Grace Lim
Engaging Youths Through their Culture	Jan	2 days	Joe Chan Joanne Fu
Management of Family Violence (Intermediate)	Feb	3 days	Lee Yoke Mey
Voice Spa Workshop	Apr	1 day	Mok Sin Lai
Management of Family Violence (Intermediate)	Apr	3 days	Grace Lim
Techniques in Couple Counselling	May	3 days	Ng Ai Ling
Working with Youths	May	5 days	Joanne Fu
Working in Schools: Youth Gangsterism & Violence	Jun	3 days	Joe Chan
Experiencing God Through Counselling	Jul	3 days	Grace Lim
Techniques in Couple Coounselling	Aug	2 days	Mok Sin Lai
Discovering the Rhythm in You - A Professional Seminar on the Practice of Groupwork	Sep	2 days	Joe Chan Jaslyn Tan Serene
Friendly Schools & Families Programmes	Sep	3 days	Joe Chan
Fundamentals of Facilitation	Sep	1 day	All Staff
Working with Youths - Intro	Sep	3 days	Serene Tan
Better Minute Writing for NPOs	Sep	2 days	Tay Lay Tshin
Fundamentals of Facilitation (In-House Training by Mrs Ding-Khoo Seok Ling)	Sep	1 day	All Staff
Therapeutic Intervention - Relational Risk-taking Men and Affairs,	Nov	1 day	Grace Lim
Family Mediation Skill - Intro	Oct	2 days	Mok Sin Lai Angeline Jayanthi
Family Law for Social Service Professionals	Nov	1 day	Mok Sin Lai Angeline Jayanthi
Working in Schools: Youth Gangsterism & Violence	Dec	3 days	Serene Tan