



They're Talking, But Are You Listening?

They might just be between 10 and 13, but the ten young panellists of Singapore Children's Forum, held at ITE College West on 23 November 2013, raised some pretty big questions about family, education, friendship, money and security.

"Is feeling safe being safe?" asked one. "What is the true meaning of love?" probed another.

Themed 'Hear What Matters to Us', the inaugural forum was organised by Singapore Children's Society to serve as a national platform for children to voice their opinions. Preparation for the forum began in June 2012, when Children's Society began polling children about the issues that were important to them. Several preliminary brainstorming sessions helped flesh out the five key topics.



Acting Minister of Manpower Mr Tan Chuan-jin and Chairman of Singapore Children's Society Mr Koh Choon Hui listening to what the children have to say at the Singapore Children's Forum.

"One of the Society's strategic thrusts is to be a voice for children," said Chairman Mr Koh Choon Hui. "By listening intently to the voices of children, we become the bridge between them and society at large."

Guest-of-Honour Mr Tan Chuan-jin, Acting Minister for Manpower, added that it is important for parents and educators to listen to what children have to say, and to support them during their formative years.

(cont'd on P2)



他们说话，您在听吗？

2013年11月23日，新加坡儿童会主办的首届《儿童大会》，在工艺教育西区学院举行。年龄介于10岁到13岁的10名小主讲者和大约120名与会学生，以及5名成人主讲者，针对孩子们最关注的课题，提出看法。

大会主题是“聆听我们的世界”。儿童会早在一年多前，便为大会展开筹备工作。儿童会先向孩子们进行调查，以了解哪些课题对他们最重要。经过几场初步的讨论会后，儿童会最终敲定5大课题：家庭、教育、友谊、金钱和安全。

儿童会主席许俊辉先生说：“儿童会的策略大纲之一，是替孩子们发言。通过仔细聆听孩子们的心声，儿童会可以成为孩子和社会之间的桥梁。”

本届大会特别嘉宾是人力部代部长陈川仁先生。他认为，家长和教育工作者必须从孩子小时候就开始聆听他们说话、同他们沟通。最重要的是，大家必须参与孩子的成长过程，因为这是孩子吸收最多、印象最深刻的时候。



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“Our children have their perspectives. We need to start listening to them, and talking to them. Most importantly, I think we need to be part of their lives when they are young, when they absorb the most and are most impressionable,” he said.

Some 120 students attended the forum, which also featured five adult panellists – founder of Yellow Ribbon Project and Dads for Life Mr Jason Wong, veteran educator and social service advocate Mdm Rashidah Abdul Rasip, registered psychologist and counsellor Ms Vivienne Ng, journalist Ms Jane Ng, and pilot Captain David Eliathamby.

During the event, three deserving youth volunteers also received Most Outstanding Student Volunteer Awards. Manjusri Secondary School student Gan Bao Na, Yuying Secondary School student Kang Joo Soon, and Mohamed Husaini Bin Mohd Yatim of New Town Secondary School received trophies for their contributions to their schoolmates and the community.



The wounds inflicted by child abuse and neglect are more than skin deep, and a new resource, the OCBC-TODAY Children's Fund, will help address the emotional impact of such abuse.

Launched at the OCBC Centre on 3 October 2013, the Fund will go towards counselling and therapy intervention programmes that will, hopefully, help the child and teenage beneficiaries of Singapore Children's Society to develop healthy self-esteem and live purposeful lives.

The Fund aims to raise \$1.5 million annually to reach out to around 2,000 distressed families. OCBC Bank has committed \$1 to the Fund for every \$2 raised by the public. MediaCorp's TODAY newspaper is the official media partner for the Fund.

Mr Koh Choon Hui, Chairman of Children's Society, said: "Every child deserves to be loved and protected, and to be given the opportunity to reach his or her fullest potential. In cases where they cannot receive such support, Singapore Children's Society steps in to provide that help."

New Fund to Help Children Recover from Abuse



From left to right: OCBC Bank Group CEO Mr Samuel Tsien, Children's Society Chairman Mr Koh Choon Hui, MediaCorp Deputy CEO Mr Chang Long Jong, and MediaCorp Editor-in-Chief Mr Walter Fernandez viewing the paintings at the OCBC Artspace. Proceeds from the sale go to the OCBC-TODAY Children's Fund.

The fund-raising was kicked off by 15 children from Children's Society who created paintings to be sold at a silent auction, with bids starting at \$500. The paintings were exhibited at the OCBC Artspace from 3 to 11 October. All were sold, with the \$21,013.89 raised getting the Fund off to a good start.

To donate or for more information, visit www.ocbctodayfund.sg or contact either Ms Gan Jia Ying or Ms Annette Ho on 6273 2010.

Our Book Wins POPULAR Readers' Choice Awards

A book published by Singapore Children's Society, 《我们这样长大：新加坡的童年生活》 ('Singapore Childhood: Our Stories Then and Now'), has clinched the second prize in POPULAR Readers' Choice Awards 2013, organised by POPULAR Bookstore.

It was among the favourites of online voters who chose from 10 shortlisted Chinese titles.

The book was launched alongside an English-language version as part of the Society's 60th Anniversary celebrations in 2012. The books trace the political, economic and social changes that have taken place in Singapore over the past six decades, and explore how they have transformed childhoods.



Striking a Balance between Home and Work

Being a working parent in 21st century Singapore is no easy feat. Raising a child not only takes money, but physical time and emotional energy. Coupled with the demands of the fast-paced corporate world,

it means that it is often hard to draw a line between work and family time. Work-life balance can often be elusive.

It is a scenario that Speaker of Parliament Mdm Halimah Yacob knows well. The mother of five shared her experiences attempting to strike a balance between work and family with the 200 participants of the 7th Singapore Children's Society Lecture. Entitled 'The Modern Dilemma: Reconciling Children, Family and Career', it was held at Singapore Management University on 5 October 2013.

Mdm Halimah acknowledged that juggling work and family can be a daunting challenge, and emphasised the need for comprehensive

measures to support families. She proposed having pro-family – not just pro-procreation – policies, including those encouraging fathers to play more active roles in looking after children. She revealed that she herself shares responsibilities with her husband. Mdm Halimah also suggested that programmes organised by non-governmental organisations go beyond catering to children, and involve their parents as well so as to encourage them to play larger roles in their children's lives.

Mdm Halimah commended Singapore Children's Society for its work and commitment to the cause of family and children.

Mdm Halimah Yacob speaking about her experiences. Children's Society Research and Advocacy Standing Committee member and moderator Dr Warren Lee is next to her.





Kachan Takes Our Staff Back to School



Singapore Children's Society's staff went 'Back to School' for their annual get-together Kachan 2013, proving that age is nothing but a number.

Held at Safra Mount Faber on 7 December, the 'students', many decked out in school uniforms, arrived in full force, ready to relive their youth while mingling with 'classmates' from other centres.

The ice was broken with a bowling competition – with both the teams with the highest and lowest scores rewarded, after which Long Service Awards were presented to eight staff members by Dr Stephanie Leonard, nominated member of the Society's Executive Committee and advisor to the Sunbeam Place Standing Committee.

Then came a sound no one ever forgets – the bell for recess. They tucked into a scrumptious buffet spread to gear up for the 'class test', where there were lovely goodie bags up for grabs for those with the right answers.

Prizes also went out to the best dressed student, the teacher's pet, the most rebellious student and the record breaking late-comer.

The day was not only a great bonding exercise, but also allowed participants to relive their youth.

LONG SERVICE STAFF

- 25 Years** **Mr Goh Soon Huat**, Driver, Fund-raising Department
- 15 Years** **Ms Tan Bee Joo**, Director, Talks and Workshops Programmes Centre; Co-Director, Family Service Centre (Yishun)
- 10 Years** **Ms Cheng Pei Yun**, Senior Social Worker, Family Service Centre (Yishun)
- 5 Years** **Ms Catherine Sanchez Maderazo**, Senior Social Worker, Family Service Centre (Yishun)
- Ms Loo Cho Li**, Social Worker, Family Service Centre (Yishun)
- Ms Rosie Lim**, Research Officer, Research and Outreach Centre
- Ms Tan Yueling**, Senior Counsellor, Student Service Hub (Bukit Merah)
- Ms Zune Thu Thu**, Housemother, Sunbeam Place

Learning to Take Less for Granted

Some 30 of our beneficiaries had their eyes opened to how easy it can be to take things for granted during Camp Zero, including the amount of effort parenting takes and modern day conveniences like electricity.

The theme for this instalment of the bi-annual camp, organised by Children Service Centre, was gratitude.

The camp was held at CAMP CHALLENGE, a campsite located at Admiralty Road East, from 25 to 27 November 2013, and saw the children negotiating challenging station games and a 'high elements' obstacle course to earn money for their dinner. Through the games, they experienced first-hand the challenges their parents go through, including the difficulty of making ends meet.

During the games, they also took turns to be blindfolded, or have a hand or leg strapped, so they could learn to be grateful for being free from disability.

The children also had to learn to live without electricity and light, wash their own clothes and make their own meals.

Brothers Arief, 12, and Fariez, 10, said their favourite parts were the station games, learning to pitch a tent, and 'high elements'. They also came away from the camp with a better appreciation for everything their parents did for them, they added.

"We learnt to appreciate what we have and learnt how it feels like for our parents to wake up in the morning to wash the clothes and prepare breakfast. We could feel that our parents work very hard to earn money. Even though it is very hard, they never give up on trying to earn money to buy food for the family."

The final day saw participants tucking into a hearty breakfast and then collecting autographs from the staff and their newfound friends.

"But then the camp ended and we felt very sad. Some of us even cried in the bus. We will miss the friends we made."



Retreating to Bliss

Having never ventured further than their homes or schools, checking into the Changi Beach Club on 18 November 2013 for the night was a real treat for 58 residents of Sunbeam Place, a home for abused and neglected children.

Most were struck by the tranquility of the resort when they first arrived, but awe quickly gave way to excitement as they discovered the plush beds in their rooms and the prospect of boundless fun.

The older children, aged 9 to 17, started their day with a couple of rounds of bowling followed by a splash in the resort's Olympic-sized swimming pool, while the two- to eight-year-olds had a ball in the colourful indoor 'ball pool' before cooling off in the children's play pool under the watchful eyes of the home's 27 staff members.

Persuaded to leave the pool and freshen up as evening beckoned, the children got dressed for a sumptuous barbecue buffet dinner by the sea.

Eager to prolong the pampering for as long as they could, some of the girls even planned a mini 'spa-rt'y' in their rooms after dinner was done, with rejuvenating face masks provided courtesy of our staff.

Paradise indeed!



Make a Positive IMPACT



From teaching children about the impact of global warming to making movie dates with the elderly, close to 40 youth from eight secondary schools put forward their best ideas for Project IMPACT, an Inter-CABIN Re-Project Competition held at Siglap Secondary School.

Organised by Singapore Children's Society Student Service Hub (Bukit Merah), the Project CABIN participants started on their projects in April last year, pitching their ideas and organising activities ranging from team building to environmental wellness workshops with children.

Four schools won prizes at the final presentation, which was held on 14 September. Yuying Secondary School won the top award for its project on global warming. Manjusri Secondary School and Chua Chu Kang Secondary School tied for the first runner-up position for their projects on conducting an art workshop for the elderly and making movie dates with the elderly respectively. Siglap Secondary School's project on creating awareness about animal abuse was the second runner-up.

Impressed by the students' work and how well organised the competition was, guest judge and Principal Executive of the National Council of Social Service Ms Wang Siliang said: "The competition was a good opportunity for the students to learn from each other."



Singapore Children's Society's staff members gave their pre-loved items a new lease of life as part of the Singapore Kindness Movement.

These items were donated to the inaugural Free Market, a festive event organised by Youth Service Centre (Toa Payoh) and RoundBox on 9 November 2013 at the Hall of Trust at OnePeople.sg.

Over 100 beneficiaries were able to find items they needed at the Free Market, including apparel, accessories, games and stationery, prompting smiles all around.

During the event, the talented youth beneficiaries of the two centres also put up hip-hop dances and band performances, keeping the crowd entertained.

A big thank you to the generous staff of Children's Society.

Learning to Lead with Heart



Life might not have been easy for Singapore Paralympic gold medallist Ms Yip Pin Xiu, who suffers from muscular dystrophy, but she has refused to let it get her down.

She told her story, including the challenges she has faced and how she has dealt with them, to the 79 students from 10 CABIN schools who attended CABIN Club Camp 2013 – Camp Chefia. The theme was 'Leading With Heart'.

Held from 5 to 7 November at CAMP CHALLENGE, the annual camp helps attendees develop leadership skills while caring for others.

Prior to Ms Yip's talk, the campers took part in an experiential learning activity to understand the issues of being physically challenged. This made the talk especially meaningful, and helped them better empathise with the plight of the disabled.

On the final evening, the students held an Entertainment Night and put up a show with various components, including reality TV, advertising, news and a variety show.

The camp was very well received by the campers, especially the Entertainment Night, said volunteer facilitator Mr Vijayan Haridas, adding: "I think all the youth enjoyed themselves thoroughly throughout the camp. Every single person participated and contributed toward making this camp a success."



Singapore Paralympic gold medallist Ms Yip Pin Xiu shares her story with the CABIN Club campers.





The Season of Giving



Close to \$700 was raised for Singapore Children's Society during the annual Children's Charities Association Christmas Fair and Walkathon on 7 December 2013.

During the event, held at Ngee Ann City Civic Plaza, our fund-raising staff manned a stall selling Children's Society merchandise such as pinwheels, game cards and stationery holders made by our beneficiaries. Proceeds will go toward supporting the Society's work.

Our RoundBox youth also performed several numbers – the RoundBox dancers grooved to hip-hop beats while their band sang three songs, concluding with 'Mistletoe'. As the song came to an end, lead singer Daniel invited an audience member to join him on stage. This sweet and impromptu gesture drew resounding applause and cheers from the crowd.

For the Society's beneficiaries who had the chance to participate, including hip-hop dancer Fithri, it was a chance to say thank you.

"It was indeed a great experience getting together to perform for the yearly CCA Fair representing Singapore Children's Society RoundBox. Thank you for giving us this opportunity to give back to the society and to say thank you for the support you have given us all this while. It means a lot to us and we love you!"



A Very Special Christmas

Christmas last year was made even more memorable for eight beneficiaries of the Children's Medical Fund and their families.

A group of 20 kind-hearted individuals, who call themselves 'Jesus Love', put together their resources to sponsor and participate in a Christmas outing to Resorts World Sentosa on 21 December.

The half-day outing gave our beneficiaries the chance to bond, relax and spend quality time with their loved ones. Everyone was also treated to a buffet lunch, and got a chance to participate in face painting, a balloon sculpting show and party games. They also sang Christmas carols and even got a chance to meet Santa Claus!

The Children's Medical Fund helps children suffering from chronic or life-threatening illnesses to afford quality medical treatment.

Thank you to the team for bringing joy to the children!





High Praise for New Programme Paideia

Peter* was diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) when he was young, but because his symptoms, which included hyperactivity and impulsivity, were not properly managed, he turned to drugs instead of his ADHD medication. At 18, he got into trouble with the law.

His experience drove his friend, researcher Mr Aloysius Chow, 33, to dedicate himself to developing more comprehensive programmes that would help children and teenagers with ADHD better manage their symptoms from a young age.

With another friend, 36-year-old programme executive Mr Jeremy Yap, he spent a year on research and much deliberation before surfacing with Paideia, a weekly programme that gets small groups of 10 children together to build character through activities, games and discussions.

While Paideia is primarily meant for seven to 11-year-old children with ADHD, it has also benefitted the children at Sunbeam Place, who, since the programme was introduced in 2012, have picked up values such as determination and confidence.

To date, 30 children at Sunbeam Place have benefitted from the programme.

The grandmother of one of the beneficiaries gave Paideia the thumbs up, saying that

her grandson became more respectful and kind after spending just a few months in the programme.

Explaining why she felt there was a fit between Paideia and Sunbeam Place, Dr Siew Lai Keun, Director of Sunbeam Place, said: "When our children felt that Aloysius and Jeremy understood and cared about them deeply, they had the intrinsic motivation to learn the lessons on values and character they shared. They provided opportunities for decision-making to help our children take ethical action and see the positive results in their daily lives. Through this programme, our children grew in character and learnt values and principles which will positively impact their lives in years to come."

"Aloysius and Jeremy showered upon the children their endless patience and care. We are truly grateful and appreciative that they volunteered their time to enrich our children's lives," she added.

Benefits to both sides

Paideia has not just been a great programme for the children of Sunbeam Place, but has also proven to be extremely fulfilling for both Mr Chow and Mr Yap, despite challenges early on.

Mr Chow remembers some of the stumbling blocks: "Initially, when we started working with the kids, we found it very difficult to communicate and to run the programme. We had to gain their trust and learn how to communicate at their level, and we had to do a lot of research to understand these kids better."

Despite that, the duo pressed on, he said, adding: "We have to take the initiative to help people. If we have the resources and we know what to do, we should step forward to help others. We can't save everybody, but as long as you save a few people, that's good enough."

Mr Yap echoes his sentiments, adding: "I feel very happy and proud when the kids remember what I taught them a week, or even a month before. They have taken what I have shared with them to heart and remembered it. It is very gratifying and I am very pleased that I am doing some good."

* Name has been changed to protect the individual's privacy.



Singapore Children's Society Charity Gala Movie Premiere



Final Push for 2013's Fund-Raising

Singapore Children's Society held its Charity Gala Movie Premiere 'Three Peas in a Pod' at Golden Village VivoCity on 11 November. Acting Minister for Culture, Community and Youth, and Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Communications and Information Mr Lawrence Wong (centre) was the guest of honour. On his left is Appeals Standing Committee Chairman Mr Kurt Wee. Children's Society Chairman Mr Koh Choon Hui is on the extreme right. A total of \$83,491 has been raised through this event so far.



Heartfelt Thanks to Our Volunteers



Singapore Children's Society showed its appreciation for the hard work and dedication of its volunteers at the annual Tribute to Volunteers, held at Golden Village VivoCity on 19 October.

Over 130 volunteers, guests and Society staff were treated to a sumptuous international buffet brunch at the foyer outside GV Max, followed by a screening of sci-fi drama Gravity.

Our volunteers also took home more tangible memories in the form of photo prints of themselves playing around with outrageous props in a photo booth.

Sharing Knowledge for Better Communities

A well-known Chinese proverb goes: "Give a man a fish and you will feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you will feed him for a lifetime". It inspired Singapore Children's Society's Talks and Workshops Programmes Centre, which opened last year.

Our 10th centre aims to draw on our years of experience and the knowledge gleaned from our work with children, youth and families over the years. We hope to be able to share this with the community, including our three target groups – children and youth, parents and caregivers, and volunteers and teachers.

As part of our outreach, the centre has developed a series of talks and workshops based on the Ministry of Education's Social and Emotional Learning framework that caters to children and youth.

The centre offers educational talks for adults, including ways to broach issues like boy-girl relationships, address school bullying, and discover one's love language for effective parenting.

For enquiries, contact either Ms Nur Hidayah at nhfauzan@childrensociety.org.sg or Mr Fang Xinwei at xwfang@childrensociety.org.sg or call them on 6753 7331.



新基金 协助受虐儿童

被虐待或被忽略的儿童，所受的伤害往往比表面还要深。为协助减轻这些伤害对受害者造成的心理影响，本地推出新的资源项目——“华侨银行-今日报儿童基金”。

基金的推介礼于2013年10月3日，在华厦中心举行。基金可以用来推行辅导和治疗干预计划，协助新加坡儿童会的受益儿童和青少年培养自信心，让他们的生活更有意义。

基金会的目标是每年筹集150万元，协助大约2千户贫困家庭。华侨银行承诺：公众每捐出2元善款，银行会捐出1元给基金。新传媒旗下的《今日报》是基金会的媒体宣传伙伴。

基金会的首个活动是把儿童会15名儿童亲手绘制的画作，通过无声拍卖的方式，从500元底价起拍。这些画作于10月3日到11日，在华侨银行艺术空间展出。所有画作都成功拍卖，为基金共筹得2万1千多元。

欲知捐款等详情，请浏览网站：www.ocbctodayfund.sg，或致电：6273 2010联络颜佳莹小姐或何慧丽小姐。



学习用 心 领航

我国首位残疾奥林匹克运动会游泳金牌得主叶品秀小姐，患有肌肉萎缩症。尽管面对生活上的种种挑战，但她从不轻言放弃。这位生命斗士向来自10所学校、出席“集装箱活动社营”的79名“集装箱活动社”学生会会员，分享了她的心路历程。

这个常年活动于2013年11月5日到7日，在海军部东路的挑战营举行。今年的主题是“用心领航”。除了培养学生们的领导能力，他们也从中学习关怀他人。

在出席叶小姐的分享会前，学生们参与了一项体验学习活动，以了解体障人士面对的各种困难。这不仅能让学生对体障人士的处境感同身受，也为分享会增添一层意义。

活动结束前一晚，学生们合力呈献一场与众不同的文娱晚会。表演项目包括：实况电视节目、广告、新闻和综艺节目。



平衡家庭与事业

在21世纪的今天，在职父母不易当。对此，国会议长哈莉玛女士感同身受。这位育有5个孩子的妈妈，在“第7届新加坡儿童会讲座”上，同200名与会者分享了她在平衡事业与家庭的经历。讲座于2013年10月5日在新加坡管理大学举行，主题是《现代人的困境：在孩子、家庭和事业之间取得平衡》。

哈莉玛女士坦言，要平衡事业和家庭极具挑战。她提议推行亲家庭措施，而不只是亲生育措施，包括鼓励为人父者积极参与照顾孩子。此外，哈莉玛女士建议：非政府组织推出的计划不单是帮助孩子，也要协助家长，鼓励他们在孩子的成长岁月中，扮演更重要的角色。

哈莉玛女士也赞扬新加坡儿童会，为协助本地家庭和儿童而付出的努力和辛劳。

国会议长兼讲座主讲人哈莉玛女士畅谈个人经历。儿童会研究与倡导常务委员兼讲座主持人李伟仁医生在旁聆听。



分享知识 建立美好社会

俗话说：授人以鱼，不如授人以渔。有鉴于此，新加坡儿童会在去年开设了讲座与工作坊计划及推广中心。

这是儿童会设立的第10间中心。新中心以儿童会这些年来在协助儿童、青少年和家庭方面所累积的经验和知识为基础。儿童会希望能跟社群分享这些经验，特别是三个目标群体：儿童与青少年、家长与看护者，以及义工与教师。

作为外展活动的一部分，中心根据教育部推出的“社交情绪学习”框架，为儿童和青少年制定系列讲座和工作坊。中心也为成年人举办教育讲座，探讨的课题包括：异性关系、校霸欺凌问题，以及如何促进亲子关系。

欲知有关讲座和工作坊的详情，请拨电：6753 7331联络方欣伟先生或 Nur Hidayah小姐。



《派代亚计划》



获高度赞赏

33岁的研究员周莱士先生有一位好友*彼得，自小被确诊患有注意力缺陷过动症（简称过动症）。由于没有妥善管理症状，彼得沦为吸毒者，并在18岁那年犯法。

好友的经历，促使周先生立志研发计划，协助过动症儿童和青少年更好地管理症状。他在另一名朋友——36岁的计划执行员叶春福先生的协助下，花了一年时间研究和检讨后，推出《派代亚计划》。

计划原本是要协助7到11岁的过动症患者。不过，计划自2012年在晨曦儿童之家推出后，儿童之家的孩子们也获益不浅。计划每周通过活动、游戏和讨论，让每组由10名孩子组成的小组，学习毅力、信心等良好品格。目前为止，共有30名儿童之家的孩子在计划下受惠。

晨曦儿童之家院长萧丽娟博士说：“通过这项计划，孩子们学会良好的价值观和原则，变得更乖巧懂事。这对他们的未来有正面帮助。”萧博士也感激周先生和叶先生拨出宝贵时间，充实孩子们的人生。

*人名采用假名，以保护当事人的身份。



