

BOYS' TOWN

Festival of Service



Painting of mural

Boys' Town launched our inaugural event for the 2013 *Festival of Service* amidst the festive joy of Chinese New Year with our steamboat lunch-cum-community outreach. This was held in collaboration with Matthew 25 Soup Kitchen, a community service ministry of the Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. About 100 Friends in Need (FINS) who are beneficiaries cared for by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul were invited to share in the celebrations, and our boys took charge of the food preparation, table setting, ushering, food serving, and post-event cleanup work with help from their parents, the staff and volunteers. Everyone enjoyed a sumptuous steamboat in an atmosphere suffused with the spirit of caring and sharing, while soaking up the cheerful

music performed live by the Korean Beautiful Mind Team volunteers. The *Festival of Service*

was launched in conjunction with the 65th anniversary of Boys' Town. The boys would like to show their appreciation for the generous partnership of the community in our work over these 65 years by sharing what they have received with other needy in the community too.

This initiative will help our boys cultivate leadership qualities, to nurture a heart of service towards others, to build rapport and teamwork, and to acquire useful life skills.

Do stay tuned for more news as our *Festival of Service* takes flight with the upcoming events that we have lined up for 2013:

Domestic Makeover

In each quarter of the year, a group of boys from Boys' Town will help to do a home makeover for a family that lives in a 1 or 2-room flat. The boys will help in cleaning and painting the house, do simple repairs and other minor refurbishments to improve the living conditions for the family. A total of 3 families will benefit from this project.

Charity Beyond Our Home

An initiative to help our boys appreciate what they possess while experiencing the culture and lifestyle of their "peers" in another country, this event will consist of two trips to St Fransiskus Xaverius Asrama, a children's home in Tanjung Balai, Indonesia. The boys had helped to paint a mural in a kindergarten in the first trip, while those on the second trip will help to improve living conditions for the children with spring cleaning, minor repair works, and maintenance of the compound.



*Lion dance performance
- Chinese New Year lunch*



Chinese New Year lunch



Tanjung Balai mural painting project

Message

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends & Benefactors of Boys' Town

We seemed to have entered and moved on into 2013 very quickly. We are now four months into the year.

Boys' Town started the year with the shifting and settling into the new building. The boys were very excited to shift into new dormitories and to try and make their new rooms "homely". The Brothers and staff also had to do some spring cleaning and shifted into the new quarters and offices in early 2013. We are now quite settled in, and the boys are looking forward to the completion of the rest of their facilities (like dining hall, recreation & TV hall, hobby rooms, the gym, etc...). Phase 2 is expected to be ready sometime in the middle of this year – on time for Boys' Town's 65th Anniversary – A Celebration of Service.

Boys' Town could not have undertaken such a big project for our youths if not for the generous support of each and every one of you. YOU have made it possible to build a brand new home for the boys of Boys' Town.

God and his Divine Providence also played a large part in helping us develop and fulfill the needs of the youths for whom we serve.

As we finish up this big undertaking of the new building, we look forward to celebrating 65 years of service for youths. We have new developed new programmes and services so that we can better serve the needs of the youths today.

One of the exciting programmes we have launched this year is the Festival of Service. "Reaching out" and "Being of Service to Others" is one of the basic teachings of St Louis Marie de Montfort, the founder of the Brothers of St Gabriel - who owns and runs Boys' Town.

The objective of this Festival of Service is for the Boys to experience the spirit of providing service and to help the needy. Although many of our boys come from single-parent and needy families, we want to make use of this Festival of Service to teach our boys so that they too can help and serve others no matter what their station in life is.

This issue of the newsletter will feature articles highlighting the progress of the YouthReach programme, a new mentoring and job placement programme initiated in our Alternative School and an interview with a Boy who has graduated from Boys' Town. I hope that these articles will inspire you to share our passion in wanting our boys to succeed. Please continue to support us in any way you can so that we can continue to serve our youth-at-risks.

Irene Loi

Executive Director, Boys' Town



Work Readiness Attachment Programme (WRAP) in Boys' Town Alternative School (BTAS)

The Boys' Town Alternative School (BTAS) was established in 2007 with its primary goal set to help those who are out of mainstream education, get a comprehensive learning journey. Over the years BTAS has housed more than 60 individuals from Primary six to Secondary five. The syllabuses and subjects taught at BTAS follow that of the Ministry of Education's very closely. The students are broken down into classes according to their level and streams. Each class holds a maximum of 6 students which enables our teachers to provide individualized learning.

In 2013, BTAS re-structured its curriculum and introduced an attachment program; Work Readiness Attachment Program (WRAP). WRAP is designed to provide upper secondary students with mentoring sessions as well as work attachments. The program aims to provide the participants with real working scenarios. It also aims to prepare them for working life. For five weeks every term, the participants will go through various life skills sessions that will help build their work attitude and work ethics for their work attachments. These sessions are designed by Boys' Town and are conducted by volunteers and mentors. Each session consists of a theory based presentation followed by role play activities. After attending five sessions, the participants were attached to a restaurant for one week where they held various positions according to their preferences. The participants had a chance to try various things like cooking, designing, telemarketing and even whipping up some fancy lattes behind the barista counter. Over the next three school terms, the participants will get a chance to try out various other jobs and will continue to learn life skills from the sessions as well as their mentors.

PROGRAMMES for the Boys—All work and no play?

As part of the boys' development and learning, a series of programmes and activities were carefully planned for them outside of their school curriculum. Here are just some activities that the boys went through recently.

Orientation camp 2013 at Pulau Ubin

The boys had to rough it out in a 3 days 2 nights camp at Pulau Ubin, sleeping in tents under the moonlight and having only a night powder bath to cleanse themselves. Throughout the camp, the boys shared frustration, hard work and laughter as they bonded and learnt to live together.



Universal Studio Singapore

The boys were kindly invited to join the Changi Airport Group for their Family day event. It goes without saying the boys were filled with excitement and had a blast taking the different rides and attractions. The only down side expressed from the boys was that they eventually had to leave for home.

Swedish House Mafia Concert (SHM)

Being the first concert for most of the boys, they were all excited and hyped up for the event and were even counting down the days to the event. It was a long wait for the concert to begin as the opening act took 2 hours. When the concert finally began, the boys could not contain their excitement and were all standing up and dancing to the beat of SHM's electro house mixes. It was a great concert which everyone enjoyed and a perfect way to kick start music and dance for 2013.



Street Outreach by YouthReach

By befriending at-risk-youths in their regular hangouts, our youth workers hope to build relationships by offering them support and guidance. Throughout 2012, YouthReach's Street Outreach service made contact with 152 youths in the Tampines vicinity. Having won the trust of these youths, our youth workers began to receive calls for assistance. We have since managed to resolve disputes, stop fights and connect runaway youths with their families.

In September 2012, the Street Outreach team had a breakthrough with a highly guarded enclave of at-risk-youths and proceeded to organize a Sepak Takraw Challenge Competition so as to meaningfully engage these youths in a character-building sports activity. For the duration of 11 weeks, the youths formed 6 teams to compete amongst themselves. To encourage good sportsmanship, bonus points were awarded to losing teams for displaying qualities of respect, endurance, discipline, and responsibility.

For 2013, the Outreach Team hopes to be able to reach out to more at-risk-youths.



Who WE ARE...

BOYS'TOWN was established in 1948 by the Brothers of St Gabriel. Our Home provides boarding and residential care for boys aged 11 to 18 who come primarily from troubled, single parent & financially needy families.

Despite being a registered charity with IPC status and also a member of the National Council of Social Services (NCSS), we depend highly on the generosity of our benefactors & supporters.

If you are interested to donate or volunteer your services you can contact our Community Partnerships Department at 6690 5420 or check out our website: www.boystown.org.sg for more information on how you can make a difference.

We thank you for making the lives of our boys at Boys' Town more meaningful & enriching.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

It has recently come to our attention that there are door-to-door ice-cream sellers claiming to be raising funds for Boys' Town.

We would like to inform you that these activities are not endorsed by us.

We have put up an Important Notice on our website at www.boystown.org.sg to notify members of the public.

If you encounter such peddlers, please do not hesitate to contact us through the email at info@boystown.org.sg and 6690 5420 or if it is after office hours, please contact this number 9623 4731 to check the validity of the fund-raising activity.

From the Desk of our Social Workers — Boys to Men.

Our social workers work with our boys very closely to ensure that their stay here will help them transform and develop into a better person so that they can become socially integrated, responsible and contributing members of society.

With this mission, Boys' Town has seen to the growth and development of a number of boys. In 2013, we aim to feature some of these graduates as a testimony of the type of work we do at moulding them from boys to men.

Eddie (*not his real name*), came to us when he was 13 and he was transferred from a children's home. His family was unable to provide for him due to financial reasons and inadequate caregiving. Eddie stayed in Boys' Town for 6 years and is presently in our aftercare programme. He has since completed his O levels and is pursuing his ITE course as a second year student.

The following is an interview with Eddie

1. What was your first experience of being at Boys' Town?
I felt like a loner as I did not know anyone then.
2. What are the key lessons that Boys' Town has taught you?
Discipline and leadership. These are two areas which I learnt through the programmes I underwent at Boys' Town.
3. How have you grown?
Probably in the area of being more sociable with my peers.
4. What is the most memorable experience at Boys' Town that you are thankful for?
The exchange programme sponsored by Freehills in 2012. I enjoyed myself tremendously and more importantly, I took a plane for the first time! Another memorable experience would be taking part in 'the Big Break', a culinary competition last year with Asian Food Channel. Through the experience, I made friends with my competitors and had lots of fun in the process. Each of them inspired me to do better in each challenge.
5. What are your aspirations?
I hope to be a person who is able to lead when I grow up



Urgently VOLUNTEERS Needed!

This year, our annual Boys' Town Flag Day is on **Wednesday, 5 June 2013**.

Be a Flag Seller and invite your family and friends to help sell flags. You will not only be helping to collect the much needed funds but at the same time making our cause more visible to the public.

To register, please contact *Lorraine* at Tel: 6690 5420 or email her at lorraine@boystown.org.sg with the following details:

Name:
NRIC:
Contact No: