

## **HELPING YOUTH-IN-NEED**

## MISSION

To help youth-in-need become socially integrated, responsible and contributing members of society by providing residential, outreach, community and school-based programmes.

## VISION

A CARING milieu

## VALUES

Care and concern

**A**daptability

Responsibility

Integrity

Nuturing

Godliness

#### ORGANISATION INFORMATION

Boys' Town is a non-profit organisation started in 1948 by the Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel. Each year, we reach out to 300 children and youth typically between the ages of 10 and 21 who come from disadvantaged and disengaged families, and may have suffered domestic violence, abandonment or the lack of care and financial support.

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Boys' Town remains dedicated in our mission to continue to serve the disadvantaged with genuine care and quality programmes.

It met the needs of 300 children, youth and families last year who had very little means or were begotten by family adversity.

One rising concern we face is the increase in broken young lives, from children who are ill-fed, covered with non-accidental injuries, to older youth who came from a chaotic home environment and have suffered from the absence of love.

Two new services – the shelter and hostel – were launched in 2013 to help tackle this issue and transform Boys' Town into an integrated centre to provide one-stop, coordinated care for young people in need.

Growing in our social responsibility, we supported clients from youth, young working adults to parents through our programmes, counselling and street outreach. Personalised care plans and regular training and research ensured that we efficiently manage our resources and reach more families.

As an independent charity organisation, most of our programmes are funded by public donations. The children whom we look after, the youth whom we reach out to, and the needy families whom we counsel, are supported by kind donations from individuals and corporations like you.

With your support, Boys' Town will continue to serve the community, with passion and purpose. We believe that together, we will go a long way in adapting for the future and sustaining care for those who need our help.

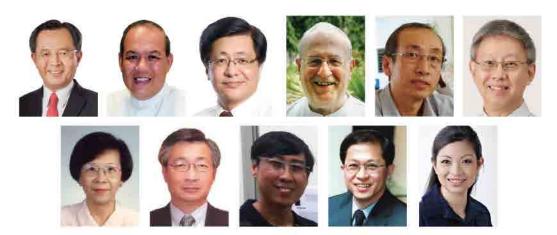
Mr Gerard Lee
Chairman
Bovs' Town Board of Governors



Leaders training for Mount Tahan climb.

## **BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

The members of the Board of Governors are business professionals and community leaders who provide directional leadership on strategic planning, public relations, fundraising and development of resources so as to strengthen Boys' Town's ability to serve. They render their services on a voluntary basis and are not remunerated.



(From left to right, top to bottom)
Mr Gerard Lee (Chairman), Bro. Dominic Yeo Koh (Chair - Appointments, Services and Case Review),
Mr Jeremy Tay (Chair - Human Resource), Bro. Emmanuel @ Gaudette Pierre-Paul (Chair - Fundraising),
Mr Simon Lim (Chair - Building), Mr Lional Tseng (Chair - Audit), Dr Seng Boon Kheng, Mr Raymond Chan,
Mr Philip Lee, Mr Tay Teck Chye, Ms Angelina Fernandez

## **MANAGEMENT TEAM**















(From left to right, top to bottom)

Mrs Irene Loi (Executive Director), Dr Roland Yeow (Deputy Director), Ms Adrienne Sng (Deputy Director),

Mr George Cheong (HR and Governance Specialist), Mr Trevor Chan (Senior Manager, Community Partnerships and Social Enterprise),

Mr Harry Mealin (Manager, Boys' Town Hostel), Mr Joseph Chng (Manager, Boys' Town Shelter),

Mr Dewa Rajan Martin (Administration and Operations Manager), Mr Francis Chua (Estate Manager)

## **ORGANISATIONAL CHART**

## ST. GABRIEL'S FOUNDATION

# BOARD OF GOVERNORS

#### SUB-COMMITTEES:

Appointments, Audit, Building, Fundraising, Human Resource, and Services and Case Review

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## DEPUTY DIRECTOR 1

## DEPUTY DIRECTOR 2

#### PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

- Training
- Research
- Youth Outreach (YouthReach)

## RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

- Boys' Town Group Home
- Boys' Town Hostel
- Boys' Town Shelter
- Boys' Town Alternative Schooling

## CLINICAL SERVICES

- Social Work
- Counselling
- Psychological Services
- Chaplaincy

## CORPORATE SERVICES

- HR and Governance
  - Finance
- Community Partnerships/ Social Enterprise
  - IT
  - Admin and Operations
    - Estate

## **KEY MILESTONES**

St Joseph's Trade School and Orphanage were set up by Bro. Robert and Bro. Galmier.

Boys' Town was officially founded by Bro. Vincent with the support of Mr. William Thomas McDermott, an Australian businessman and philanthropist.

Boys' Town's facility was extended with the construction of a new administrative building cum dining hall.

Public appeal was made to raise funds for a new building which houses a recreational hall and four dormitories. Construction began the following year.

Bro. Dominic Yeo Koh formed the Social Work Department.

Boys' Town celebrated 50 years in service for the youth in the community.

Bro. Emmanuel, our longest serving Director General of Boys' Town, stepped down after 30 years. He was succeeded by Bro. Dominic Kiong.

Mrs Irene Loi became Boys' Town's first lady and lay Executive Director.

Boys' Town Alternative Schooling was established in October to help boys who have been assessed to learn better outside the formal school structure.

Boys' Town celebrated its 60th Anniversary and entered the Singapore Book of Records for the most number of people piggy backing and walking a distance of 6 metres.

A youth training and research programme was established to build a stronger pool of youth workers and to better understand the evolving needs of young people.

A clinical intervention centre with our own in-house psychologist and expressive therapist was started to help the youth express their feelings and make sense of what they are going through.

Boys' Town launched YouthReach at Tampines estate; an outreach programme for youth-in-need and supported by Catholic Welfare Services.

Boys' Town breaks ground for new building.

1948

1955

1962

1985

1998

1999

2007

2008

2009

2010

2011

Construction of new building began.

Boys' Town was awarded the Non-Profit of the Year (Philanthropy Management) by the National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre for having the best practices in donor management, fundraising and financial management and accountability among the non-profit organisations in Singapore.

2012

Temporary Occupation Permit for the main building was received.

A Certificate in Youth Work was launched by Boys' Town Training and Research Department to provide research-based information, resources, and professional development for youth workers serving youth-in-need and their families. The certification is accredited by Workforce Development Authority (WDA) and Social Service Institute (SSI).

2013

Boys' Town celebrated the official opening of its integrated centre for children, youth and families. With the new facilities, Boys' Town is able to bring together a multi-disciplinary team comprising a psychologist, counsellors, social workers, teachers and programme supervisors to provide one-stop, coordinated care for youth-in-need and their families.

# KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE YEAR

#### SHELTER

The 10-bed shelter has admitted eight children from vulnerable backgrounds. The shelter team comprises a manager, a social worker and two programme supervisors to provide quality care for these young residents.



#### HOSTEL

The 10-bed hostel has admitted eight older youth who are in ITE, polytechnic, junior college or National Service. The hostel team comprises a manager and a social worker to help these teenagers with independent living and prepare them for future careers.



#### OPEN HOUSE AND BLESSING OF BUILDING

Boys' Town Open House on 16 August saw staff members and boys giving visitors a tour of the new building's facilities. The occasion was graced by Archbishop William Goh.



## PROGRAMME DEPARTMENT

To help young people discover and develop their strengths and talents, the Programmes Department organise an array of outdoor and recreational activities, and work with community and corporate partners to provide opportunities and support.

The team specially design holistic programmes to cater to the well being of each individual person. An annual review is conducted of all activities to ensure they are effectively meeting the needs of the young people, with the aim of helping them reintegrate back into their families and society.

#### **Orientation Camp**

The annual orientation camp comprises mainly team building and bonding activities to help the new and older boys to get to know each other better. In 2013, the boys were brought on a camping trip to Pulau Ubin where they got to experience topography as they map their journey to the campsite, outdoor cooking using mess tins and a river crossing obstacle course.



## **Leadership Development Programmes**

The leadership development programme trains and develops the boys' abilities to lead effectively, including providing clear communications, guidance to younger boys, managing conflicts and fostering team spirit.

#### MOUNT TAHAN EXPEDITION

Eight of our boys conquered the 2187 metre-high Mount Tahan in Perak, Malaysia. The group had been training for four months, going through rigorous hill climbing, sand trekking and weight training. They set off on their mission on 8 June with two staff and expedition leader, Mr David Lim, from Incredible Journeys. After three days of hiking up 60km of steep slopes, they arrived to a beautiful sight on the summit on 11 June.



#### **LUMUT OUTWARD BOUND**

The 5-day outdoor adventure offered a new batch of young leaders exciting experiences and training. From a kayaking trip to Pangkor Island to set up a campsite, jungle trekking, abseiling down a rock cliff, to learning to build a raft, the boys came together to develop tenacity and a caring connection to each other. The action and reflection activities helped them to learn acceptance of responsibility, readiness and the ability to transcend self-imposed limits.



#### **Festival of Service**

Boys' Town launched the inaugural Festival of Service in 2013 to provide opportunities for the boys to participate in the community, and develop empathy and gratitude by serving others in need. Through various events, the boys got to realise how they can bring joy to others with small act of kindness, even as they themselves receive assistance from Boys' Town.

#### CHINESE NEW YEAR LUNCH FOR THE NEEDY

In February, the boys organised a steamboat lunch at the Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Together with volunteers, they set up tables and prepared a spread of sumptuous food to bring festive joy to over 100 elderly beneficiaries from the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.



#### TANJONG BALAI ORPHANAGE

In March, the boys and a few staff members went to an orphanage in Tanjung Balai, Indonesia. They painted a mural for its kindergarten, cleaned up the compound and helped with minor repairs including plumbing and light fixtures. They revisited the orphanage in November to help rebuild and paint a house for an underprivileged family.

#### MAKEOVER FOR ONE-ROOM FLATS IN MARSILING

In July, the boys went to the Marsiling estate to help with home makeovers for families housed in poor conditions and struggling to make ends meet. They repainted rotten walls; replaced thin, dusty mattresses with new ones; and fixed broken ceiling lights, water taps and tables. They also took time to have a simple meal with the residents and played games with their children.



#### **Fitness Club**

The fitness club is conducted by Coach Richard Wee and aims to improve the boys' general fitness. The boys undergo a variety of calisthenics workout to increase body strength and flexibility with movements such as bending, jumping and kicking, using only the body's weight for resistance. The training helps with muscular and cardiovascular fitness and also improves psychomotor skills such as balance, agility and coordination.

#### **Soccer Club**

The boys participate in weekly soccer training with Coach Zorke from the Singapore Soccer Academy. Soccer training drills build up their technical ball skills under pressure, ball control and receiving techniques, and their speed, agility and quickness. The boys were also given opportunities to practise what they learnt in friendly matches with the US Navy, MediaCorp, Evolve MMA and the Ministry of Social and Family Development Inter-Home Tournament.



#### **Media Club**

The Media Club is headed by volunteer, Mr Steven Liew, who is an experienced photographer and videographer. Mr Steven imparts his experience and skills to the boys by bringing them on various shoots at restaurants, parks and special events such as the Chinatown Light-Up and USS aircraft carrier visit. Apart from the technical skills of how to handle a camera, compose and edit a photo, the boys also got to experience behind-the-scenes filming.





## **Triathlon / Running Club**

Every Thursday, the boys in this club are ferried to the Canadian International School for their training with Mr Raymond Leong and his team from Swim Concierge. The boys train in the school's swimming pool and use the track for their running and cycling practices. They have participated in 7 events in the year including the Milo Youth Triathlon, the OCBC Cycle Super Challenge and the Standard Chartered Marathon. Two of the boys who joined the club not knowing how to swim or cycle, made significant progress and proudly represented Boys' Town in these national sporting events.

#### **Guitar Club**

The guitar enthusiasts in Boys' Town were privileged to receive lessons from Mr Hyung and volunteers from the Korean Presbyterian Church every Sunday. The boys were taught how to play modern pop songs like 'Collide' by Howie Day and 'I'm Yours' by Jason Mraz using acoustic guitars. They showcased their talents by performing for internal events including the 65th Anniversary & Founders' Day dinner and the annual Family Day.



## **Tuition Programme**

The tuition programme remains an important activity to provide qualified support for boys needing help to complete their assignment or to better understand new school syllabus.

It has grown steadily over the year with the support of over 50 dedicated volunteers from STEP Chapter Singapore, Nanyang Technological University and other students and working adults. The improvement in the academic results bear testament to the tutors' hard work and ability to motivate the boys. An appreciation day was organised to allow the boys to show their gratitude to the tutors. A networking session was held over three evenings to allow different groups of tutors to get to know one another, receive updates on the school results, and provide feedback to the coordinators.



## **SOCIAL WORK**

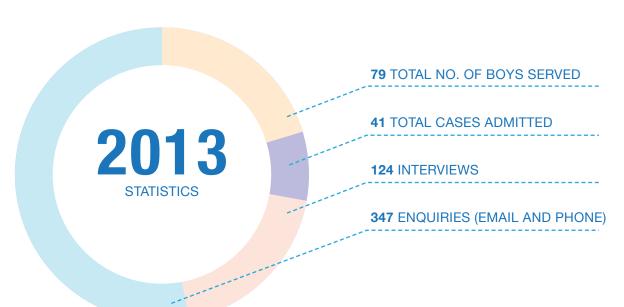
A team of dedicated and professionally trained social workers strive towards building a holistic and individualised care plan that is tailored to meet each young person's needs. They address each resident's educational, social, spiritual and family needs and review them regularly to ensure changing needs are attended to.

The social workers help an estimated 80 young persons per year, typically between the ages of 10 and 21, from compassionate ground cases to referrals from Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF). They work with young people through personal issues and difficulties encountered at home and in school. They provide care and protection for those who have suffered abuse or neglect, and deliver group work or rehabilitation due to risk behaviours and lack of parental supervision.

80
YOUNG PERSONS
ATTENDED TO
EACH YEAR

Their work also emphasizes strongly on aftercare and follow-up services for the young people upon their discharge. They provide help to them and their families in the transition period of about six months after they leave, and connect them to services within the community to provide the continued assistance.

The social workers also work closely with the Programmes Department to run academic, sports and arts-related programmes to help the young people catch up with their peers and develop their potential talents. These include mentorship, character building and life skills workshops on respect, self-awareness and integrity to enable them to become independent and socially responsible people.





#### **Shelter**

The shelter reaches out to children who are abused, abandoned and neglected. The cases are mostly referred by the MSF.

The children may come from low income families who lack basic necessities and have to sacrifice food, clothing and at times, their children's education.

Some of the children come from environments affected by crime or violence and were abused and violated. The shelter offers them a safe environment and intensive care by social workers and programme supervisors.

The team work towards building a close relationship with the children, seeking to be a friend, encourager and mentor to help them overcome their past hurts and to build up their resilience and social confidence.

The shelter team is supported by the Boys' Town Clinical Intervention Centre. Together, they tap on the existing network of friends and family of a young person at risk and bring in counsellors, psychologists and other professionals to work together as a team to develop a holistic action plan.



I had been suspended from school for fighting with students and teachers and disturbing classes. I was always angry and wanted to hurt myself.

At Boys' Town, the shelter staff's kind and strict ways in caring for me helped me with my feelings. I begin to share the abuse I went through and it started my healing. I look forward to returning to school in 2014 and going home to celebrate my birthday with my family.

- Nicky\*, 11, 'Care and Protection Order' resident who has been with Boys' Town since August 2013.

His parents have received counselling to improve family relations and parenting skills.

#### Hostel

The hostel serves as a temporary place for older youth who have no family or other forms of support. These youth require a place to stay while they complete their National Service or studies. In addition to providing housing, an aftercare programme will prepare them for employment and independent living. A case manager will monitor their progress after they have left the programme. Currently, eight youth have been enrolled.



I was abandoned when I was a baby and have never known my parents. My adoptive parents took care of me but they were poor and didn't have the means to send me to school. When they passed on, I was placed in the care of relatives.

I was 10 years' old when I took my Primary 1 exams. I did well and was promoted to Primary 3. This encouraged me to give my best and break out of the poverty to cycle.

During the 'O' Levels, I was asked by my relatives to leave the house. I came to Boys' Town hoping to find a place to stay.

The staff here not only gave me a roof over my head, but a renewed hope and direction in life. I scored 12 points for my 'O' Level and hope to pursue my dream of becoming a newsreader.

- Ragu\*, 19, joined Boys' Town in November 2013. He is currently studying Media and Communications at a local polytechnic.

## **CLINICAL INTERVENTION CENTRE**

Our counsellors, expressive therapist and psychologist form the Clinical Intervention Centre to provide residents and external families in need with counselling and therapy.

Some of the current issues they work on with clients include depression, adaptation, low intellectual functioning, interpersonal relationships, dyslexia, autism, and traumatic experiences such as abuse and abandonment.

The team takes an active role in formulating intervention plans for the youth. They employ psycho-educational assessment tools such as IQ and verbal reasoning tests to assess youth with specialised needs (e.g. attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, oppositional defiant disorder and conduct disorder) and measure their ability to understand what they read and how they apply their reasoning skills.

This will help determine the level of learning competency of the youth, whether they are suitable for placement in an academic or vocational setting, and what are the appropriate follow-up interventions required.

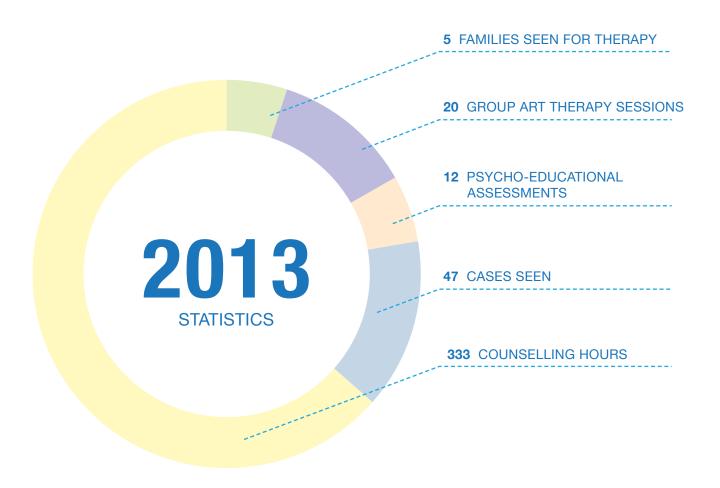


To develop knowledge and be responsive towards specialised cases, the team attended the following trainings, some of which were partially funded by the government:

- Affect regulation therapy on regulating mood and controlling positive and negative arousal states
- Cognitive behavioural therapy to evaluate and change destructive or disturbing thought patterns by exploring thoughts, attitudes, beliefs and behaviour and encouraging new coping skills
- Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing, a form of psychotherapy used particularly for treating posttraumatic stress disorder such as physical or sexual abuse



Moving forward, the team is exploring various cost-efficient ways in managing resources. This includes contracting external counsellors from the private practice with specific training to handle the specialised cases. These counsellors' valuable experience will help complement existing services.



## **BOYS' TOWN ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLING**

Boys' Town Alternative Schooling (BTAS) provides a holistic, customised and structured environment for students to pursue their education. Students come from different schools across the island and are closely monitored and coached on specific subjects so that they can obtain a basic 'N' and 'O' Level certification.

The objective of this programme is to help students who have been assessed to learn better outside the formal school structure continue their education in a home-schooling environment. Classes are held in small groups within Boys' Town campus.

The BTAS curriculum is planned around the Ministry of Education (MOE) syllabus, and the textbooks, course workbooks, examinations and co-curricular activities are approved by the MOE. Apart from academic certification, the students go through vocational training such as customer service, product knowledge and culinary skills. This is to enhance their ability to apply their learning as well as exercise their skills.

In 2013, BTAS served a total of 26 students from Primary Six to Secondary Four, of which four sat for their national examinations.





#### ALL FOUR BTAS STUDENTS PASSED NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS IN 2013



Of the four students, three passed their 'N' Level examination and are currently pursuing NITEC Certification in Electronics (Mobile Device), Electronics (Computer and Networking) and Electrical Technology (Light and Sound) at ITE College.

The fourth student passed his PSLE and has enrolled in Assumption English School.

The remaining 22 students sat for their respective schools' End of Year examinations which were specially sent by the schools to Boys' Town. A total of 20 boys were promoted to the next level. Three boys had to be retained and BTAS has arranged for additional night tuition to help them.

19/22

There were also five boys who were ready to be integrated back to mainstream schools. They each did well in their examinations and passed the interviews with the respective school principals.

This year, BTAS concentrated on providing English, Chinese, Math, Science, History, Art and Computer Application.

The lessons are taught by external teachers. Due to demand, the school is continually looking for part-time teachers above 25 years old, who have strong interpersonal skills and can commit on weekdays for a year to guide and mentor young people.



## **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS DEPARTMENT**

The department manages the fundraising and corporate communications of Boys' Town and drives initiatives in the areas of branding, public and media relations, donor management, corporate and institutional partnerships, public education, research and archives, and volunteer management.

#### **DONATION DRAW**

A Donation Draw was held from January to April 2013. The staff and boys helped to sell the tickets to friends, schools, business contacts and the public before the official draw was conducted on 27 April on Boys' Town's campus. A total of \$98,778 was raised.



#### FLAG DAY

On 5 June 2013, our boys and staff went islandwide with their tins to collect donations for Boys' Town. We would like to thank the following supporters:

- Catholic churches who had kindly allowed us to sell our flags on their compound
- Companies who had adopted tins and helped raise funds within their office premises
- Schools and other volunteers who spent the day to sell flags with us

With your support, \$89,627 was raised.

#### VERONICA YOUNG & THE SILVER STRINGS CONCERT

Popularly known as the Connie Francis of Singapore in the 1960s, Singer Veronica Young delighted the audience at a concert held at the Boys' Town campus in an aim to raise funds for the organisation.

Belting out popular hits, she and her band – The Silver Strings – entertained the crowd with dance moves to songs such as 'Frankie' and 'Hippy Hippy Shakes'.



#### **Media and Publicity**

The team shared stories with the media and prepared spokespersons for interviews, including developing talking points to address topics such as the resurgence of youth gangs and gang-related violence, social problems, and offer sound advice through the media to help people understand the youth-in-need.





In June, YouthReach, a youth outreach programme run by Boys' Town, participated in interviews with Channel 8 Good Morning Singapore and Channel NewsAsia Singapore Connect. Centre manager Gwen Koh and social worker Aaron Leng shared about how the youth's rebellious behaviour must be seen from a holistic viewpoint, from their adjustment to the expectations of adulthood to seeking a sense of belonging and affirmation from peers.

Between July and December, the team also provided support for a youth mediation episode on Channel 5 docu-drama 'The Missing Peace'. YouthReach centre manager Gwen provided case studies to explain how outreach work intervenes at a group level so as to understand the group dynamics of youth and establish contacts with other high-risk individuals. She shared that it takes time and patience to build trust with the youth because they have a high defense mechanism and are easily suspicious of other people's intentions due to their past run-ins with authorities.

In September, The New Paper covered Boys' Town Alternative Schooling (BTAS) as part of a Teachers' Day special. The team assisted in crafting talking points for BTAS education officer Vithi on her insights to supporting boys with different learning needs and sourcing for job attachments to help them find suitable career paths.

Other media engagements included the Boys' Town Open House in August, which received coverage on The Straits Times, The New Paper, Shin Min Daily News, Lianhe Wanbao, TODAY, News Radio 938LIVE, Capital Radio 95.8 and Catholic News. In December, Teens magazine carried an interview with youth worker Shafiee on 'Careers that give back to society'.







## TRAINING AND RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

The Training and Research Department is dedicated to enhancing the effectiveness of Boys' Town through the development of innovative approaches, tools, as well as their practical application by combining sophisticated theory with hands-on approach.

It is committed to providing training and carrying out evaluation and research studies that contribute to enhancing the staff's skills in various fields of expertise, strengthening the learning environment, and enabling the team to adapt and respond appropriately to the needs of their work.

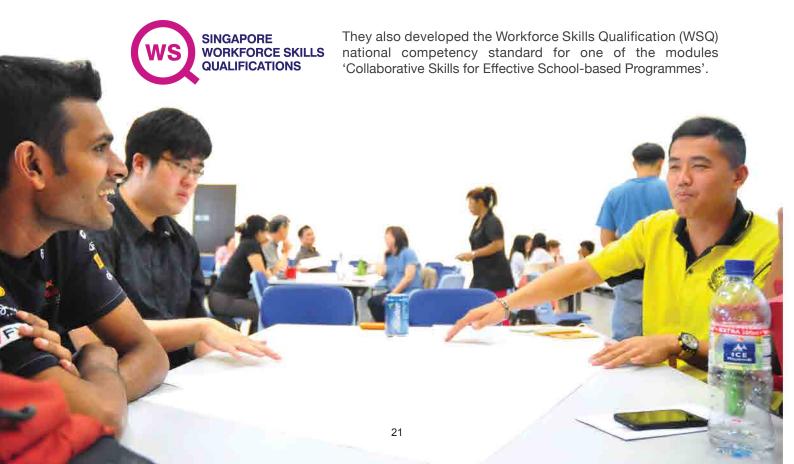
The department also manages the sale of St Luke's Innovative Resources, which includes therapeutic card sets, books and stickers promoting strengths-based philosophy, and uses straightforward language that requires no special training. These hands-on tools help to build conversations with clients and are used by counsellors, social workers, psychologists, educators, managers and supervisors who work with adults and children.



### **Training**

In 2013, the department worked with Social Service Institute (SSI) to conduct the Certificate in Youth Work for the second year running and reached out to 15 participants. Modules include:

- · Leading and Mentoring Youth
- Planning and Implementing Effective Youth Programmes
- · Psycho-social and Cognitive Needs in Youth
- · Working Effectively with Families of Young Clients
- · Legal and Ethical Framework in Youth Work
- Collaborative Skills for Effective School-based Programmes



Two runs of mentoring training were conducted for volunteer mentors from Loving Heart Multi-Service Centre, a voluntary welfare organisation that serves the community and provides programmes such as sports, tuition and case management for the needy. The volunteer mentors are posted to primary and secondary schools to provide coaching and mentoring to students. The training topics include:

- Enhancing one's self-awareness, developing leadership style and leveraging on motivational techniques and group activities
- Conducting team activities, including facilitating team processes, communication, enabling conflict resolution, skills development, and programme evaluation
- Identifying young people who require formal intervention and following-up with mentoring or referral to specialist

#### Research

Part of the department's work involves extracting meaningful data and insight into the complexity of youth work, and expand the understanding and knowledge in this field. The team is currently conducting two studies:

Three-year impact study on Boys' Town programmes and services. To explore the use of social emotional competencies and developmental assets (e.g. positive relationships, values and opportunities) to divert youth from risky behaviours, increase their civic engagement and give them the strengths they need to make positive choices in life.

Youth mentoring and value inculcation. To provide preliminary evidence on the benefits and disadvantages of reinforcing values in a youth mentoring relationship, and identify factors which aid in the acquiring of values.

In April, it published an Action Research Toolkit to help transform organisations into learning communities by improving ways of addressing issues and solving problems. The toolkit aims to help foster continuous growth and development, strengthen programmes through the building of common focuses, and empower teams to conduct investigations into areas of interest and share what they have learnt with the community around them.



The team also supported two psychology undergraduates from City University, Hong Kong, in a 6-week internship at Boys' Town. The objective was to help the students gain practical full-time work experience and apply the knowledge and skills they acquired in school to their working place. During their time with Boys' Town, the students were exposed to the contributions and applications of psychological sciences in a residential youth care setting.

## YOUTHREACH

Boys' Town also runs YouthReach; an outreach programme for youth-in-need started in 2010. It is currently supported by Catholic Welfare Services and Caritas Singapore.

YouthReach focuses on helping youth, typically between the ages of 10 and 21, who face moral danger due to their engagement or tendency of getting into risky behaviours such as dropping out of school, associating with gangs, and experimenting with drugs and unsafe sexual conduct. The youth may come from low socioeconomic backgrounds, struggle with poor school performance, or have experienced abuse or neglect.

In the long-term, YouthReach hopes to reconnect these youth with their families and give them the motivation and strength of character to break away from risky behaviours and friends who have a negative influence on their lives.

YouthReach began as a drop-in centre at Tampines to engage youth in meaningful activities and help them develop physically, academically, emotionally and socially. Through fun and engaging activities, the youth are able to share, encourage and be of support to one another. It has since expanded to include counselling, developmental programmes, and visiting the youth at their homes.

The team also does street outreach to engage groups of youth. These efforts have helped defuse confrontations, support runaway youth in returning home, and relocate intoxicated youth to a place of safety.



#### **Social Work and Counselling Services**

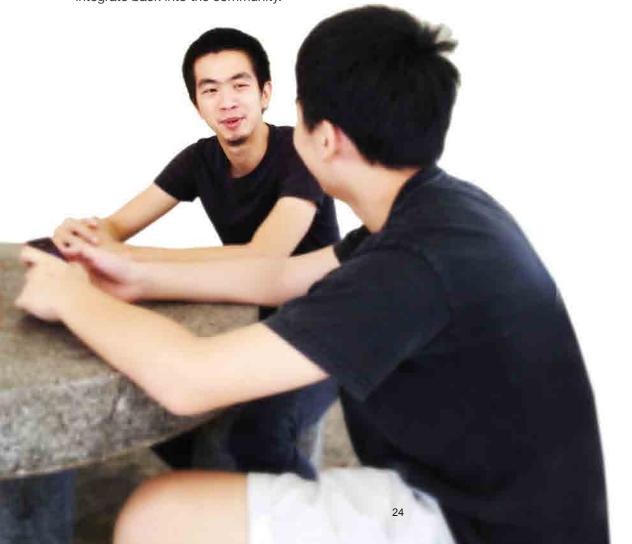


The team of six comprises social workers, youth workers and counsellors. They reach out to the youth and engage them in a trusting and collaborative relationship. They spend time to understand the youth before assessing and formulating an action plan to help them. They also monitor and evaluate the youth's short-term goal attainment and affirm and encourage them throughout process.

Part of the team's job involves intensive case work to understand the youth and discern his or her family and background issues so they can better address various risk factors including:

- Individual psychological or behavioral risk such as language delays or impairments, impulsiveness, restlessness and inability to delay gratification
- Family environment such as the lack of parental supervision, parental conflict or separation leading to poor relationship between children and parents, and the youth less willing to discuss their activities
- Peer influence and rejection that affects the youth's ability to be socialized properly, and causes them to gravitate towards anti-social peer groups which may lead to violent or deviant behaviour

The team also works with the authorities on a rehabilitative programme called StreetWise for youth who have unwittingly drifted into gangs but expressed the desire to leave and stay away from those gangs, or have been arrested for gang-related activities. In 2013, the team worked on 19 cases from the StreetWise Programme and conducted weekly group work and monthly parent support groups to assist these youth to integrate back into the community.



#### **Youth Developmental Programme**

The youth workers design holistic programmes to instill positive character in the youth and impart life skills such as building interpersonal relationships, making decisions and coping with stress. These programmes give the youth structure, discipline and a sense of purpose.



The football team of 25 youth participated in Student Care Service's ACE Football League, for youth aged 12 to 17, over a period of five months. Through training and participating in matches together, the players built a sense of affiliation with the team. Six of them received awards from Student Care Service for display of discipline and good sportsmanship.

During Christmas, the team worked with Tampines North Community Centre on a donation drive and collected food items from HDB flats to distribute to needy families.

Youth worker Arief, team manager for the East City Warriors, received the Character Manager of the Year award from Student Care Service for being a good role model and contributing to the development of the youth under his care.

He was invited to share his experience at the inaugural Youth Sports Symposium, organised by the Ministry of Social and Family Development, at ITE College Central.

At the end of the year, Arief brought 16 players to Gunung Ledang in Johor for a team bonding session and to have a friendly match with a local secondary school. The trip allowed the youth to foster camaraderie and develop overseas friendships.

#### SEPAK TAKRAW LEAGUE

Started by youth worker Shafiee, the sepak takraw league saw a growing number of youth participating since its launch two years ago. Currently, a total of 33 youth have formed teams to take part in competitions every Friday evening.



With the support of local community service group, Pekik, youth worker Shafiee brought the team for a charity game at York Hill and Jalan Kukoh, one of the poorest neighbourhoods in Singapore.

The youth took the opportunity to present food items and their favourite packet dishes to the beneficiaries comprising mostly single-parent families and the elderly.

During the charity game, one of the 17-year-olds, a first year student with ITE College, was spotted and recruited by a sepak takraw national team coach for his talent.

#### SKATEBOARD TEAM

A skateboarding team of 14 youth was set up by youth worker Shafiee with the help of a teenage boy he had reached out to. The boy introduced his skateboarding friends to Shafiee knowing the youth worker was able to help provide the socio-emotional support for the struggles they faced with their parents and with the misuse of drugs.

Every week, Shafiee would meet up with the skateboarders for a mentoring session and to find out how they were doing. The youth are showing progress and are motivated to change for the better. They are also planning activities to help build a positive relationship between the skateboarding community and the public. Their determination and drive saw them networking successfully with two skate shops and securing skateboards and T-shirt sponsorships for a skateboarding competition they hope to organise.

Shafiee is currently planning a group work activity and skate tour with the team, including an educational visit to a welfare home for ex-drug offenders.

"I was once a gang member, used to skip school, fight and extort money. Then, a meeting with youth worker Shafiee and an opportunity to take up my first love – skateboarding, turned my life around. Shafiee wanted me to represent the youth centre in skateboarding competitions and said he'll support me in getting a new skateboard and a pair of shoes for my hobby. Through his patience and guidance, I started to think of the kind of future I wanted for myself. I believed I was not good enough and could achieve very little. But he made me feel valued and changed my mindset."



-Alan\*, 11, YouthReach skateboard team. Life is still undergoing changes for the young boy as he works hard to cope with his parents' impending divorce and process his feelings of frustration and self-blame.

#### DANCE

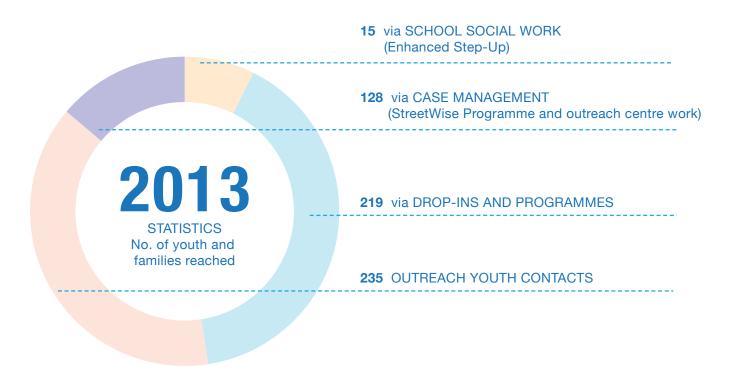
The team is working with volunteers to come up with dance programmes to reach out to the female youth group.

\* Not real names

#### **Street Outreach**

Social worker Aaron and his team have made progress at night entertainment establishments, reaching out to youth at mixed-aged parties and maintaining contact with groups of at-risk male and female youth.

Through walking the ground and spending quality time with the youth at their regular hang-outs, organising sports, camps and barbeque bonding sessions, the team has reached out to over 200 at-risk youth, with a consistent follow-through with more than half of the group.



## **BENEFACTORS**

You play a critical role in helping to grow the boys' hope for the future. We seek your support to continue to help us bring healing to Singapore's hurting youth and at-risk families. If you are already a part of our mission, Thank You. We remember each of you in our thoughts and prayers; please do the same for all children who face tomorrow with uncertainties.

The benefactor list on the following pages recognizes individuals and organisations that have made cash or in-kind gifts of \$1,000 and above in 2013 to support Boys' Town.



We also want to take this opportunity to extend our sincere appreciation to donors who requested anonymity. Great care was taken to make this report as accurate as possible. We apologise if anyone was mistakenly omitted or incorrectly listed.

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