

BT news!

A Boys' Town Publication | May 2016 | Volume 45, No.1 | MCI (P) 030/03/2016

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Boys' Town

Adventure Centre

With a mission to touch hearts and stimulate minds, we have established a therapeutic programme where people and nature entwine.

Called adventure therapy, the programme is open to children and youth, especially those experiencing unresolved conflict, damaged relationships and post-traumatic stress.

Whether it is scaling a natural rock wall or traversing water rapids, participants are made to reflect and learn hands-on to work around the environment they are in.

The programme is run by our new Boys' Town Adventure Centre (BTAC) and provides challenge courses, mountain expeditions, and outdoor sports certification for both existing beneficiaries and the public.

The BTAC complements the years of experience Boys' Town has conducting sports and adventure activities to develop our beneficiaries' self-esteem and help them overcome mental barriers.

Since BTAC started in January 2016, it has conducted a few adventure therapy sessions for our boys, local secondary schools, as well as customized programmes for at-risk youths associated with gangs.

The centre is run by trained adventure leaders and counsellors. It will have a new adventure tower at the end of the year sponsored by a donor.

The public, including adults, are welcome to sign-up for BTAC programmes. Proceeds will go towards supporting Boys' Town's operations. Contact us at 6690 5420 or info@boystown.org.sg to find out more.

Life lessons from the outdoors

Like most young people, Royston* has dreams of how his future would be like. The 17-year-old loves sharing about raising a big family and working in a restaurant one day.

What sets him apart from the other boys are his sensory difficulties and his past, both of which are inextricably linked.

Royston was born with impaired neurological responses. As a child, he showed difficulty understanding information and often gets overwhelmed by his senses.

With adventure therapy, he was able to manage sensory triggers and control his outbursts. A supportive supervisor who brought him on the wilderness expedition helped him build self-awareness as he connected with nature.



Waterfall abseiling



Camaraderie camp



We held our annual orientation camp for the boys from 8 to 10 January with a slew of team building activities including outdoor camping, dragon boating to a campfire with BBQ and night games. The 3-day event was organised with some volunteers from STEP Chapter who have been providing weekly tuition for the boys.



Family Day

On 19 February, we celebrated Lunar New Year and Family Day with our youths from Boys' Town and YouthReach. The beneficiaries were given a chance to share their testimonies and gratitude to their families while they served them dinner and put up special performances.



YouthReach girls

Sanctuary for young ones

Recruiting foster parents!

Boys' Town has taken over a new foster care service and named it Sanctuary Care. Known previously as Sanctuary House, the foster care service looked after children and babies in need of immediate care and shelter. It had to close down due to manpower issues.



Ms Risela Darmawan (left) and Ms Gillian McConnell are among the staff running the Sanctuary Care service at Boys' Town.

(Photo: The Straits Times)

Boys' Town took over the service because we believed it was valuable and complemented our mission to offer a continuum of alternative care services that meets each child's best interest.

We currently also provide a foster care service for abused or neglected children sent to us by the Ministry of Social and Family Development.

With Sanctuary Care, we will be assisting low income parents who need short-term childcare help, such as those who are ill, or facing a family or pregnancy crisis.

"When her mother had to go into a drug rehab centre, 2-year old Julie* was sent to live with foster parents. Julie's father was absent and there was no extended family to turn to. With a foster family, Julie found a safe home to stay until she can return to her mother."

No matter what kind of commitment you can make, your time and energy will help a child in need. Contact us at **6690 5420** or info@boystown.org.sg to find out how you can help.

Snapshots! Activities in Boys' Town



◀ Building a kitchen for St. Emmanuel Kindergarten in Indonesia

During the school holidays, 8 boys and 3 staff took a boat ride out to Balai, Indonesia, to help a kindergarten build their first mini kitchen.



Speaking to commandos, pilots & navy officers ▶

The boys had the rare chance to meet senior officers from Command Staff College and asked questions about army life.



Competing in the Boys vs. Staff matches ▶

The boys and staff had a whale of a time bonding over friendly matches in soccer, badminton, table tennis, basketball and LAN games.



◀ Appreciating supporters during Thanksgiving Night

Family members, volunteers and corporate partners got together for an evening at Boys' Town where we gave thanks to people who have made a difference to the lives of our beneficiaries. We also celebrated the graduation of boys who have completed their stay in Boys' Town.

Attending SHATEC and Singapore Kindness Movement baking class and hotel visit ▶

A group of Boys' Town boys and YouthReach girls were invited to a cookie baking class at SHATEC. They also went behind-the-scenes at Marina Mandarin hotel to better understand the work of service staff.



Who WE ARE...

Boys' Town is a charity started in 1948 by the Brothers of St. Gabriel. We provide residential care, street outreach, community and school-based programmes for over 300 children and youths from disadvantaged and disengaged families. We are an Institution of a Public Character (IPC) and a member of the National Council of Social Service.

YOU CAN **EMPOWER & CHANGE LIVES**

Donate now at www.boystown.org.sg



We accept:  

For enquiries: 6690 5420 or info@boystown.org.sg

IMPORTANT NOTICE

REPORT SCAMS

Boys' Town is not organising the sale of ice cream and handmade pencils to raise funds.

We have put up a notice on our website to notify the public of possible scams. The authorities would like to advise victims to lodge a police report.

If you encounter these peddlers, please check with us before making any donations. You may reach us at the contact details above during office hours Monday to Friday, 9am-6pm, or call our duty officer at 96234731.

He Lost his father but fought to Find himself

Four years ago, Danish's* father passed away, leaving his mother to raise him and his two younger sisters.

Life became harder when three relatives who faced financial difficulties moved in to live with them.

The family of seven bunked in a four-room flat and Danish had to move his bed to the living room.

"It was a rocky period for me," says Danish, now 17. "My mother had no time for us because she had to work long hours. And being the older brother, I felt I had to take care of everyone."

He relates how this pressure led to his overprotective and impulsive streak. "I hated people who hurt those I cared for."

During a soccer final, an opponent tackled his team mate and spat on him. Danish challenged him to a fight and was issued a red card.



Doing the duck walk during a team building trip at Pulau Ubin

For the first time in a long while, Danish felt relieved to be able to confide in someone. Syafie continued to visit the teenager at school and brought him on fishing trips, paving the way for his change.

"Playing soccer was more than just a ball game. Many times, I have to think how my actions would affect the team. I had to learn how to take responsibility for my emotions," he says.

With a new perspective, Danish started leading cheers to encourage their opponents. He also took the initiative to call the coach before each game to offer help to carry the equipment.

His hard work paid off when he was awarded the "Most Improved Player" in 2015. With a shy smile, he lets on his new vision: "I may not come from a well-to-do family but I want to be rich in my heart to help others."

**Name has been changed for privacy*



Danish and his team playing in the ACE Football League.

Youth worker Syafie, who was the coach of Danish's soccer team, counselled him and helped him reflect on his behaviour.

