

Caring Lives

BELIEVING DREAMS



 <https://life-community.org/>

 Life Community Services Society

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 lifecommunity_sg

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About Us

Established in 1996, Life Community is a non-profit organisation serving approximately 1,000 children, youths, and families annually from low-income and/or vulnerable backgrounds.

We have seen that challenging family situations such as parental incarceration, neglect, and financial challenges, can cause much emotional stress, trauma, and wounds in children.

When a child experience such stressors in the long run, their cognitive and emotional development are hindered. They find it harder to develop essential traits such as resilience and grit, which are

crucial to help them break out of their circumstances. This also sets them back earlier on in life.

Life Community intervenes through four core programmes to close these gaps, so our children and youths are empowered for the next stages of their lives.

- Member of National Council of Social Service (NCSS) with IPC status
- Charity Registration Number: 01545
- UEN: S96SS0100H
- Registered Address: 5 Stadium Walk #04-04/07 Kallang Leisure Park Singapore 397693



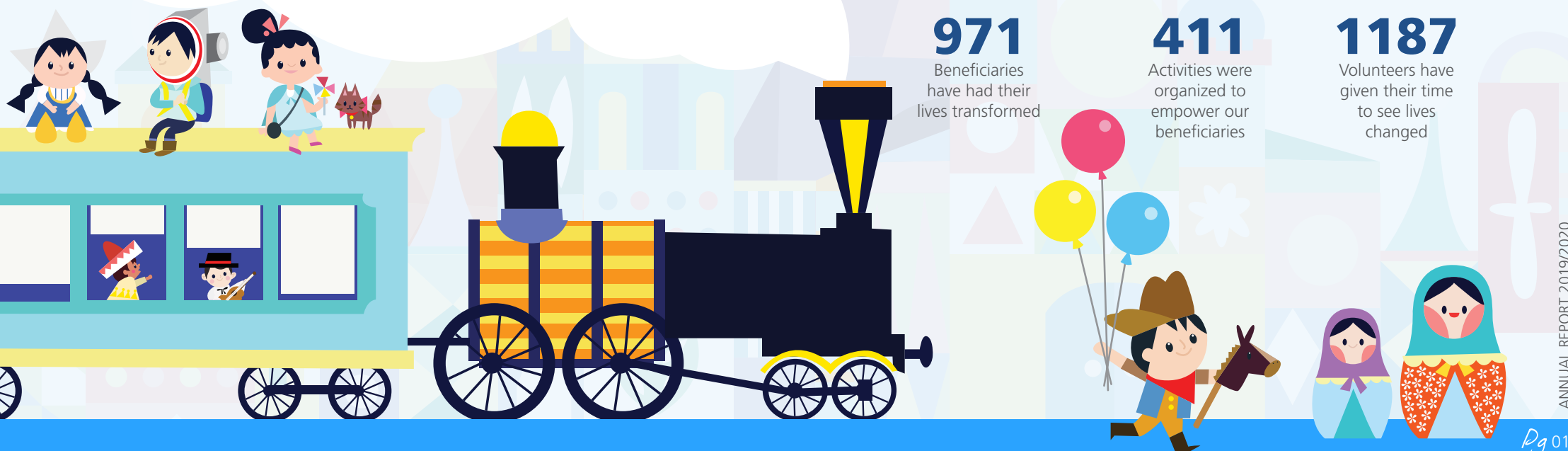
971
Beneficiaries have had their lives transformed



411
Activities were organized to empower our beneficiaries



1187
Volunteers have given their time to see lives changed



Year In Review 2019/2020

Firstly, I like to thank God for the year that has passed.

As an organization that believes every child can be empowered through care and mentoring, Life Community continues to focus on serving the young of our nation and their families. In the past year, we served a total of 971 children across our 4 core programmes, with 81 beneficiaries who graduated.

The challenges of our young beneficiaries are many. Often, their family circumstances further complicate the situation. In 2019/2020, we have trained a total of 135 volunteer mentors, checking in regularly with them through our mentor circles to ensure they are well supported. Our hope is through our volunteer mentors and staff members, a helping hand is extended to our young ones, along with a listening ear, a gentle tap, a bucket of love, a little hug, and someone who will walk alongside them through the highs and lows of life. Our young people need good role models, and people who can and will cheer them on when the going gets tough.

At the start of 2019, we saw dips in the enrolment of our community-based Student Care Centres. It evened out eventually across the financial year as we did more outreach, with Hougang Life Student Care serving more students at the beginning of 2020. There remains a need for us to reach out to more children staying in the heartlands who require after-school care support. We will continue to

strengthen our community partnerships and increase the quality of our services so more families and their needs will be met.

I would also like to express our sincere appreciation to all our donors and corporate partners who have financially supported us through the years. Thank you for believing that every child deserves a fair chance in life. I am happy to inform you that a growing number of beneficiaries who have graduated are now giving back as volunteers in various capacities, so the legacy of Life Community will live on through them.

Mark* is a good example when he returned as an emcee for our Annual Charity Golf 2019 event. That night, he also shared a moving story of his journey that touched the hearts of many. You can read his full story here. <https://life-community.org/the-giant-within/>

Finally, to all my colleagues and beneficiaries, my heartfelt thanks for trusting in my leadership. It is truly a joy to live, work, and grow together with you in the family.



Chairman

Nicholas Goh



CEO

Lam Moi Kwai



Friends of Children and Youth



About

Started in 2004, Friends of Children and Youth (FOCY) helps children and youths, ages 7 to 19, with at least one parent presently or formerly incarcerated.

FOCY intervenes in our beneficiaries' social, physical, emotional, educational development, as well as provide financial assistance. We do it through casework management, regular mentoring sessions, tuition programme, food rations, character-building and life-skills workshops and activities.

Our aim is through our intervention methods, they will rise above their existing circumstances, build strong foundations and be equipped to enter the next phase of their lives.



337

Beneficiaries Helped



98

Volunteers Gave Their Time To Help



126

Activities Conducted



Island wide

100%

children & youths have caring and trusting relationships with their caseworkers and mentors

Based on 337 children & youths

Research has shown that children with parents who are/were incarcerated are five times more likely to follow in their parents' footsteps due to the absence of proper guidance. We aim to break this cycle by introducing a caseworker and mentor to journey alongside with them. We are encouraged to know that 100% of them have trusting and supportive relationships. This way, they know they have someone to turn to during

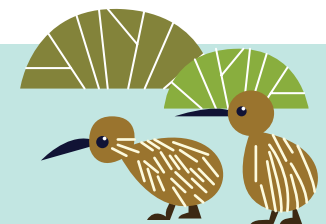
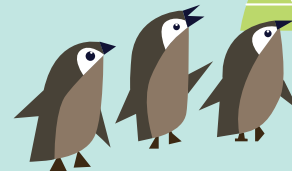
75%

children & youths have shown reduction in risks factors* and improvement in resilience factors**

challenging times, instead of seeking unhealthy coping alternatives.

This group of young beneficiaries are also exposed to more risk factors* which leads to higher levels of social and emotional stress compared to their peers, resulting in anti-social behaviour, mental health issues, and below-average academic performance. Through our programme and guidance, resilience is built up so these issues can be alleviated.

* Risks factors include unfavorable family relationships, poor living situations, neglect & abuse, emotional issues, and behaviors such as self-harm or bullying
 ** Resilience factors include secure attachment, and emotional resilience to overcome challenges



Mightykids, Families and Community



About

Started in 2009, MightyKids, Families & Community (MKFC) is a drop-in activity centre for children and youths, ages 6-19, who have low-social support, are disengaged, and/or at risk, around Telok Blangah Estate.

MKFC intervenes through regular group mentoring sessions, academic support, daily meals, interest-based activities and workshops to build character, competency and connections.



115

Beneficiaries Helped



136

Volunteers Gave Their Time To Help



61

Activities Conducted



Telok Blangah Rise

Outcomes



78%

children & youths have developed quality relationships with their mentors



79%

children & youths have shown improvement in self-efficacy, pro-social skills and positive character traits

Based on 53 children & youths who have completed one year of mentoring sessions

With quality relationships built, our beneficiaries know they have a reliable support system to turn to especially during tough seasons in their lives, decreasing the possibilities of seeking unhealthy coping alternatives.

Additionally, growing positive character traits and skills will increase their abilities

to achieve goals and positively contribute back to the community in the long run.

We are seeing much improvement in our beneficiaries under the MKFC Programme, and believe they will continue to build healthy and strong foundations as they enter the next phases of their lives.



About

Started in 2016, EduGrow for Brighter Tomorrows, is a family-centric, early intervention programme that aims to strengthen primary school children from lower-income families residing in Marine Parade to be on a path of upward social mobility.

We focus on five areas – aspiration, character, education, financial values and relational skills, to help the child reach his/her fullest potential. This is a joint project with WeCare@MarineParade.



53

Beneficiaries Helped



51

Volunteers gave their time to help



48

Activities Conducted



Marine Parade



100%

passed PSLE



85%

have regular school attendance



81%

are able to maintain positive relationships



77%

are able to identify and regulate emotions

Based on 52 children

We are encouraged to see all of our P6 beneficiaries passing their PSLE, and most of the children under our care having regular school attendance. Although academic success is not the end-all-be-all, this will provide more social-economic opportunities and open more doors in their futures.

We are also encouraged to see the majority of our children having positive

relationships that flourish, and being able to regulate their emotions well. This will help decrease the likelihood of seeking unhealthy coping alternatives, and break out of their existing circumstances in the long run.

We are positive they will continue to grow stronger holistically as they enter the next phases of their lives.





About

Started in 1999, Life Student Care provides quality after-school student care services for working parents.

Research has shown that a supportive environment with consistent routines early on in a child's life positively contributes to his/her cognitive, emotional, and physical development.

We aim to do so by providing an environment akin to a second home in all our student care centres. In addition, we emphasize on the total development of the child as part of our "SPICES" programme -Social, Physical, Intellectual, Creative, Emotional and Spiritual (Moral).



466

Beneficiaries Helped



902

Volunteers gave their time to help



176

Activities Conducted



Hougang, Sengkang, Yishun, Pasir Ris

A Teacher's Heart

"I have known Louise* for two years now. He joined Life Student Care (LSC) when he was seven years old, or in Primary One.

When I first met him, he was not strong in his English basics, such as his ABCs. Often, he would mix alphabets up, such as "B" and "D" or "P" and "Q", and reverse numbers. He was also struggling to read words such as "the", "a", and "an".

As a result, Louise often took a much longer time in finishing his homework. He was falling behind compared to peers his age. Without improving his foundations, he would have a hard time moving on to more complex books and homework which require more understanding.

I began to work with Louise on learning two new words each day to widen his vocabulary. We worked on improving his grasp on the language and his handwriting, by re-learning the way to write alphabets. We also wrote them on the dotted lines I drew in his exercise books. The dotted lines were a great way for him to write alphabets and sentences neatly.

We saw progress slowly. Initially, he was failing all his spelling tests. After months of us working together, he was able to spell three to four words accurately. Recently, he managed to spell five out of six words accurately on average for his spelling tests. What a great improvement!

He also has much neater handwriting and is also able to read simple words now.

We are still working together to correct his occasional reversal of alphabets, and I am confident he would be able to write words with ease and become a great reader soon.

Louise has determination to focus and improve, and a great learning attitude. I see so much in him and know he is destined for a bright future."

Louise's teacher, LSC Programme

**Name has been changed to maintain confidentiality*

Empowered To Empower Others

"My parents are cleaners and I know they work very hard to provide for me and my two siblings. Despite knowing this, I still felt embarrassed about my background, especially in a society like Singapore where status is very much valued. Naturally, I had low self-esteem and lacked confidence.

I also struggled academically. My parents worked long hours and did not have time to teach me. My brothers would try to coach me but as they had their own schoolwork, I did not want to disturb them. I would go to school earlier in the morning to ask my classmates for help. However, I would still fail most of my exams. I felt like giving up and was unmotivated, since I thought I was never going to be good enough.

I came to know Life Community at the age of ten. I started making more friends and formed a support network with the staff and volunteer tutors. To engage me in my studies, they made sure tuition was fun and enjoyable, taking the time to teach and guide me. Slowly, I picked up the basics and felt more equipped to study.

I also had opportunities to try new activities! One moment that changed my mindset forever was a rock-climbing session. I was having great difficulties trying to reach the top and was about to give up. Everyone kept cheering me on and eventually I did it! I was so proud of myself. Something then clicked in me - I am strong enough to reach my goals if I persevere. Over the years, this experience has helped pushed me on whenever something seemed too hard for me.

I also had the chance to try performing arts and attended a theatre production workshop during my time with Life Community. I learnt many things including the techniques of making videos and designing publicity flyers. I even acted in one of their SG50 short films! Best of all, my parents attended the premier for this film which had about 200 people in the audience. I was elated when I saw how proud they were to see me being featured in the film.

Lastly, I participated in the preparation of ingredients for our daily lunch meals provided at the centre. Little did I know, I would discover my hidden passion. I started learning basic cooking skills and food hygiene standards. I then progressed on to cook for Life Community's overnight camps, and also taught and passed on what I have learnt to other youths.

Today, I am enrolled in ITE Nitec Asian Culinary Arts Course and working towards my goal of becoming a chef!

I am thankful to Life Community, and all the donors and volunteers for helping me to discover my strengths through the various opportunities given and for affirming me constantly.

"I am empowered and in turn, I empower others, and the cycle goes on. It does not matter where I came from; What matters is where I am heading towards. Yes, there is sunshine in my future!"

Jia Jing, Graduate Alumni of MKFC



Jia Jing teaching another youth to cook



When There Is Help, Hope Never Ceases



Growing up, James had little parental presence or guidance in his life.

His father, a gang leader, was incarcerated for drug-related activities and his mother, being the sole breadwinner of the family, was always tied up at work.

As a result, he became at risk of going off path at an early age. He had already picked up smoking, fighting, gambling, and drinking even though he was only in primary school.

He was also involved in several police cases, including one for criminally intimidating his peer with a weapon. Fortunately, he was let off with just a stern warning.

In regards to studies, he was not interested. Being able to win fights and rebelling were what brought acceptance and recognition among his friends.

Life Community first came to know James when he was 8 years old. It was extremely tough to get through to him. He had a negative outlook in life due to his own experiences and did not think his actions were detrimental. They were merely just part of his life.

Despite these difficulties, James's caseworker and mentor continued to meet up with him to provide a consistent adult figure, and guided him whenever he brought up issues and challenges in his life. They also constantly encouraged and helped him with his studies. During one visit, James shared that his biggest fear about his future was going to jail. He knew he had anger issues and felt powerless to change.

With trust and genuine friendship built over the years, James opened up and became receptive to guidance and advice from his caseworker and mentor. He was encouraged to be aware of what he was feeling and was given practical ways to deal with his emotions such as anger.

James also started to see himself more accurately after his caseworker helped him discover his strengths and character traits such as his love and kindness towards his family, his curious attitude towards new things, and his drive to improve (e.g. his basketball skills).

Most importantly, having good and caring role models in James's life allowed him to see a life beyond being a gangster and committing offenses to obtain approval from others.

Academically, James was able to pass his PSLE and graduate to secondary level, when all his teachers believed he would fail. He has forgiven his father and maintained a close relationship with him after he was released. He does not speak with as much vulgarities or create much trouble in school now.

In 2019, his father was unfortunately re-incarcerated for drug-related activities..

James was disappointed at the re-incarceration of his father, as his biggest hope was for his family to be together again.

Although the journey ahead remains tough for him and his family, Life Community will continue to support and walk with him. For as long as there is an outstretched hand, hope will never cease.

James, FOCY Programme
Name has been changed to maintain confidentiality



Highlights



Golf For Life 2019

Date: Wednesday 31 July 2019

Location: Warren Golf and Country Club

With the help of our golfers, donors, and corporate partners, we raised a gross receipt of \$237,353 (with an expense/cost ratio of 15%), which went towards assisting our beneficiaries under our four core programmes.



Staff Retreat

Date: Friday 30 August 2019

Location: Village Katong Hotel

Our team bonded over an exciting night of performances and games as we celebrated, encouraged, and appreciated each other's efforts, dedication and teamwork in serving our children, youths and families over the past year.



Children's Day with Watsons Singapore

Date: Friday 4 October 2019

Location: Kallang Bowl

48 children celebrated Children's Day bowling with the team from Watsons Singapore, which is one of their favourite activities to do! Thank you Watsons Singapore for this fun-filled day and for leaving such big smiles on the faces of our children.



Friends of Children and Youth Christmas Party

Date: Saturday 23 November 2019

Location: Singapore Swimming Club

The most awaited event of the year for 112 children and youths - Great food, fun activities, and inspiring speeches! Thank you to everyone who gave their time and support, and for making this event such a successful one.

Contact

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The Annual Report should be read in conjunction with the audited financial statements which comes as a separate booklet. The required disclosures in conformity to the FRS (Financial Reporting Standards in Singapore) and Code of Governance for Charities and Institutions of a Public Character issued by the Charity Council (April 2018) are contained in the audited financial statements.