

#forpositivechange

a helping hand in Serangoon

2020 MCI (P) 062/02/2020



Empowering Self, Enhancing Lives, Enriching Communities



SERANGOON MORAL
FAMILY SERVICE CENTRE



Dear Readers,

As we embark on the journey of the year ahead, it is helpful to allow ourselves some time to reflect on our previous year's accomplishments. Questions that we may ask ourselves include: "Did I achieve the resolutions that I set? What targets or goals did I meet at work and/or at home? What did I learn from the year's events?" Very often, by the time we answer these questions, we will either feel very proud of our accomplishments or beat ourselves up for not meeting the mark.

In the pursuit of excellence, we tend to push ourselves harder to achieve more goals at a faster speed. We work harder for longer hours and sacrifice our sleep to accomplish more. The 2019 Cigna 360 Well-Being Survey – Well and Beyond, conducted by a global health service company Cigna Corporation, found that Singapore had the fifth lowest wellness index, which was measured across five key indices – family, financial, physical, social and work. Is it time then for us to perhaps relook at our priorities and focus on our wellness/well-being?

For those who are keen to know more and learn new strategies to enhance your well-being, our team of social workers have published articles on our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/Serangoonfsc/>) and website (www.smfsc.org.sg). I will like to encourage you to start your #forpositivechange journey of self-care because you are important, and you matter.

If you have any suggestions, questions or concerns, please address them to the SMFSC Newsletter Editorial Committee at contact@smfsc.org.sg.

Yours sincerely,

Adeline Chew
Executive Director
Serangoon Moral Family Service Centre



Casework Walkthrough

Our Casework & Counselling services are provided by trained social workers to help individuals and families work through their personal, social and emotional challenges. Our team of professional staff works closely with the individuals and/or families to provide holistic services with the aim to strengthen resilience, increase inner resources and enhance overall well-being.



I'm at my wits' end. I have thoughts of seeking help but I don't know where to go.

Do you want to have a chat with us? You can contact us by calling, visiting or emailing our centre. Which do you prefer?

I think I would want to speak with someone face to face, but...what's going to happen?

When you come in, you can request to speak to our duty officer. You will also be asked to present a valid form of identification.



Okay, what do I need to say? Will this conversation be happening in private?

Yes, you can share as much as you wish! You will have the conversation in one of our counselling rooms to ensure that it is a place that you feel safe in.

Will the duty officer be my case worker?

The role of the duty officer is to get a brief understanding of your concerns. The duty officer will also assess if our centre is the most suitable to meet your concerns. If your concerns are a better fit for other resources e.g. legal aid, our duty officer will refer you to the appropriate resources.



What will happen at the end of the chit-chat?

If the decision is to continue to receive support from our family service centre, a caseworker will follow up with you in the next 3 to 5 working days. If you have any other questions, you can always call us to find out more!

Alright, thank you for sharing!



Groupwork, Pit Stop

Groupwork is a method of social work practice involving participants in a group setting to develop solutions to issues together and to learn from each other. Pit Stop is a groupwork for preteens (10 to 12 years old) to enhance functioning by inculcating healthy self-concept and self-esteem so that they can maximise their strengths, talents and abilities. Below are participants' feedback about the programme (in participants' actual words).

S

I had fun with my friends from different class and we play together.

I love the egg cracking activity as we get to help each other and had fun together.

E

Groupwork activities allow me to learn social skills about working with friends.

I persevered during rock climbing even though it was hard.

B

I've learnt more about myself that I didn't know previously.

Before the programme, I was impulsive. However, after the programme, I learnt how to use "Stop, Think, Go" before doing anything.

The programme was fun and educational! It keeps us occupied and I get to learn things that I didn't know.

P

I learnt to be more calm. It takes time to build patience.

I would recommend Pit Stop to others as it allows me to make new friends.

J

I enjoyed Pit Stop as it was fun as compared to normal curriculum.

I get to make new friends and not feel alone anymore.

I've learnt the power of yet and to persevere more.

A

Be calm in exams using the stop think and go model.



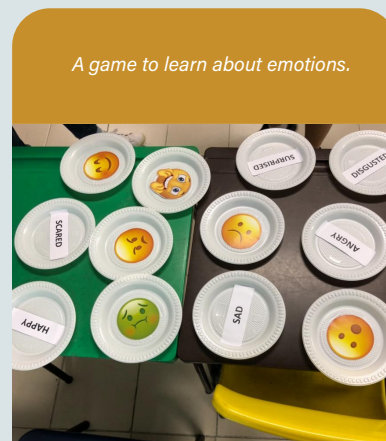
Do you know?

Pit Stop was introduced in 2014 and 57 preteens had benefited from the programme.

We are recruiting participants for a run in June 2020. Call us at 6284 7123 to enquire more.



Participant is doing a questionnaire to learn more about his strengths.



A game to learn about emotions.



Hands-on activity to illustrate positive and negative peer pressure.

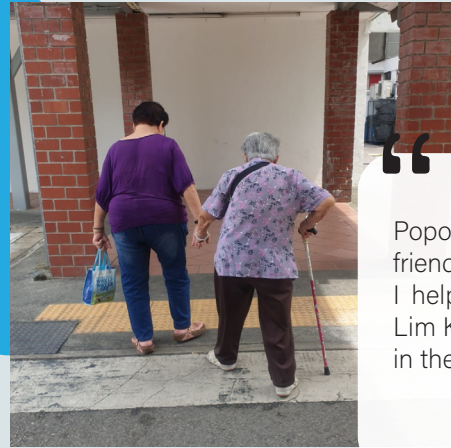
Kampong Friends, Lim Kopi

Kampong Friends is our centre's initiative which focuses on collaborating and co-creating with the community. It is our hope to encourage community ownership by identifying and mobilising existing, but often unrecognised assets and resources. Lim Kopi is a community project that started in 2016. It aims to strengthen the kampong spirit in Lorong Lew Lian, by creating a space for seniors to come together and foster relationships with each other through active ageing activities.



“ I feel good here as I can mix with elderly to make friends. I can walk here from my house and do exercise. Sometimes here also got makan!

- Mr Washil



“ Popo and I have been friends for 9 years now. I help her to come to Lim Kopi and take part in the activities!

- Mdm Chah



Lim Kopi 3rd Anniversary



Residents enjoying themselves at Lim Kopi's 3rd Anniversary game booths.

A total of 7 community partners joined us in our mini anniversary carnival to set up booths and share about their programmes and services. Through this, we hoped to improve our seniors' awareness of the various community resources available. The celebration was also a time for them to reminisce about the past with games and activities from their childhood.



Idea Sharing 2019/2020



'How can we improve?' is a question our resident volunteers often ask as we continuously seek for ways to best engage and connect with our seniors.



On 11 October 2019, 22 resident volunteers came together for an annual appreciation lunch and idea sharing session. Through this session, everyone shared feedback and worked together in co-creating new ideas for improvements.

Kampong Friends, Kampong Harvest

Kampong Harvest is a community garden that extends to being more than just a garden itself. It is a platform to connect residents from all walks of life and promote physical and social well-being.



Residents sharing a light-hearted moment.



Our residents sharing their composting knowledge and experience with each other.



All residents are welcomed to join us in our gardening activities.

“ It takes a whole kampong to build a kampong garden!

- Garden Core Team Resident, Ben ”

“ How are your feelings so far in coming for Kampong Harvest? ”

“ Coming here is a form of exercise for me, and I like that everyone is gathered around happily to enjoy the weekend together. There's a lot of things we can learn from one another, and this is how I see this experience so far. ”



Residents preparing the plots for planting.

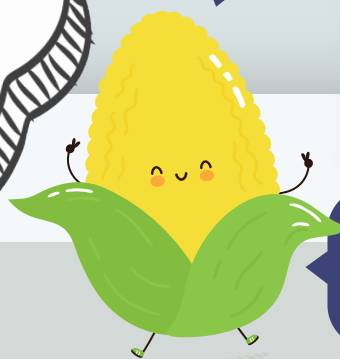
“ What would you say to promote Kampong Harvest to the other residents? ”

“ Nowadays people prefer to stay at home after a long day of work rather than coming out to exercise. Therefore, we welcome all residents to join Kampong Harvest as it is a place to interact, exercise as well as relieve our long-lost kampong spirit. ”



Gardening is a lot of hard work, but teamwork makes it more enjoyable!

- Garden Interest
Group Resident, BK



You can call us at **6284 7123** or **walk in** to enquire more about our community garden.

Kampong Carnival 2019



14th September 2019



Our SMFSC team getting ready to welcome residents.

We held our first Kampong Carnival at Serangoon Avenue 4 on 14th September 2019. The carnival was organised with the intentions of raising awareness of the centre's programmes and services, as well as gathering residents' views and thoughts on community development.



There were many carnival games for residents of all ages to enjoy!



Residents were given stickers to pen down their thoughts and hopes for the community.



It was not long before our board was filled with residents' thoughts and hopes.

Through the conversations, residents highlighted and identified existing community assets and resources.

These would be helpful in facilitating future conversations for community building. Residents also got to enjoy the day with carnival games and food.



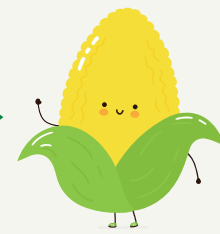
“ Do you know?

The carnival successfully outreached to approximately 300 residents living in and around Serangoon Avenue 4.

”



“Ready, aim and shoot!”



“
Time is what we want most,
but what we use worst

- William Penn

”



Ask almost anyone around you how they are, and the most likely response would be “busy”. We go through life at break-neck speed with very little time for ourselves. This perpetual lack of time seems to be the defining nature of our lives even though we can never really see or feel time. The title above of this article is quoted from the poet William Penn and it perfectly describes this constant struggle to squeeze more time out of our day. This quote continues to resonate with each passing generation as when he first wrote it in 1681. But, although we cannot truly “control” time, we can control what we do with it. That’s the essence of Penn’s quote. Singaporeans may be the world’s longest-living people, but we are also living a slightly greater proportion of our lives in poor health compared with about 30 years ago. This is from a report that studied the burden of disease here between 1990 and 2017 (Lim, 2019). While the passing of time is a foregone conclusion over which we mortals have no control over, how we manage this passage of time is something we can definitely influence and control.

Professor Lyndall Strazdins, clinical psychologist and senior fellow at the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health at the Australian National University and a recognised leader in the field of work, family and child well-being, says we are yet to grasp that time is itself a significant determinant of health. She notes that a

detrimental impact of time scarcity may be its prevention of activities and behaviours critical for good health (Strazdins et al, 2011). In 1948, the World Health Organization (WHO) defined health with a phrase that is still used today – health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (WHO, 1948). This is consistent with the biopsychosocial model of health (Engel, 1980), which considers physiological, psychological and social factors in health and illness, and interactions between these factors. It differs from the traditional medical model, which defines health as the absence of illness or disease and emphasises the role of clinical diagnosis and intervention. The WHO definition links health explicitly with well-being and conceptualises health as a human right requiring physical and social resources to achieve and maintain.

The concept of well-being sits well outside the medical model of health as its presence or absence is not a matter of clinical diagnosis. There is an acknowledgement that well-being is subjective, and it varies greatly between individuals, as do the factors that contribute to it. This does not suggest that it cannot be defined or measured, and there has been considerable progress in this area. Though there is no one universal definition of well-being, there is a general consensus that at the very least, well-being includes the

presence of positive emotions and moods (such as contentment and happiness), the absence of negative emotions (such as depression and anxiety), satisfaction with life, fulfilment and positive functioning. To put it simply, well-being can be described as judging your life positively and feeling rather good about yourself and the environment you are in - it may be the difference between a thriving life and one spent suffering. The McKinley Health Center at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign brings this definition further and notes that a state of optimal well-being is one that is oriented toward maximizing an individual's potential. This is a life-long process of moving towards enhancing your physical, intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual, and environmental well-being.

Dr. Claire Nicogossian, a clinical psychologist and parental well-being expert, notes that the foundation of well-being starts with physical self-care. Physical self-care is all about ensuring that your body is well-nourished and happy. Our physical health is the foundation on which all else is built upon. How we treat and care for our body directly correlates to our well-being and will impact our ability to cope with the stress and demands of everyday life (Nicogossian, 2017). However, it is important to note here that though self-care is different for everyone and there is no clear or definite time frame or frequency for it to be practised, it is important to try and practice self-care every day. Self-care can be easily included into your life by just simply listening to your body, heart and mind. The challenge then is to identify activities and behaviours that will be most beneficial to your own well-being. Start small and start something that is insanely easy to do but gives the simplest of joy. **If you're enjoying yourself and if it's making you happy, then that time is well spent. And do remember the time you enjoy wasting is not time wasted.**



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ARTICLE 2 :
CHUA JING RU
Social Worker

Build your child's self-esteem!

What is self-esteem?

Self-esteem is how a person views his/her own value and worth. Self-esteem influence the way we frame our thoughts and feel about ourselves. When children find their parents' communication as supportive and open, they develop higher self-esteem than when their parents' communication patterns are perceived as controlling and unsupportive (Heiman, Zinck, & Heath, 2008).

As an infant, self-esteem is built when basic needs of love, comfort and intimacy are met. Parents and caregivers who show love and attention to the infants teach them that they are important and protected. This could be done through appropriate and prompt responses to cries and communication attempts made by the infant.

As a toddler, self-esteem is developed through the love and treatment from his/her parents and caregivers. A child who receive repeated messages that they are useless because they are unable to perform certain tasks may then see themselves as unlovable and incapable of performing other tasks (Geldard, Geldard & Foo, 2018). Parents and caregivers can boost their toddler's self-esteem by focusing on his/her efforts in attempting tasks. Allowing the toddler to face challenges, helping them to learn new skills and feel competent and confident, thus developing their self-esteem levels.

When a child starts attending school, self-esteem is often influenced by their ability to complete tasks and make friends. If children are encouraged and reinforced for their initiative, they begin to feel industrious and confident in their ability to achieve goals (McLeod, S.A, 2008). Often, children make comparisons towards other children, such as their differences in ability to complete a task or to perform in sports. At this stage, boosting self-esteem would require parents and caregivers to allow children to make age-appropriate risks and choices such as trying new tasks. It is important for adults to help children make sense of the mistakes they make and to attempt again.

With the onset of puberty, teenagers experience physical and hormonal changes which heavily impact on how they feel about their bodies which in turn influence their self-esteem. This is also a period where teenagers start learning and experimenting to find out what roles they fit in the society as an adult. Parents and caregivers can help by keeping open communication with the teenager, empathise with their growing struggles and support them in making decisions for themselves. Parents and caregivers can allow them to take responsibility and deal with consequences of their actions.



References:

- Geldard, K., Geldard, D., & Foo, R. Y. (2018). *Counselling children: a practical introduction*. Los Angeles: SAGE.
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Parents and caregivers' self-esteem are important too! Well-functioning parents and caregivers are the first step to creating an atmosphere of positive self-esteem at home. Self-esteem is continually built through the stages of life, even through adulthood and maturity and it is influenced by one's daily experiences. Improve your daily experiences by:

- Positive self-talk – Put in the effort to say kind words to yourself
- Focus on you – Affirm your efforts rather than comparing against other parents and caregivers
- Be realistic – Understand that perfection is impractical. Mistakes are to be expected, learn from them
- Small victories – The little details matter, celebrate the little achievements
- Allow yourself rest and support – Offer rest time to yourself and surround yourself with people who support you



Some signs of healthy self-esteem:

- Believing and accepting compliments given to you
- Acknowledging and celebrating the achievements of others
- Focusing on your own needs rather than overly focusing on pleasing others
- Being confident despite imperfections
- Recognise you have your strengths and weaknesses just like anyone else



Some signs of unhealthy self-esteem:

- Self-blame and criticism
- Fear and reluctance to take risks or make changes
- Inability to accept compliments and to be fair to yourself
- Saying sorry excessively
- Constantly seeking reassurance from other people




Are you and/or your family experiencing:
Parental, Marital, Relationship,
Emotional & Mental Health Issues,
Family Violence or Crisis?



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