

# HELP OUR GIRLS

*Would you like to partner us to help girls and women renew hope in the new year? Here are the ways you can help!*

## WHAT THEY NEED

**\$2,000** helps a girl in the Residential Therapeutic Programme for 1 month

**\$3,000** helps 2 girls in the Clinical Programme for 1 month

**\$4,500** helps 3 girls in the Alternative School for 3 months

**\$12,000** helps a girl in the Residential Therapeutic Programme for 6 months

**\$48,000** helps a girl in DaySpring (Residential Therapeutic, Clinical and Education Programmes) for 1 year

**PLEASE FILL IN THE FORM OVERLEAF**

## CALENDAR

### Happenings

#### GALLOPING TO GREATNESS

*November & December*

DaySpring girls participated in Equine Assisted Therapy through Equal, where they were taught five key habits: Listening with Understanding and Empathy; Thinking Flexibly; Taking Responsible Risk; Managing Impulsivity; and Persisting. The girls then presented their poised riding skills. They were beautiful!



#### GOING THE DISTANCE

*26 - 28 November*

Four DaySpring girls went to Karimun, Indonesia, along with other youths to participate in community service activities and engage with children from local villages. To fund the trip, the girls worked hard months before to sell cookies, put up a talent dance show and organise a flea market. Now, that's going the extra mile!



#### SHINE BRIGHT LIKE A DIAMOND

*17 - 21 November*

Shine Singapore runs workshops to help girls develop worth, strength and purpose. In the latest session hosted by former Class 95FM DJ Carol Smith, our girls were taught self-esteem, decision-making and problem-solving skills. The aim is to empower them as positive change-makers in the world.



## GREETINGS

### HAVE A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A GLORIOUS NEW YEAR!

Thank you for your unwavering support and the joy you have brought to us!

Love,  
The DaySpring Girls  
and Team



## ABOUT DAYSPRING RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT CENTRE



Since 2006, DaySpring has been providing voluntary welfare service to women and youth-at-risk in Singapore. We operate as a programme under HighPoint Community Services Association (HCSA), which is a member of the National Council of Social Services and recognised as an Institution of Public Character (IPC).

Our vision is to see every girl and woman, especially those at risk, live a life of purpose and hope, make peace with her past, and find purpose in her present and renewed hope for the future. In January 2011 we set up DaySpring Residential Treatment Centre (DaySpring RTC) to provide abused girls from the ages of 12 to 16 with a treatment programme in a small-group home environment. The first of its kind in Singapore, DaySpring RTC is approved and licensed by the Ministry of Social and Family Development.

### TREATMENT PROGRAMMES

*We offer our residents the following programmes during their stay with DaySpring:*

#### RESIDENTIAL THERAPEUTIC PROGRAMME

A 12- to 18-month live-in programme where our residents experience a sense of belonging, love and safety under 24/7 care and supervision by counsellors and mentors. They learn to cultivate healthy ways of thinking, feeling and behaving. The programme includes a 3-month in-house alternative school, so the girls can integrate better when they return to school after their initial treatment.

#### VALUES PROGRAMME

Six-level values-based programme where our residents determine their personal values and work with coaches and mentors to align their values with their actions. They learn to control themselves and achieve authentic, self-driven change. New residents begin with Safety, and move on to the subsequent levels: Expectation, Connection, Discovery, Insight, Integrity and Interdependence.

#### CLINICAL PROGRAMME

Our residents are involved in various clinical therapies as part of their daily schedules. These include individual counselling; family counselling; art, dance, drama and pet therapy; anger management; emotional regulation; and trauma and abuse group. Using a team-based approach, our counsellors and staff work with the residents to help them achieve their clinical goals.

#### TRANSITION PROGRAMME

Six-month after-care programme where graduates of the Residential Treatment Programme continue their path of healing. They learn life skills necessary for living independently and with their families and for reintegration into society.

## ABOUT DAYSPRING NEW LIFE CENTRE

DaySpring New Life Centre provides timely, non-judgmental and holistic help to women with unsupported pregnancies so they can make the best choices for themselves, their children (born and unborn) and loved ones. It comprises a residential service, where women stay in to receive the care they need pre- and post-birth; as well as support services in the areas of adoption, fostering, counselling, parenting, medical needs, legal needs, and more.

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DaySpring

# GOT Her BACK

NEWSLETTER for DECEMBER 2014

## FEATURE

### LIFE ANEW FOR WOMEN STRUGGLING WITH UNSUPPORTED PREGNANCIES

*DaySpring New Life Centre, a partnership between former pastor Jennifer Heng and DaySpring, launches to focus on timely, non-judgmental and holistic care*

Take a few seconds to imagine a distressed female struggling with an unwanted pregnancy. For most of us, a teenage girl pops up in our minds. It is also common to find social services targeting their help towards pregnant teens.

In reality, the majority of women who have abortions in Singapore are above 20 years old. In 2013, almost 47% of the 9,282 abortions here were by those 21 to 30 years old, while less than 7% were by those under 20.

Former pastor Jennifer Heng, 39, and DaySpring saw in these statistics a compelling need for help. "And there is certainly a pressing need to help the older women too," she said. "They have very intense anxieties such as parental pressure, the inability to support their child financially, and fears of not having the future they want."

#### From Darkness to Light

Jennifer would know. She had two abortions when she was younger.

"I was extroverted and rebellious, but beneath that confident exterior, I was insecure," she recalled. "My greatest weakness was the need to be loved and accepted by the opposite sex. I didn't know what healthy boundaries were."

"After the abortions, I thought I'd never receive the forgiveness for what I had done." The healing process was not impossible, but it took years.

First, Jennifer embraced God's unconditional love for her, and then she started learning to forgive herself. Close friends stuck by and never judged – their presence and love nourished her.

She said: "I found the courage to confront what I had done and discover the root reasons why I did what I did."

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*Jennifer Heng and DaySpring saw in Singapore's abortion statistics a compelling need for help*



*MPs Christopher De Souza and Tin Pei Ling visit the recently launched DaySpring New Life Centre and cuddle one of our first baby residents!*

*"Ultimately, we are about empowering women and their families to make life-giving choices"*

## Breathing New Life

While in the valley of fears, Jennifer often wondered how other women coped.

She began entertaining a radical thought: "How can I help these women as I have been helped?"

In November 2013, Jennifer was connected to DaySpring. Their mutual passion for caring for vulnerable girls and women rubbed off each other.

For pregnant mothers, nine months is a symbolic period, and this was no different in the case of Jennifer and DaySpring. Both had been impregnated with the idea of creating a much-needed haven.

From January to September this year, they collaborated and worked hard to build DaySpring New Life Centre, which opened in early October.

Timely, non-judgmental and holistic care and support are key in DaySpring New Life Centre's approach to helping women and their families cope with unsupported pregnancies. The aim is to empower the women and families to make life-giving choices.

For women needing help, services such as referrals for adoption and fostering services, counselling, family mediation, pre- and post-natal needs, and life skills training are available. For those needing a place to stay during their pregnancies, 233 Turf Club Road provides a therapeutic environment. Post-birth, the women and infants can stay for up to four months.

A network of partner organisations ensures New Life Centre does not stand alone in this work and that it is a community effort.

## Hand in Hand, Heart to Heart

One of the challenges faced by the centre: women themselves must want to be helped.

"Because they are often referred to us by various support groups, some of the women don't feel the want or need to be helped," Jennifer observed.

At the end of the day, the real hard work is thus heart work.

"As a centre that seeks to empower women, we will continue to tread sensitively so we don't impose on them," said Jennifer.

"An unwanted or unsupported pregnancy may feel like an inconvenience, but it may also be the much-needed turning point for the women and their families," Jennifer explained. "Ultimately, we want to see families pull together and become stronger."

## DID YOU KNOW?

In 2013, there were 39,720 live births and 9,282 abortions reported in Singapore. This means that almost 19% – or, 1 in 5 – pregnancies are aborted every year.

(Statistics from Ministry of Health and Department of Statistics, Singapore)

## FEATURE

# STARS SHINE FOR DAYSPRING GIRLS

*DaySpring's annual fund-raising dinner, themed Starry Starry Night, raised half a million dollars for women and at-risk youths*

"We are all of us stars, and we deserve to twinkle," the famous actress Marilyn Monroe once said.

While she certainly could not be at DaySpring's annual fund-raising dinner, her charismatic presence in the form of a life-sized standee was unmissable.

Held on 28 September at the cosy NUSS Guild Hall, *Starry Starry Night* echoed Monroe's motto: all of us can shine.

So it was more than apt that local celebrities Irene Ang, Jeanette Aw, Nikki Muller, and other Fly Entertainment artistes took to the stage with funny yet inspiring performances such as *What I Would Do If I Were Singapore's First Woman President*.

They were of course celebrating the biggest stars of the evening: the courageous DaySpring girls who are each discovering their own spark.

DaySpring is a beneficiary of the government's Care and Share movement that matches dollar for dollar donations received. That evening, a million dollars was raised from the \$500,000 contributed by our supporters. Thank you donors for your belief in our work!



Clockwise: (1) Welcoming our guest-of-honour, Dr Lily Neo, Member of Parliament and Deputy Chair of Government Parliamentary Committee, Ministry of Social and Family Development (2) Jeanette Aw handed out awards to DaySpring alumni, shared about her time with the girls, and encouraged guests to support (3) If she were Singapore's first woman president, Irene Ang would install ERP gantries at HDB areas so more people would stay home and make babies (4) The evening started a total of 270 guests, who heartily rallied a contribution of half a million dollars to DaySpring (5) Special guest Celine Dion, performed her self-penned song *Live Now*, which was poignant and touching

## MEET

# "I thought Father's violence was normal"

*"Carol," who graduated from DaySpring in November, suffered more than 10 years of abuse before finally walking the lighted path*



"I was diagnosed with clinical depression two years ago after my mother brought me to the Institute of Mental Health following a suicide threat.

At that time I was in secondary three and felt immense pressure from school, especially from my CCA batch-mate's hurtful words. I was unable to concentrate and fell behind in my studies.

There were also frequent quarrels at home. I broke down after many years.

I was surprised by the psychiatrist's shocked reaction when I told him about the violence at home.

All along, I thought Father's violence was normal and happened in other families.

Shortly after starting therapy, I began having flashbacks of being sexually abused by Father. As more memories returned, including my struggles and screams, I began acknowledging all that had happened to me.

My psychiatrist did not immediately report the abuse to the authorities. The violence continued. Father hurled objects such as a ladder, bamboo poles and chairs at us. He would also tell me how useless I was because I am not a boy.

## From Resident to Intern

*We looked after the beautiful Dorothy, 19, when she was overcoming her traumatic past. Today, she has blossomed into a DaySpring intern and aspires to be a Child Protection Officer*



"I had a past that destroyed me. I was sexually, physically and mentally abused when I was a child. To make things worse, my mum was someone who needed companionship so she had many affairs.

Life was volatile. I had to find shelter and changed schools every year. I became a person I never thought I would become. I landed up in hostels, and then, the Singapore Girls' Home. After three months there, I met someone who has become my god-sent angel.

Cathy, Clinical Director of DaySpring, spoke to me and I could not help but break into tears. I entered DaySpring to receive therapy and rehabilitation in 2011.

One day, during a chaotic moment in DaySpring, I felt all my fears drowning me, as if I was pulled into a deep sea. I looked for Cathy, and all I did for the next hour was cry into her lap. I realised I had cried all my fears out.

Many times, I wanted to give up and I never thought I would make it to graduation. On that fine day in 2012, I remember, I had butterflies in my tummy as I stood in front of everyone and shared about my past.

The next year, I started experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms. I attempted another suicide; the final push to act on it came after my father touched me again.

In the hospital, the Child Protection Officer agreed that I should live in a home. She arranged for me to be at DaySpring. I arrived at DaySpring on my 16th birthday.

I continued having suicidal thoughts but the staff never gave up on me and continued to work with me even as I told them to just give up. They remained understanding and patient.

DaySpring turned out to be a strong pillar of support, helping me through many difficult times such as when Father passed away and my O Level examinations.

I learnt that life is really unpredictable and we should not take things for granted. I took my own mental health and well-being for granted. I never imagined I would ever be diagnosed with depression.

Surprisingly, when I saw my father for the first time after entering DaySpring, I was not angry at all. I felt at peace. I realised I had forgiven him. I told him that I believed he was a good person deep down.

I understood: it is through forgiveness that we free ourselves and others from the invisible shackles that once held all of us down."

Today, I work as an intern mentor in DaySpring. I ensure the girls follow their planned schedules, practise respect and cleanliness, and I also help them pull through their rough days.

Because of what I have faced, I have an interest in psychology, which is what I am studying now. I hope to become a Child Protection Officer, so I can help troubled kids realise that someone out there cares for and understands them.

Three things that inspire me? One, my past and the journey I've taken to overcome it. Second, people who triumph over criticisms and insecurities and fight to succeed in life. Finally, I enjoy writing!"

*"I hope to become a Child Protection Officer, so I can help troubled kids realise that someone out there cares for and understands them"*

# GIVE TODAY!

## YOUR DETAILS

Dr  Mdm  Mr  Mrs  Ms

Full Name

Address

Postal Code

Phone No.

E-mail

NRIC/FIN

Occupation

We respect your privacy and do not rent, sell or exchange our mailing lists.

## CONTRIBUTION METHOD

Cheque No. / Bank

Payable to **HCSA DaySpring**

Bank Transfer No.

**OCBC Bank Account No:**  
**641-008602-001**  
Branch Code: 641  
Bank Code: 7339  
Swift Code: OCBCSGSG

## MAIL THIS FORM AND YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO:

**DaySpring Residential Treatment Centre**  
234 Turf Club Road  
Singapore 287984

*All donations entitle you to the prevailing tax deduction rate of 2.5 times the donated amount.*

**For partnerships and volunteering opportunities, contact Adelene Wee at 6276 8002 or adelene@dayspring.org.sg**

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION!