

KAMPONG GLAMourise 7-04

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Project Type: Category 7: Service-Learning,
Single Year

Section I: Overview of Project (Refer to Annex A for References)

Our Area of Concern

Based on research conducted in Singapore and published in the 联合早报(ZaoBao) Newspaper, an estimated **1 in 4** Singaporeans will be aged 65 and above by **2030**. Many leaders, including Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam has also voiced his concern, stating that an ageing population is “one of Singapore’s biggest challenges”. We explored further into the issue and found out from the Longitudinal Survey of Social Isolation, that **1 in 2** Singaporeans aged 60 and above reported being lonely. Moreover, the number of elderly living *alone* is projected to *rise to 83,000* by **2030**.

Underlying Problem

Given the above situation, we delved deeper into the problem and realised that the younger generations are showing less concern for the elderly and misconceptions and misunderstandings, such as the ideology that the elderly are of no more use to the society, worsen the issue. This led us to embark on our SL Project with the underlying problem of: Given that Singapore is facing an ageing population and that the younger generations are showing less concern for the elderly, how might we integrate the elderly back to society by interacting with the young, as well as, make them feel happy?

Our Service Partner

We worked with our service partner: PEACE-connect (PECCO), a non-governmental organisation. The organisation serves seniors aged 60 and above who are living in the area and provide services such as Senior Group Homes (shelter for elderly), Senior Activity Centres (Equipped with activity rooms and exercise facilities) as well as Cluster Support Centres. A simple reason why we wanted to work with them was because they have the experience of caring

for the elderly, and it will be invaluable for us to learn the skills of interacting with the elderly from them.

Challenges Identified

After touring the Kampong Glam area and talking with our beneficiary, we realised that there were some challenges such as the lack of outreach to the younger generation. To get the younger generation to interact more with the elderly, they must first learn how to accept them. However, we rarely saw any young volunteers at PEACE-connect and thus, we based our events on volunteer-recruitment, whereby students from Hwa Chong Institution will be the ones helping out and interacting with the elderly.

Another challenge was the amount of care given. PEACE-connect is not a small organisation. They need to look after many elderly and the care each elderly receives, may be very minimal. Therefore, we focussed our weekly activities on a small group of elderly, build bonds with them. We target larger groups and the community with our large-scale events.

Plan of Action

Our action plan was crafted to target the problem of low level of interactions between the young and the old, as well as to solve the issue of the elderly being lonely and segregated from society. The plans allow us and the volunteers to learn the approach when interacting with the elderly and have meaningful interactions with them. We communicated with our beneficiary as well as the Kampong Glam Community Centre for the venues we required for the large-scale events.

Date	Action	Objective(s)
Jan - March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Liaising with PEACE-connect on our plans and listen to their suggestions ● Improve plans and submit final copy ● Start preparing resources for weekly visits and 	

	events	
April - May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Head down for first few house visits to understand the target group of elderly we will be working with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Find the right approach when interacting with them
June - July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hold volunteer-based activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Breakfast with Love <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide manpower for the event ○ House Cleaning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Clean up the houses of our target group of elderly ○ Mini-party <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Volunteers to help out at a party organised by us for all elderly of the Senior Group Homes ○ Neighbourhood Day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ New/ Returning volunteers to set up stalls for elderly in the neighbourhood to participate in ■ Game booths to spark reminiscence of the past as well as have a chance to interact with volunteers ○ IT Course <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ One of the booths during the Neighbourhood Day ■ Educate the elderly on how to use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understand and interact with the elderly ● Bring joy to the elderly, so that they will not feel lonely

	their phones and how to deal with phone scams	
*Note: Weekly visits still continue on Saturdays which do not have any events scheduled for.		

Section II: Implementation of Action Plan (Refer to Annex B for photos)

All of the events listed in the action plan above were executed in the time-frame stated. As the interactions with the elderly became more frequent, the elderly became more open with us and voiced other concerns they may have. We helped them resolve these concerns as well.

Throughout the project

- Weekly visits
 - We head down to Kampong Glam to listen to the elderly share their experiences and play simple games with them.
 - We bring breakfast or fruits to them every visit for them to enjoy.
- Helping elderly buy their daily necessities

June Holidays - July

- Breakfast with Love (4/6/18)
 - We recruited some volunteers for our beneficiary to follow us down to help out in the distribution of breakfast and morning exercise at the community centre.
- House Cleaning (16/6/18)
 - Volunteers from 3P2 followed us down to clean up the houses of the elderly so that they have a better environment to live in.
- Mini-party (30/6/18)
 - Party organised for all elderly living in Senior Group Homes
 - Volunteers to help with the coordination of games and distribution of snacks
 - Overwhelming response as elderly not from the SGHs also joined in mid-way
- Neighbourhood Day cum IT Course (21/7/18)
 - Volunteers to help us with the manning of stalls
 - More than 150 elderly participated in the games and IT Course

Section III: Project Outcomes

1. Accomplishments

We recruited **more than 20** volunteers for our events and some even returned to help us in our subsequent events. Our volunteers came from other schools such as Cedar Girls Secondary as well, not limited to Hwa Chong students. These student-volunteers also learnt communication skills and the tumultuous times the elderly had to go through. We have managed to serve a total of **200 elderly** throughout our events and free tickets were out of stock for our neighbourhood day event.

2. Reflections

As the core project team, we learnt about the plight of the elderly that PEACE-connect, some of which have lost connections with their families, and some, were left to fend for themselves by their families. These unfortunate events and stories shared by the elderly have truly touched our hearts as we progressed through the journey. Some of the elderly long to see their families again, but that was one of the wishes we were unable to realise, and for that, we felt sympathetic. We are heartened by the affirmation by our beneficiary and mentor throughout the project. We are also thankful to all volunteers for volunteering their time to learn more about the current situation and play a part in the attempt to solve the issue. The overall success of our events have proven that we have made an impact on the community. There were also areas for improvement, such as having volunteers to follow us down for our weekly sessions, as well as interacting with more elderly so that we can increase our outreach. Should there be a next batch of students, we will work with them and provide them with advice as to how to continue to bring success to the project and bring it to greater heights.

3. Scope of Impact

Impact on Community: Teenagers and adults were also seen at some of the events, especially during the Neighbourhood Day. It was evident that they were putting in their effort and time to

accompany their parents/ grandparents to our events despite having to sacrifice half of their Saturday.

Impact on Elderly: The elderly feel more joy and have found more meaning in life. They also know where to go when they feel lonely.

Impact on Beneficiary: The beneficiary have given us positive feedback and also learnt how to put technology to good use in their future events for the elderly. They approached us to learn more about the Bingo App we were using during the party as well.

Impact on volunteers: We have recruited more than 20 volunteers and received feedback that they have learnt how to interact with the elderly and cleared their misconceptions.

“During this well-organised event, I have learnt how to initiate conversations with elderlies and how to keep a conversation going.” ~ Zhu Yicheng, Sec 3.

“From this event, I have learnt slightly better interpersonal skills, and I have also learned how to interact with the elderly.” ~ Marcus Chan, Sec 1

(1493 words)

Annex A: References

- YI, S. (2018). *Social mobility, ageing are Singapore's big challenges: Tharman*. *The Straits Times*. Retrieved 22 March 2018, from <http://www.straitstimes.com/politics/social-mobility-ageing-are-spores-big-challenges>
- *Mind the generation gap*. (2017). *The Straits Times*. Retrieved 22 March 2018, from <http://www.straitstimes.com/opinion/st-editorial/mind-the-generation-gap>
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- *PeCCO Peace Connect - Volunteer*. (2018). *PEACE – Connect Cluster Operator (PeCCO)*. Retrieved 22 March 2018, from <http://www.pecco.org.sg/index.php/volunteer/>
- Cheatsheet: Issues Faced By The Elderly In Singapore. (2018). NVPC. Retrieved 1 April 2018, from <https://www.nvpc.org.sg/resources/cheatsheet-issues-faced-by-the-elderly-in-singapore>

Annex B

Images from Breakfast with Love (4/6/18)

Project team and volunteers from Cedar Girls School helping out our beneficiary.







Cleaning of Houses







Mini Party (30/6/18)







Project KAMPONG GLAMourise 2018

Neighbourhood Day









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Weekly Visits





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