



## **Project Revival 7-36**

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Single Year Service Learning Project

## **Section I : Overview**

### **1. Area of concern**

The boys from Boys' Town come from disadvantaged families, such as families with parents that have been sent to jail, or families that face problems economically. Thus these boys lack love and care, and are also unable to cope with schoolwork. In addition, these children faced hardships like financial struggles, family issues, emotional abuse and trauma. They may have low confidence, be unmotivated, give up easily and have an "I don't care anymore" attitude. As a result, they may neglect their schoolwork, causing their grades to deteriorate. They also do not have much interaction with people outside of Boys' Town, and thus may lack certain social skills or other holistic skills such as creativity or responsibility which are essential. Due to various stereotypes regarding the boys from Boys' Town, there is often a social stigma surrounding these boys even after they graduate, which may negatively affect the opportunities they get, such as job or study opportunities. However, these stereotypes are mostly untrue, and the public are just oblivious to the truth of Boys' Town and what are the struggles faced by the children on a daily basis. Boys' Town Singapore aims to help children and youth-in-need become socially integrated, responsible and contributing members of society. They do so by providing residential services and vocational skills training and education to disadvantaged boys. New services such as fostering, street outreach and clinical intervention were set up in the last few years to steer the organisation towards becoming a one-stop children and youth centre.

### **2. Challenges Identified**

After talking to the representatives from Boys' Town as well as listening to the story of the boys, we understood more about the struggles they faced and could identify the challenges they faced. Boys in Boys' Town Singapore face many challenges. One challenge is that they do not have someone to consult and to ask for advice from, be it regarding academic work, or problems faced in their daily lives. They spend most of their time in the Boys' Town compound, so it is rare for them to have someone out of Boys' Town that they can talk to. As a result they may not be equipped with the necessary social skills. In addition, due to past experiences which they may have gone through, they might lack confidence and self-esteem. Another challenge is that people often see boys from Boys' Town in a negative light, due to the various stereotypes that are associated with them. After conducting a survey with 127 people, we found out that before the survey, 85% of people were intimidated by the name "Boys' Town", while 73.2% of people were afraid to meet the boys from Boys' Town. The research showed that there was a social stigma surrounding the boys, thus they often not treated equally and are labelled as being less competent than others. This may affect their chances of getting jobs, or even a place in a school in the future. Another challenge faced is one faced by the beneficiary. Boys' Town is not funded by the government, thus most of its income come from donations by companies, the public and even alumni. As a result, they may not have sufficient funding to improve their facilities and equipment.

### **3. Underlying problem**

Given that these youth come from disadvantaged families and lack attention, love, care, moral guidance and require help academically; and thereby being subjected to discrimination, how might we attempt to remove the social stigma surrounding them and hopefully allow them to reintegrate back into society without the presence of labelling, at the same time providing them with someone they can confide in and rely on.

#### 4. Accomplishments

Our social media posts aim to help raise awareness about Boys' Town, allowing the public to learn more about the boys and the struggles they face, as well as remove the stereotypes associated with the boys. Our tuition sessions are aimed towards helping improve the grades of the boys and provide them with an avenue of interaction with people outside of Boys' Town to improve their social skills. The workshop in collaboration with Project CreasionAid aims to help cultivate creativity in the boys through hands-on activities. The flag-day helps to raise funds for Boys' Town as they are not funded by the government and need funds for new facilities and equipment. Through flyer distribution, we can let more people know about what they can do to play a part in making the lives of the children in Boys' Town better

#### Section II : Plan Implementation

Date	Action	Objective(s)
Jan-Feb	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Formation of Project Revival</li> <li>2. Liaising and communication with Boys' Town Singapore</li> <li>3. Introduction to Boys' Town and their facilities</li> </ol>	
Feb	<u>Flag Day</u> Jurong East MRT Raised awareness about the boys in Boys' Town Raised funds	-raise funds and awareness
Mar-Aug	<u>Tuition sessions</u> Held every week on Thursday Get to know the boys better and provide guidance Develop relationships Help improve the academics	- improve grades, provide social interaction
Jun-Aug	<u>Social media</u> Setting up of Instagram page Posting of facts and information on Boys' Town Raise awareness for Boys' Town 407 followers	- raise awareness
Aug	<u>Workshop</u> Collaboration with Project CreasionAid Conducted with boys from Boys' Town	- help cultivate creativity
Aug	<u>Flyer Distribution</u> Help spread the word about Boys' Town's fostering services	-raise awareness

#### Section III: Project Outcomes

##### 1. Accomplishments

Through our tuition sessions, we were able to help the boys with their struggles in school work, ultimately helping them improve in certain subjects which they are weaker at. Through weekly tuition sessions, they were able to bring up their grades, as well as get to know more about them. By bringing up their grades, we were able to provide them with a higher chance of getting better education and future prospects. We were also able to raise awareness on the problems faced by these boys through posts on our Instagram page and surveys. We have 405 followers on Instagram and 127 responses for our survey. By participating in the beneficiary's flag day, we also helped gather funds needed to improve the facilities and equipment in Boys' Town Singapore to give the children a better living environment.

## **2. Reflections**

We have learnt more about what are the troubles and issues faced by the boys in Boys' Town, which are some issues not usually shown to the public. Through working with them, we realised that the stereotypes that the public have towards the boys there are completely false. As a result of these stereotypes, there is a social stigma surrounding the boys that affect them negatively. We are very happy that we were able to change the mindsets of some people about the boys in Boys' Town and allow them to see these boys in a new, more positive light. We probably could have reached out to more people if we had created our Instagram page earlier, as well as conducted the survey on a larger pool of people, even having more activities that will raise awareness. However, we are grateful that we were able to reach some people and we believe that through sustained publicity and interaction with the boys, we can achieve the aim of removing the social stigma and help ease the transition of the boys integrating back into society.

## **3. Scope of project**

### Community/Publicity Impact:

We were able to shed light on the situation at Boys' Town and change the mindsets of people about the boys from Boys' Town. Through our survey and Instagram posts, we can make people aware of some misconceptions they have about Boys' Town, and correct these misconceptions. We hope that the public will not have a discriminatory attitude towards the boys and even take action to help them, ultimately treating them as equals who have their own set of talents and skills.

### Impact on boys:

Through our tuition cum interaction sessions, we were not only able to improve the grades of the boys, but also help improve their social and critical thinking skills. Being their tutor does not only mean being someone who helps them with their school work, but more importantly it also means being someone that the boys can talk to about their struggles, and rely on when they face troubles outside of their academics. By providing them with interaction with someone outside of Boys' Town, the boys can learn how to socialise, which will help them in the future. Through raising awareness, we can also make life easier for the boys in the future, such that the public will view them equally.