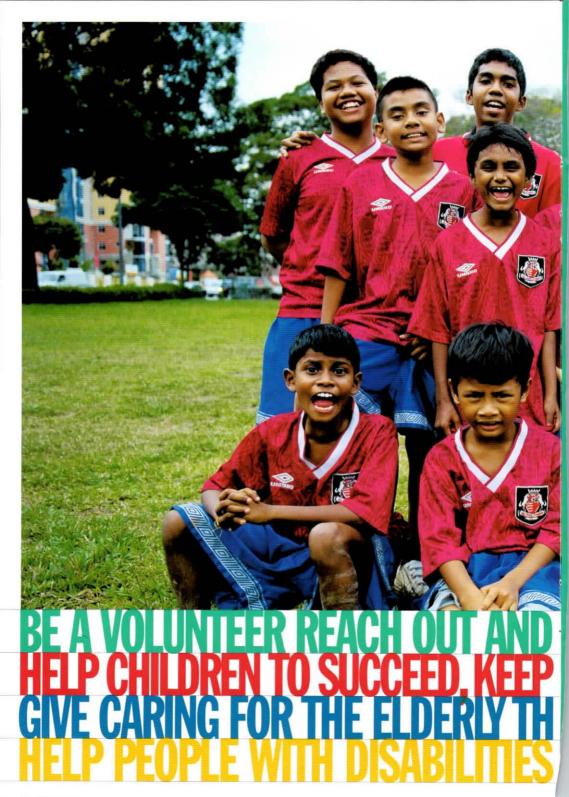




BE A VOLUNTEER REACH OUT AND CHANGE LIVES







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BE A VOLUNTEER REACH OUT AND

It is often more difficult to give up one's time rather than donate cash to help someone in need. Getting personally involved in community causes means offering time, energy, dedication, sharing skills, expertise and making sacrifices.

In Singapore, there is a growing need for social services to promote the well being of our disadvantaged communities. Almost every other day, when you read the newspapers, you come across stories of people who need help, reports of broken families, rising rates of dementia among the elderly, heightened stress levels among Singaporeans. And the list of woes goes on.

YOU can play an important part in making a difference in their lives by helping them to be self-sufficient, to succeed and function with dignity and pride in society.

There are over 300 Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWOs) in Singapore. They create programmes and deliver services either directly or indirectly for children, youth and family, the elderly, people with disabilities, and those who need health care.

The National Council of Social Service [NCSS] is the national coordinating body for social services in Singapore.

Get started now

Here are a few simple points you may wish to know about before you get started as a volunteer.

 Volunteering means you are seriously interested in giving your time willingly to help others.

 Volunteering may involve skills that you have and want to offer to others.

 Volunteering requires a willingness to learn and there is much you may wish to learn.

 Success at volunteering depends very much on keeping an open mind, and not prejudging or acting with bias.

As a volunteer, you are in the best position to know your strengths and weaknesses. Do not over-commit yourself because burnout is a possible risk.

Give volunteering your best shot

To be an effective and fulfilled volunteer, keep these four simple guiding principles in mind.

- Commitment
- Ability to manage time
- Responsibility
- 🔹 Enthusiasm

It is no coincidence that these four principles form the acronym CARE.

CHANGE LIVES

It is what volunteering in the social service sector is all about.

There are two areas in which you can work as a volunteer.

Interactive volunteers

This area of volunteering is for those who enjoy meeting and working with disadvantaged people. If you are a see, touch and feel type you can work effectively with disadvantaged persons and VWO professionals.

Volunteers in support roles

This area of volunteering is for those who prefer to work quietly in the background and offer their skills to help in a number of activities.

 Administrative work such as manning hotlines and clerical functions.

 Organising and planning various activities for the disadvantaged.

 Offering paramedical training and sharing medical expertise.

 Cleaning, repairing and maintenance of premises used for care of the disadvantaged.

Housekeeping, namely occasional cleaning, cooking and laundry for the disadvantaged who live in one-room flats.

BE A VOLUNTEER REACH OUT AND

I started volunteering when

I thoroughly

Assisting in the production of publications and newsletters in areas such as photography, copywriting, copy editing, graphic design and printing.

Both types of volunteers have a unique role to play in helping the disadvantaged communities in Singapore.

Why Volunteer?

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Volunteering in the social services is not easy, but it is very rewarding. Helping someone in need makes a person feel good and fulfilled.

Research has shown that volunteering is an enriching experience. It helps one's personal growth through a sense of accomplishment and builds self-confidence. It really improves one's life. Besides helping others, you might just be helping yourself too!

You make new and warm friendships to add to your existing circle of friends.

➡ You feel real good by helping someone in need.

You learn new skills, share and work with others.

I was 40. 🔹 It is a learning process adding to vour work experience.

enjoy my You empower others with your volunteer volunteer efforts. work

because it helps me to live a

Association

[AWWA].

Get Connected

Think about it. If you believe volunmeaningful, teering is for you, we will provide the and fulfilled necessary orientation. This will help life. It is a you to understand the environment life no amount of you will work in and the beneficiaries money can you will work with.

buy. The NCSS Volunteer Circle has in place tested and tried training programmes especially developed Cynthia T.H.Ng, for volunteers. In addition, experienced aged 60 staff from among the 300-plus a volunteer Voluntary Welfare Organisations with the Asian provide support and guidance to Women's Welfare volunteers.

> Anvone can be a volunteer - voung. old, working or retired people, singles, couples, whole families, companies, groups and institutions.

You will find a volunteering niche whatever your special interests, skills and emotional causes. You only have to give whatever time you can spare.

Best of all, you do not necessarily require special skills to be a volunteer.

CHANGE LIVES

In volunteering, every little action counts, such as listening and befriending an elderly person. You do not have to perform big things to achieve great results. At the end of the day, it is the heart that matters.

Interested? Join us in reaching out and changing lives

Lim Shuhui, a volunteer Volunteer notes,

For more information on volunteering opportunities, check the details in this with the publication on volunteering to help Student Children, Youth and Family, The Corps Elderly and People with Disabilities. Each of these sections provides relevant information and details of

how you can volunteer and what is Volunteering needed to help each specific disadhas opened up a lot of vantaged group. opportunities for me to discover and develop myself.

Kwan Hoi Leong, a teacher who volunteers with TRANS Centre believes that

The difficult step is to get started: once the obstacle is overcome, it would be difficult to stop volunteering. Don't consider it too much. just do it.

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HELP CHILDREN TO SUCCEED, KEEP

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FAMILIES TOGETHER

Daniel (not his real name) is nine years old and is mildly autistic. Because of this condition, Daniel had poor social skills and found it hard to interact with others. He longed to have friends but he did not know how to make friends or to be a friend.

To help Daniel, arrangements were made last year for him to attend the children's programme Wonder Kids at the Yishun Centre of the Students Care Service. The Wonder Kids programme consists of ten sessions of group activities, one parents discussion group and one family outing. The programme focuses on a number of themes including, *Myself, I'm Special, Know My Feelings, Coping With Feelings, Know My Friends, Care For My Friends, Know My Family and Care For My Family.*

Upon completion of the Wonder Kids programme, Daniel was selected to join the pre-teens Trampoline Club. Here his social skills have shown continuing improvement. Much of this improvement has been due to a workshop run by volunteers who help children to learn about their strengths and shortcomings. Daniel is no longer self-centred and selfish but is now more keenly aware of his surroundings and the joy of having friends. Daniel is just one of a very large group of disadvantaged children in Singapore whose lives can be changed for the better with community help. Children particularly have to be handled with a lot of care, sensitivity and thought and brought along gradually to overcome their disabilities.

Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWOs) have several programmes in place to help children such as Daniel with their problems.

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You too can do your part as a volunteer. Share your time, talent, skills and sense of compassion to help children to succeed and keep families together.

HELP CHILDREN TO SUCCEED, KEEP

TYPES OF SERVICES

Here are the descriptions of some of the main services that may be of interest to you.

Children's Homes

In Singapore today, there is a large group of vulnerable children whose needs cannot be adequately met within the family environment.

This could be caused by a number of factors such as parental abuse, separation, divorce, illness, or imprisonment.

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Children's Homes provide an alternative place for children who are in need of temporary shelter, supervision, care and protection. The homes take in children below the age of 16. They are admitted on a voluntary basis or as determined by the Juvenile Court.

Family Service Centres

In Singapore, there are 35 Family Service Centres (FSCs) located across the island, each serving a designated geographical area. There is at least one FSC in every major housing estate. Individuals and families can turn to them for professional advice and support on family-related matters. Here are some of the services FSCs provide:

Casework and counselling for individuals and families facing challenges such as marital conflicts, parenting difficulties and family violence.

Information and Referral. These services provide important information to widen their options for help and referral to a range of services for the family.

 Family Life Education Programmes educate and help individuals to develop their potential and enhance family living.

Single Parent Family Support Services

In addition to the FSCs, there are two specialised centres, namely HELP (Help Every Lone Parent) Family Service Centre and As-Salaam YWMA (Young Women Muslim Association) Family Support Centre, which provide services for single parent families.

Youth Services

Urban living can be stressful. Youths are in the developmental phase of their lives and need support and encouragement for them to Surrounded by the delightful chuckles of joy and sometimes bickering of the children, I really feel like I'm a little kid once again.

Gan Ai Ling, a volunteer with the Fei Yue Family Service Centre.

FAMILIES TOGETHER

HELP CHILDREN TO SUCCEED, KEEP

develop to their fullest potential. Common issues faced by youth are stress, boy-girl relationships, family relationships, search for self-identity and peer group pressures.

Some of the main youth services offered are:

 Assisting youths with learning difficulties.

Helping young boys and girls with their relationship difficulties between themselves and their families.

 Helping troubled youths direct their energies to creative and useful endeavours.

 Helping delinquents and juvenile criminals reintegrate into society.

These services are provided by youth agencies and are based in communities or in schools through the School Social Work Programme which provides emotional, social and family support and guidance to enable students to obtain maximum benefits from their schooling experience.

YOUR CHANCE TO REACH OUT

There is a wide range of services available in most VWOs that you can get involved in to offer your skills and pursue your interests. These include:

Sometimes it can be really tiring and stressful, but I tell myself I have to do it because someone is benefiting from my help.

Ahmad Nizam Abbas, a lawyer who volunteers with TRANS Centre.

Befriending

Through friendship, you can build rapport and trust with children and youths. This brings barriers down, helps to shed inhibitions and make children and youth more responsive to counselling and guidance.

Mentoring

Working with youths, you can offer them emotional support to cope with schoolwork, growing up issues and relationship difficulties. You can also help to organise and supervise recreational programmes to harness the energy and exuberance of the young, such as ball games, picnics, holiday camps, hiking, indoor games and adventure activities.

Tutoring or Coaching

Helping children from disadvantaged families with their studies or coaching them in a sport or creative interests of their choice such as arts and crafts. You can also coach children to acquire basic computer skills.

Para-Counselling

Sometimes, to deal with a problem a person needs to talk to someone, to have somebody to listen to his or

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FAMILIES TOGETHER

I felt that since my purpose of ioining the medical nrofession was to heal people. it would be good if I could also learn the art of helping people.

Dr Ang

Seng Bin,

Students

Service (SCS)

Yishun.

Care

a volunteer

her problems. This often helps the person to unburden him or herself. Para-counselling is one such way. Para-counsellors are trained in basic counselling skills and they work closely with professional counsellors.

USEFUL TIPS FOR YOU

Remember, dealing with children, youth and family problems is not easy because of conflicting emotions. Here are a few pointers.

Empathy and a good listening ear with the help a lot.

Respect the person you are helping.

➡ Be young at heart.

➡ Be observant and learn to read the person's behaviour and speech.

Be mindful about when to give in and when to be firm and say no.

Do not be overprotective or afraid to face initial rejection from those you are helping.

Be committed and persevere in helping children and youths through their difficult times.

I know that I will not be able to teach them everything and influence them in that weekly one and a half hour session to the extent that I would want to. but I do hope that somehow I would have added that little hit of value to

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their lives

Lyndee Leong, a volunteer with Bevond Services.

GIVE CARING FOR THE ELDERLY TH

Look around and you will notice a lot more older people where you live. Yes, the 65 years and older group of Singaporeans is growing larger by the year. We are told that by 2030, the people in this age group may increase to 19% of the total population.

This means that more elderly will have to be looked after by a smaller number of working adults.

Yes, they should be the golden years of life, but unfortunately for some they may not be so. Frailty and dependence on others for support leave many lonely and desolate.

Caregivers of elderly also require a lot of support from the community. An ageing population generally signals an increased demand for health and social services.

The Community has to gather round its older citizens and make them feel wanted and loved. We should, as the people lack Voluntary Welfare Organisations are striving to do, provide services that deal with the problems older people face.

We need caring, committed and spirited individuals who volunteer rely on for their time, skills and energies to take help. these services to the elderly. You, as

a volunteer, can provide a very personal touch and bring a lot of joy Seow Bee to their lives.

TYPES OF SERVICES

There are many programmes and services specially designed to address and to manage the numerous needs of the elderly as well as to lessen the burden of caregivers.

Nursing Homes

They provide medical and nursing care for the elderly. The Singapore Leprosy Relief Association (SILRA) Home, provides welfare, relief and rehabilitation for persons who have suffered from leprosy.

Sheltered Homes

These homes offer residential facilities catering to the needs of the frail and fairly elderly who are still able to manage activities of daily living on their own. The facilities at these homes allow residents to lead normal lives and choose their own lifestyle. Some homes like the one managed by the Asian Women's Welfare Association (AWWA) provide advice, guidance and counseling to help residents adjust to ageing and group living.

What old is emotional support like having someone to talk to and

Jason Lam. a volunteer with the Betnenders.



GIVE CARING FOR THE ELDERLY TH

Befriending Service

The service mobilises volunteers to visit and strike up friendships with those who are 60 years and older. These friendships are a very useful point of contact for the homebound single elderly when they are sad, lonely and bored.

The Lions Befrienders, who operate a befriending service, visit the elderly at least once a week. From time to time, with the help of volunteers, they organize social recreational activities such as outings for the elderly living within their geographical area of responsibility and help the elderly living in the community to cope with the daily demands of their lives.

The Home Help Service

The Home Help Service supports the elderly who are permanently or temporarily unable to look after themselves so that these residents can continue staying in the familiar community environment instead of being sent away to a nursing home.

Home Help Service agencies mainly provide:

- 👐 meals service
- laundry service
- escort services
- home management
- personal hygiene and grooming

The Dementia Day Care Centre

These centres provide supervisory and therapeutic services during the day to older persons afflicted by dementia, a disease where the individual suffers from progressively deteriorating intellectual functions.

Day Rehabilitation Centres

They provide active and maintenance rehabilitation, complemented by social activities to improve and sustain the functional ability of elderly people mainly suffering from physical dysfunction such as stroke, arthritis or amputation.

Social Day Centres

These are community-based, daytime programmes to help the frail elderly while their family members are at work. Using volunteers in these programmes provides relief to caregivers who need a break. It is through volunteering that I have become somebody today with rich experiences and excitement in life. Of course. I have my ups and downs. but without the downs. I will not be able to appreciate my good days

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Foo Say Thye, a volunteer with the Sree Narayana Home for the Aged Sick and the Volunteer Initiator Persons, NCSS.

AT EXTRA EDGE

Community Case Management Services [CCMS]

CCMS aims to improve the quality of life of the elderly by providing on-going support to help them remain as selfreliant as possible in their own home and community for as long as possible. To achieve these objectives, CCMS has in place several initiatives, including:

Coordinating services to match the changing needs and conditions of the elderly.

 Ensuring the elderly are linked to appropriate resources and services.

Reducing the burden and stress experienced by caregivers so that they can provide the elderly with the best care possible.

Counselling Services

The elderly and their caregivers face serious psychological and emotional issues that are unique to them. Counselling offers an opportunity for discussion of problems the elderly have to face. These problems could be marital or spousal conflicts, difficulties with inter-generational relationships, physical or psychological health issues, financial difficulties, emotional or mental abuse, anxiety, depression, loneliness, isolation and stress.

YOUR CHANCE TO REACH OUT

As you can see, there are quite a number of programmes in place for serving the elderly around us. You can be a part of this effort to help our senior citizens by becoming a volunteer.

Befriending

Spare a thought and some of your time to make friends with senior citizens and visit them at their homes. You can bring a smile, good cheer and a little laughter and love to their lives.

Recreational Activities

Picnics, outings and other recreational activities such as playing indoor games, reading and shopping help senior citizens overcome boredom, loneliness and depression.

Transportation Services

Volunteer your services to escort the elderly on time for their medical appointments, often a tricky business because elderly people tend to worry and fret for hours before they see the doctor.

GIVE CARING FOR THE ELDERLY TH

Reflexology & Massage

Do you have Reflexology & Massage skills? Here is an opportunity. Volunteer your services and help relieve aches and stiffness of muscles among the elderly.

Handicraft Skills

As a volunteer, you can encourage and teach senior citizens to learn or improve their handicraft skills. Participating in handicraft sessions allow the elderly to be creative. Besides, it is an excellent therapy for them.

Meal Delivery

Who does not like a hot meal? Elderly people certainly do, especially at the weekend. You can volunteer to be part of our Weekend Meals Delivery programme and put a smile of satisfaction on many faces.

Computer Skills

Volunteer your computer skills and while you are at it, coach the elderly in simple computer usage. **USEFUL TIPS FOR YOU**

Dealing with older people calls for a lot of tender loving care and patience. Here are some useful tips.

When interacting with the elderly, dialect speaking skills is a real asset.

 Speak loud and clear because older people usually have deficient hearing.

Be ready to offer an attentive ear.

 Treat the elderly with respect and compassion.

good, but it •• Make a serious effort to undercannot buy stand the physical, mental and medhappiness. ical condition of the elderly.

Explain, clarify and communicate
 clearly to the elderly before engaging
 them in any activities.

le to Do not over-protect your charges.
ever Encourage them to do things on their akes own.

 Create mutual trust by sharing
 some of your personal life experiences and problems with those you
 are looking after. It helps the bonding
 process.

Having lots of money is good, but it cannot buy happiness. I am not well-off,

but I am happy that I am able to do whatever it takes to help the elderly poor.

Mdm Seah Ai Suan, a volunteer with the Lions Befrienders



HELP PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

TO BE INDEPENDENT

People with disabilities need early and dedicated attention if their lives are to be transformed. Often, the impact of a serious disability can be moderated if the problem is spotted and attended to early in the person's life. Here is a father's touching story which illustrates the point.

Jing Xian was the first born of Mr Choy Kwee Yuen. Mr Choy says, "When my son Jing Xian was just a few days old, my wife and I discovered he was different. He showed no signs of being afraid when a door suddenly banged or there were loud peals of thunder.

"Being parents for the first time, we thought little Jing Xian was not afraid or did not bother at all. This went on for some time. A medical check-up with a specialist confirmed that our little boy was suffering from hearing loss.

"My wife and I were so upset. We were worried that Jing Xian would never be able to talk to us.

"But things started changing for the better when Jing Xian was admitted to the Canossian School. Within three years, Jing Xian started to speak from single words to whole sentences.

"My wife and I were so happy. During this period, we attended the Parent Guidance Programme and Listening Skills Sessions. By this time we had a second son, who also suffered from hearing loss. With the help and encouragement of the professional staff and teachers, we learned how to interact and communicate with our children with hearing impairment."

You will discover how important this type of early intervention is in the lives of people with disabilities. Like Mr Choy, those who work with people with disabilities and see the dramatic change that takes place over the years, find a great sense of fulfillment at seeing the results of their work.

Disabled does not mean unabled. Education and Training are the two key words driving the programmes and activities developed by Voluntary Welfare Organisations [VWOs] to help people with disabilities. These programmes will make people with disabilities independent and help them to integrate with mainstream society.

The programmes target persons with:

- Sensory disability [sight, sound].
- Physical disability
- Intellectual disability
- 🔹 Autism
- Multiple disabilities

HELP PEOPLE WITH DISABILI

TYPES OF SERVICES

The services offered by VWOs cover many types of disabilities and are designed to help children and adults, with plenty of scope for volunteer work.

One can never fail in volunteering for there are 20 As long as one is willing to put one's mistakes and become a better

Early Intervention

The objective of the programme is never to reduce the impact of a child's failures in disability or developmental delay on volunteering. his/her future through therapeutic, educational and psychological services provided by professionals. These heart into it, services are generally offered for one can only children in their infancy and up to six learn from years of age who show signs of one's delayed development of their faculties.

Special Education [SPED]

The objective of all SPED schools person. is to develop each child's capacity to its fullest potential, with the long-term Sin Peng objective of enhancing the child's Hwee a volunteer prospects of integration into mainwith the stream society. The educational Student Volunteer curriculum is supplemented with Corps rehabilitative and therapy services which provide for the child's physiological and psychological well being as well as all-round development.

For children with intellectual and multiple disabilities, the curriculum in SPED schools includes the teaching of personal care, toileting, feeding, dressing, money and transport skills and pre-vocational skills.

For children with sensory disabilities. the mainstream curriculum is taught in SPED schools up to PSLE. Beyond PSLE, children are integrated into mainstream secondary schools where possible.

Training & Employment

Persons with disabilities have every right to secure proper employment, to be productive, independent and live with dignity and pride.

This is achieved through Vocational Rehabilitation - a continuous and coordinated process of rehabilitation. Such programmes are for persons with disabilities aged between 16 and 60 years.

Bizlink Centre provides these services. It is the only centralised employment placement centre for people with disabilities. Approximately 240 jobs are found every year, a success rate of 68% over the last four years.

TO BE INDEPENDENT

The Vocational School for the Handicapped provides an ITE Skill Certificate of Vocational Training course that equips students with basic office practice and service skills.

Non-certifiable training and employment preparation are usually given informally at production workshops and sheltered workshops such as the one run by the Movement of the Intellectually Disabled – Employment Development Centres.

Production workshops are for persons with disabilities who are suitable for open employment but temporarily cannot be placed or who are unable to use public transport.

Sheltered workshops provide employment for persons with disabilities who are not suitable or ready for open employment.

Activity Centres, Hostels and Homes

Activity centres offer a community based day care service. Consequently, people with disabilities do not have to be placed in a special institution and caregivers can be freed for other essential activities.

Hostels provide training, development and opportunities for people with disabilities to lead a life as normal and self-reliant as possible. They also provide alternative housing for those in open or sheltered employment.

Homes offer both residential and respite care usually for people with disabilities who are destitute or those severely disabled whose families or caregivers are no longer able to care for them.

YOUR CHANCE TO REACH OUT

To successfully carry out these programmes and services, very often volunteers are needed to help support the staff. Here are some ways you can help out and get involved.

Befriending

Befriend people with disabilities. Let them know that there are people out there who care.

Recreational Activities

Outdoor and Indoor Recreational Activities such as taking people with disabilities for outings, picnics, playing indoor games, reading and even a spot of shopping and marketing.

HELP PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Learning and Therapy Sessions

Assist VWO staff in teaching people with disabilities in their learning or therapy sessions. These may include sessions in independent living skills, social skills or prevocational skills.

Handicraft Skills

Teach Handicraft or help out in the sessions. These services provide people with disabilities learning opportunities in new craft skills as well as to nurture their creativity. Making handicrafts is also a good form of therapy for them.

Transportation Services

Provide transportation services to help people with disabilities move from place to place, for example from home to centre and vice versa or to hospitals or clinics for their medical appointments.

Computer Skills

Provide computer skills and coach people with disabilities in simple computer usage.

USEFUL TIPS FOR YOU

Volunteering can be uplifting, satisfying and even fun if approached with an open mind. Here are a few tips.

 Be warm, friendly and approachable.

 Understand, but do not feel sorry for the disabled persons you are working with.

Be committed and patient.

Speak directly to a person with a disability, rather than through a third party, and always make eye contact.

• Encourage and support people with disabilities to help themselves.



BE A VOLUNTEER

Many Singaporeans of varying age group, skills and experience have found working with WWOs an enriching experience and have remained to help for years. Highlighted on the right of this page are the words of two volunteers who tell us why volunteering is such a wonderful experience.

Interested? Join us in reaching out and changing lives.

 NCSS Volunteer Circle Hotline: 1800-210 2600 (Mon-Fri, 9am to 6pm) ➡ NCSS Volunteer Circle Website: www.volunteers.org.sg

make new volunteer. friends there I'm happy and see the volunteering world in a because picture and meaningless realise how if I lived it fortunate for myself

to be committed. interested and patient You get to to be a good bigger life would be you are. only.

You need

It's more satisfying Wong Zena Hao. a volunteer with the others. Singapore

Cheshire

Home.

when you live it to help

Manogasan Vaithilingam, a volunteer with the Asian Women's Welfare Association Special School.

We wish to acknowledge the support we have received from the following organisations and offer them our very special thanks.

Association of Persons with Special Needs (APSN) Delta Senior School Autism Resource Centre (Singapore) Asian Women's Welfare Association (AWWA) **AWWA Special School Beyond Social Services Canossian School Dorcas Home Care Services Fei Yue Family Service Centre Lions Befrienders** Movement for the Intellectually Disabled of Singapore (MINDS) **Ramakrishna Mission Counselling Centre Singapore Cheshire Home** SUN-DAC Centre for the Disabled - Choa Chu Kang Sunshine Welfare Action Mission (SWAMI) Home Society for the Aged Sick S'pore Leprosy Relief Association (SILRA) Home **Student Volunteer Corps** The Singapore Association for the Deaf **TRANS Centre Volunteer Initiator Persons Yishun Student Care Service**



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