



CareHut: A Little Hut makes a Big Difference!

A boy so hungry, he ate a dead fish from the school aquarium.
A girl so neglected, she was too weak to go to school. An eight-
year old girl nearly molested while walking home on her own.

Stories of children in a Third World country? Unfortunately, these
are real-life happenings in Singapore. These are children whom
Care Community Services Society (CCSS) aims to help through
CareHuts, its after-school student care programme.



John

My family was going through a difficult period. **My mother lost her job, slipped into depression and could not find work. My father was in jail.** Our savings were wiped out. For two years, we had financial difficulties and depended on help from the Community Development Council and a Family Service Centre.

My mother wanted to go back to work but she could not, as there was no one to take care of my younger brother and I. Neither could she afford to pay for someone to care for us. Care Community Services Society helped our family get back on our feet by accepting me into CareHut at a highly subsidised rate. They helped our family financially through their Benevolent Fund. This enabled my mum to find a job.

Shortly after, my dad was released from prison, and also managed to find a job.

Aida

I grew up not knowing who my father is.

My parents separated when I was very young. My father went back to Malaysia and has not contacted us. We have completely lost touch with him. My mother brought me up alone. It was not easy for her to find a job as she did not complete primary education and was not able to converse in English.

But she eventually found a job. **Just when things were looking up, mum came down with a chronic illness.** The illness affected her emotionally and she became depressed. I not only had to cope with living without a father, but also my mother's illness.

Going to CareHut helped me to cope with the situation. At CareHut, there was someone whom I could turn to, someone who helped me

When I first joined CareHut, I didn't want to join the other children in the games because I felt sad. But with encouragement from everyone at CareHut, I have become much more cheerful. Today I enjoy coming to CareHut and love to play with my friends. **At home there is no one to help me with my homework. But in CareHut, we do it together** and there is always someone who explains things to me.

Through the activities conducted at CareHut, the aunties and uncles here realised that I am artistically inclined and can draw well. Right now, they are looking out for volunteers who are able to coach me and other children in drawing and other forms of art, to develop our artistic giftings. Will you help us discover our potential and, in the process, build our self-confidence and our future?

with my homework, and friends

I could play with. All this provided me a sense of stability while mum battled with her disease. The auntie from CCSS worked with my mum to restore her confidence. When her illness went into remission, she was able to re-enter the workforce.

Just the other day, the auntie at CareHut encouraged those of us from single parent families to talk about our feelings. I shared my feelings with the group, and look forward to more sessions like these.

My school results have improved and I am able to make more friends than before. I am doing much better than I have ever been. Hmm... **who would have thought that a tiny container hut in the backyard of a school can make such a big difference?**

Note: To protect the identity of the children, their names and some details have been changed.

CareHut: Discovering the "Star" in Every Child



CareHuts are school-based student care centres that provide affordable after-school care for children from low-income and single parent families. These children are often left without a caregiver after school as their parents need to work and are unable to afford high childcare fees. CareHut provides a wholesome environment so that they do not fall prey to street gangs and other undesirable influences.

Everyday, CareHut children are provided with meals, guidance in their studies, activities that seek to instill in them wholesome values, and outings during school holidays. During the time spent with them, we seek to help them with their homework, cope with their family situations and develop values that will position them for a better tomorrow. CCSS provides this service at subsidised rates.

Today, we have three CareHuts catering to a total of 45 children, located in:

- Pei Tong Primary School
- Eunos Primary School and
- Stamford Primary School.

Stamford CareHut is our newest addition which has just commenced operations in July 2007. We are excited about this new centre, as its capacity is double that of the other centres. This will allow us to help many more children.

Every child deserves a chance to reach for the stars.

To help them, we need:

- Contributions from individuals and corporations to fund the running of the centre so that fees are kept affordable for needy families
- Volunteers who are willing to give of their time to guide children in their homework and to organise holiday activities.

If you are interested to donate or volunteer at CareHut, please contact John at **6304 7604** or email **johnchua@carecom.org.sg**

"No man stands so tall as when he stoops to help a child." Abraham Lincoln

Founded by Trinity Christian Centre, Care Community Services Society restores hope and purpose to people of all races and religions.

It is an affiliate of the National Council of Social Services, and more than 30,000 people have benefited from its programmes. Visit **www.carecom.org.sg**