

epworth moments



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Finding Light in Dark Seasons: Building Resilience During the Holidays // Pg 04

Building Stability in Single and Blended Families // Pg 06

Behind the Scenes: The Making of Our Corporate and Resilience Champ Videos // Pg 10

CONTENTS

ABOUT US

Epworth Community Services is a Social Service Agency (SSA) that helps at-risk children and youths from needy and disadvantaged families. We want to create a better world for them so that they can develop their potential. Our work focuses on promoting the mental well-being of children and youths by building strong families and imparting skills for resilient living.

VISION

Strong Families, Resilient Living, Beautiful Minds

MISSION

To reach out in Christian love, by providing quality programmes and services to all children, youths, parents and their families, of all language, race and religion, and nurturing each family member in body, mind and spirit.

EPWORTH MOMENTS

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03 ED's Message: The Winds of Change



04 Finding Light in Dark Seasons: Building Resilience During the Holidays



06 Building Stability in Single and Blended Families

08 Raising the Standard of Care: Epworth HomeSweetHome Certified in Trauma Systems Therapy

09 Epworth x DLE M&E: Lunchtime Talk Highlights

10 Behind the Scenes: The Making of Our Corporate and Resilience Champ Videos

12 Highlights from the 2025 Fostering Open House

13 "Paint & Grub": Bringing Volunteers Together Through Art

14 Children's Day 2025: A Carnival of Smiles

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ED's Message: The Winds of Change

By Tan Khye Suan
Executive Director



We are creatures of habit, we do not like change. We want to remain in a "protected" world of predictability that feels comfortable. Changes to our routines, our relationships with others, and the way we live make us uneasy. We become fearful when change is impending and, if possible, we seek to maintain the status quo. This is human nature.

Yet, it is change that strengthens us. Across the stages of life, from infancy to adulthood, individuals must adapt physically, emotionally, socially, and cognitively to meet new demands. At each stage, new abilities are required. When we learn to adapt and embrace change, we can flourish and grow with confidence.

The same is true for organisations. History has shown that organisations who fail to adapt to changes in their operating environment become defunct. They do not survive the test of time and eventually cease to exist.

The phrase: "Change is the only constant in life!" is not a cliché. It is very real today. Epworth Community Services must accept the need for change and adapt carefully to remain relevant in the community. Otherwise, we risk becoming redundant and displaced by those who can.

The Year Ahead, 2026

Over the past 28 years, Epworth has continuously adapted to the evolving social service landscape. We will continue this journey in 2026 through purposeful, strategic, and well-managed changes that support long-term sustainability.

Enhancing Leadership

As part of succession planning, Mr Dennis Low has now joined Epworth as the Deputy Executive Director. His leadership will strengthen governance, improve productivity, provide strategic direction, and place greater focus on staff development and organisational effectiveness.

Improving Programme Delivery

Epworth will review its programmes, services, and operations to ensure we are meeting the real needs of the community. We will conduct impact studies to assess the effectiveness of our work and gather structured feedback from our clients to guide improvements. Alongside this, we will undertake research to deepen our knowledge and strengthen our skills in therapy and intervention.

The intention to improve our programmes and services will be guided by four principles:

1. Ensure relevancy;
2. Improve contents for best possible outcomes;
3. Be productive and effective; and,
4. Achieve long-term sustainability.

Stronger Push on Digitalisation

To improve efficiency and reduce reliance on additional manpower, Epworth will strengthen our digitalisation efforts, starting with financial and HR processes, followed by volunteer and donor management systems. Staff will be encouraged to identify ways digital tools can improve work processes.

Further Growth through Collaboration

While social service is not a competitive sector, it is a dynamic one. As communities adapt to a fast-changing world, greater support is needed for both existing and emerging needs. With new challenges arising, social service agencies can no longer focus only on past issues. To remain relevant, agencies must be nimble and ready to grow into new areas of work.

Epworth will pursue strategic growth through collaborations with like-minded agencies. These partnerships will allow us to better support clients while offering staff opportunities for professional growth through shared learning and skills exchange.

Beyond the West

Epworth's programmes and services are well-established and nationally recognised. We are a key partner of the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) and the National Council of Social Services, and we contribute actively to national-level initiatives such as the family service review led by MSF.

In order to make our programme and services accessible to more clients in Singapore, Epworth will explore new service delivery approaches, including digital platforms and the potential development of regional offices.

Working with Volunteers and Partners

Epworth will continue developing programmes that attract sustainable funding from government, corporate, and individual supporters. Volunteerism remains a vital avenue to extend our reach, and we will work closely with volunteers to co-create meaningful, sustainable programmes that deliver lasting impact.

As we move into 2026, we do so as a united organisation. Our focus remains steadfast: the well-being of children, youths, parents, and families who need our support.





Let's Unpack That

Finding Light in Dark Seasons: Building Resilience During the Holidays

When the holidays feel heavy, resilience is built through understanding, validation, and steady care.

By Sarah Wong

Assistant Manager, Epworth Centre for Positive Recovery

The holiday season often brings joy and celebration. Yet for some families, it can also bring stress, loss, or mixed emotions. Changes in routine, memories of difficult times, or family tension can make the season challenging, especially for children and youths who have faced trauma.

Resilience does not mean staying strong all the time. It means learning to face pain with support, care, and hope. When adults respond with understanding, children can begin to feel safe again and find light, even in dark seasons.



1. Understand How Stress and Change Affect Children



Children who have experienced trauma may react strongly to stress or change. Their bodies may stay on alert even when the situation is safe. This can appear as anger, withdrawal, or clinginess. These are not signs of disobedience, but signals of distress (National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2023).

During the holidays, excitement and change can be overwhelming. Simple steps like keeping regular routines, preparing the child for upcoming events, and offering reassurance can help reduce anxiety. When adults respond calmly, the child learns that it is safe to relax and enjoy the moment.

By understanding how stress affects children, adults can respond with empathy rather than frustration. Each calm and caring response helps the child feel seen, secure and supported.



2. Support Emotional Resilience Through Validation

Resilience grows when emotions are acknowledged, not ignored. When a child feels sad, scared, or angry, naming these feelings helps them make sense of their experience. A gentle response such as "it is okay to feel this way" teaches the child that emotions are safe to express (Siegel & Bryson, 2012).

Validation helps children learn that feelings come and go, and that they can be managed safely. This builds confidence and emotional strength. When adults stay calm and present, they help the child regulate and recover more easily after stress.

Through validation and having a calm presence, adults show children that emotions can be faced safely, and that they do not have to face them alone.



3. Nurture Connection and Safety at Home

Children gain strength from stable, caring relationships. Predictability and warmth from caregivers help them feel secure. Small gestures such as a smile, a gentle tone, or shared time together communicate safety and love.

During the holidays, it helps to focus on connection rather than perfection. Quiet family moments, shared routines, and simple traditions can help children feel grounded. When the home environment is calm and supportive, children are better able to cope with challenges and rediscover hope.

Resilience is nurtured through consistent care and understanding. Even in the darkest seasons, light can still be found in empathy, connection, and the courage to move forward.



References

- National Child Traumatic Stress Network (2023). Understanding Child Trauma.
- Siegel, D. J., & Bryson, T. P. (2012). *The Whole-Brain Child: 12 Revolutionary Strategies to Nurture Your Child's Developing Mind*.



Building Stability in Single and Blended Families

Practical insights and gentle strategies to help children feel supported during family transitions.

By Ana Tan
Counsellor, Epworth Family Welfare

Single families are led by one parent, while blended families bring together parents and children from different families. Every family is unique, with its own joys and challenges. Understanding how to support a child through these changes helps families grow stronger together.



Understanding the Child's Needs

Children in single or blended families often experience significant change. They may feel confused, sad, or anxious as they adjust to new routines and relationships.

In single-parent families, a child may miss a parent who no longer lives in the same home. These feelings are natural and deserve gentle attention.

In blended families, children may need time to build trust with a new parent or sibling. Each child adjusts at their own pace, and some may need more reassurance and patience than others.



Common Challenges

Changes in family structure can bring emotional uncertainty, especially as children learn to adapt to new routines. Parents also face challenges as they balance their children's needs with new responsibilities.

For single parents, managing work and childcare alone can be demanding. Meeting financial and emotional needs without support may cause stress and limit time spent with the child.

When parents feel tired or overwhelmed, it can affect patience and energy at home. Children may sense this stress and feel worried themselves. Support from relatives, friends, or the community can help ease the load for both parent and child.





In blended families, new roles and relationships take time to settle. Living with step-siblings may lead to conflict, especially when children feel they are competing for attention or resources. Parents may also struggle to divide attention fairly.

Misunderstandings are common as family members learn to live together. Setting clear and fair rules, spending individual time with each child, and encouraging open communication can help ease this transition. Shared activities can also strengthen family bonds over time.



Practical Strategies for Support

1. Keep routines consistent.

Predictability helps a child feel safe and secure.



2. Encourage open communication.

Invite the child to share thoughts and feelings without fear of judgment.



3. Acknowledge emotions.

Let the child know it is okay to feel sad, angry, or confused.

4. Avoid negative talk.

Refrain from speaking badly about the other parent.

5. Spend quality time.

Regularly spending quality and intentional time together. Even simple moments like eating together can strengthen bonds.



6. Include the child in family decisions.

Include the child in family decisions when suitable. This helps the child feel valued and part of the family.



Love, patience, and consistency are essential. Children thrive in homes where care and understanding come first. Families grow stronger when members respect one another's feelings and work together to overcome challenges.

Whether in a single-parent or blended family, what matters most is not the structure of the family, but the love, stability, and support that surround the child.

Raising the Standard of Care: Epworth HomeSweetHome Certified in Trauma Systems Therapy

By Augustine Tee

Manager, Epworth HomeSweetHome

Epworth HomeSweetHome is deeply honoured to mark a major milestone with its certification by the Trauma Systems Therapy (TST) Training Centre at New York University Langone Health's Grossman School of Medicine. This certification enables HomeSweetHome to provide TST to children and families.

HomeSweetHome is one of three Therapeutic Group Homes in Singapore. Since 2013, it has supported children aged 7 to 12 who are referred after experiencing complex trauma arising from repeated abuse, neglect, or disrupted caregiving. At the point of referral, many of these children struggle to feel safe, regulate their emotions, or trust adults. Their distress often presents as withdrawal, aggression, or heightened anxiety, reflecting fear and hyper-vigilance rather than defiance.

Complex trauma shapes how a child perceives and responds to the world. Even familiar routines, such as school transitions or mealtimes, can feel unsafe when a sense of safety has not been consistently experienced. TST supports children in their recovery by strengthening emotional regulation and building their capacity to respond adaptively to stress. It also works with caregivers and systems to create safe, stable environments that prevent re-traumatisation.

After two years of intensive training and consultation with Dr Adam Brown from New York University, three clinical staff have been certified as TST Experts, and four operations staff as TST Practitioners. We congratulate our dedicated professionals for advancing trauma-informed care and for their commitment to helping children heal, grow, and thrive.

Epworth x DLE M&E: Lunchtime Talk Highlights

By Angeline Nah

Assistant Manager, Epworth Community Relations

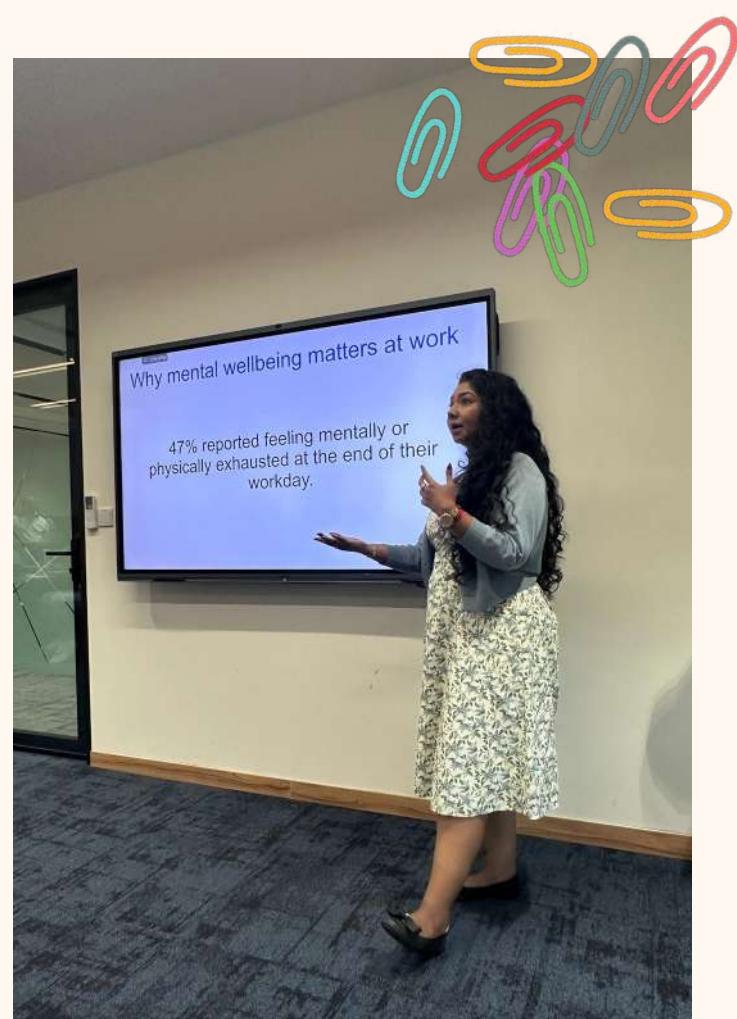


On 30 Sep 2025, Epworth Community Services had the privilege of collaborating with DLE M&E for a meaningful lunchtime talk. Over the years, DLE M&E has supported Epworth's work through generous donations and volunteer sessions at HomeSweetHome.

During the session, Francis from HomeSweetHome shared about Trauma Systems Therapy, an evidence-based model that forms the foundation of our therapeutic care. He shared impactful stories of two young residents who entered the programme after experiencing neglect and abuse. Through structured and holistic support, both children were able to regain a sense of safety and learn to better regulate their emotions.

Soniya from our Centre for Positive Recovery (CPR) also delivered an engaging presentation, which included a segment on mental wellbeing in the workplace. Highlighting that 61% of employees experienced burnout in 2024, she emphasised the impact of mental health on work performance and relationships. Soniya also shared practical tips and resources, encouraging the team to foster a culture of peer support and prioritise emotional wellbeing at work.

As Epworth continues to expand our impact, we remain deeply grateful for partners like DLE M&E who have journeyed alongside us in creating strong families, resilient living, and beautiful minds.



Behind the Scenes: The Making of Our Corporate and Resilience Champ Videos

By Laura Jiang

Community Relations Executive, Community Relations

Behind every frame of our corporate and Resilience Champ videos was more than just a camera rolling. It was a collective effort shaped by many voices and roles, guided by a shared belief in helping children thrive.

Our corporate video was built around a simple but meaningful idea: At Epworth Community Services, we walk with children, youths, and families to help light the way forward as they heal, develop, and thrive. Filming brought this concept to life through everyday moments of listening, supporting, and standing alongside those we serve. It was a quiet reminder that progress does not always come in big leaps, but through steady presence and trust.

Alongside this, "With Love, Your Resilience Champs" told a different yet deeply connected story. It shared the stories of five Resilience Champs, featuring children, youths, and families whose journeys reflect strength, perseverance, and the courage to keep moving forward despite challenges.

These videos would not have been possible without the collective efforts of our volunteer actors, dedicated staff, filming crew, and the children, youths, and families who courageously shared their stories. Each contribution, whether in front of or behind the camera, played an essential role in bringing these stories to life.

We invite you to watch the videos and be part of this journey. By pledging a small monthly donation to Resilience Champs, you can help build a better future for more children, youths, and families. Together, we can continue walking alongside them and lighting the way forward, with love.



Scan to watch 'With Love,
Your Resilience Champs'





Scan to watch the
Corporate Video

Scan to donate monthly
to Resilience Champs



Highlights from the 2025 Fostering Open House

By Quek Li Koon

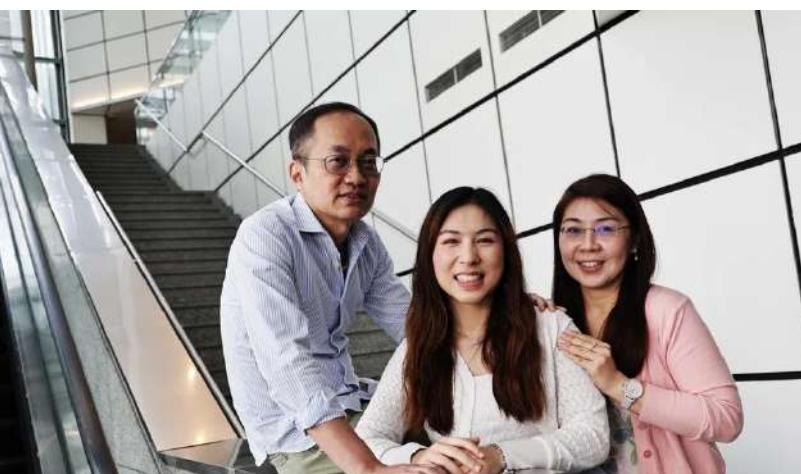
Manager, Epworth Foster Care



On 23 August 2025, the Fostering Open House was held at Suntec City Convention and Exhibition Centre from 10.00am to 2.00pm. This annual event is jointly organised by the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) and the five appointed fostering agencies to engage members of the public. The Open House aims to raise awareness of the fostering scheme and encourage more families to step forward to become foster parents.

During the event, an announcement was made by Mr Goh Pei Ming, Minister of State for Social and Family Development and Minister of State for Home Affairs, regarding higher allowances for foster parents caring for teenagers. This enhancement was introduced to encourage more families to take on the important role of caring for foster youths.

A highlight of the day was an interactive theatre skit that shared the heart-warming fostering journey of Epworth Foster Care foster parents, Mr Jason Gwee and Mdm Irene Leow, alongside their foster child, Ms Pauline, who has since aged out of care upon turning 21. Epworth Foster Care worked closely with MSF to support the foster parents in their sharing.



Mr Jason Gwee, Ms Pauline (foster child), Mdm Irene Leow
Photo Credits: The Straits Times Kelvin Chng

Booths were set up by the fostering agencies as well as *Home For Good Singapore* to engage participants and provide information on fostering and support services. Foster Parent Ambassadors were also present to share their personal journeys and interact with members of the public.

The event saw a strong turnout of 350 participants, with participants actively asking questions during the sharing sessions and at the booths. Many expressed interest in fostering and volunteering to support foster families in their care of children.

If you would like to find out more about fostering and volunteer opportunities, please visit our website at <https://www.epworth.sg/programmes-services/epworth-foster-care/> or email us at fostercare@epworth.sg.



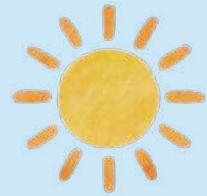
Photo Credits: MSF



“Paint & Grub”: Bringing Volunteers Together Through Art

By Rina Tan

Executive, Community Relations



On 13 Sep 2025, Epworth Study Buddies volunteers gathered at Bana Bana Café for “Paint & Grub”, a relaxed engagement session designed to deepen friendships and nurture community spirit. Set in a cosy and welcoming space, volunteers enjoyed a hands-on canvas bag painting activity paired with hearty bites and plenty of conversation.

The session provided a refreshing pause from routine volunteering duties and gave our volunteers space to connect more meaningfully. The activity sparked light-hearted fun, artistic expression, and spontaneous conversation as volunteers painted, laughed, and shared stories.

Volunteers enjoyed an experience that combined creative expression with meaningful connection. Volunteer Kok Kiong described it as “an interesting, different kind of event, fun to use my creativity on something useful I can carry around.”

Jun Kai shared, “(The event) was amazing, I had fun drawing and got to know friends.” Others echoed how valuable the time of connection was. Kylie said it was “a unique way to bond through art,” while Angelin enjoyed the “cozy setting and meeting people I volunteer alongside with.”

These moments of fellowship go a long way in strengthening volunteer engagement. When volunteers feel rooted in relationships, they feel more supported in their roles and more connected to the wider Epworth community. Beyond serving, they become part of a shared journey, built on trust, care, and a common heart for impact.

If you are looking for a meaningful way to give back while growing in community, we warmly welcome you to explore volunteering with us. Come connect, serve, and grow with Epworth.





Children's Day 2025: A Carnival of Smiles

By Law Say Hwee

Literacy Intervention Teacher, Epworth Literacy

66 students from both Epworth Literacy centres had a fun-filled time at the Children's Day Carnival on 3 Oct 2025. Upon arrival, they were warmly greeted by cheerful volunteers and a range of engaging activities that they were excited to take part in.

The carnival featured bouncy castles, classic carnival games, a photo booth, and DIY craft stations. These activities gave the children opportunities to bond with one another while having fun. Food and snacks were also provided throughout the event. After completing the carnival games, the children redeemed prizes, adding to the excitement of the day. The venue was filled with laughter, and smiles could be seen on the children's faces.

"In every child's smile lies the hope of a brighter tomorrow," said Joleen Chan, a social worker on the Epworth Literacy team. This event would not have been possible without the generous sponsorship of Socar Trading and the support of the volunteers present. Their dedication has made a positive and lasting impact on the lives of the beneficiaries we serve. The children will carry fond memories of this very special Children's Day.

We hope that more people will join us as we continue to build a brighter future for our students. Every action makes a difference.







How can I make a difference?

SUPPORT US

The important work of Epworth Community Services is funded primarily by generous well-wishers who strongly believe in our cause. We invite you to join us in making a difference in the lives of children and youths under Epworth Community Services.

*All donations are eligible for 2.5x of tax exemptions.
If you require a tax exemption receipt, please email your full name, NRIC, and payment record to admin@epworth.sg.*



giving.sg



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VOLUNTEER WITH US

Volunteers play an important role in our programmes and services. Volunteers can choose to be engaged in ad-hoc, short- or long-term programmes and are matched to programmes according to their time and interests.

For volunteering enquiries, visit www.epworth.sg or contact us at community.relations@epworth.sg.