

IN THE NEWS

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EMCC:

What we are doing to

help troubled families and individuals



EMCC is putting in renewed effort in 2013 to journey closely with clients who are affected by emotional wounds and intensify our efforts to strengthen the family unit. The organisation is introducing "New Journeys" – a support group to help women who are recovering from broken marriages. This service will be helpful, given that there were 20 divorces a day last year.

Facilitated by trained counsellors, the support group aims to help women who are currently separated from their spouses and those who are going through divorce proceedings. The group therapy sessions are scheduled for April and May.

To help fathers in their parenting role, EMCC will be holding more Parent-Teen Conflict Resolution workshops across Singapore under the auspices of Fathers@Schools and Dads@Communities. The Fathers@Schools workshops for fathers with children in schools were started in 2011. EMCC hopes to serve 400 fathers in 2013.

The first workshop conducted under the auspices of Dads@Communities was held in December 2012 at a Toa Payoh church and the second at an Indian temple in Little India in early January 2013. More are being scheduled for different community organisations to reach as many fathers as possible.

The Parent-Teen Conflict Resolution workshops are part of EMCC's integrated approach under what is termed "Marriage Journey" for EMCC staff to journey with clients from preparing for marriage, during marriage and right through the parenting years. EMCC expects to run more Marriage Preparation Programme sessions this year to serve 80 couples planning to get married.

Last year EMCC served more than 40 couples who came for the 8-hour programme. The Marriage Preparation Programme of EMCC will go some way to prevent the number of marriages (27,258 in 2011) from breaking up and bringing pain and negative impacts to the couples and their helpless children.

In 2013, EMCC will run up to 50 workshops on Parent-Teen Conflict Resolution, peer mediation and family mediation.

Indian fathers learn parent-teen conflict management



On January 19, some 16 members of the Arya Samaj Temple located in Little India who were fathers gathered there to learn parenting tips.

Among the enthusiastic members who turned up at the shophouse at 113 Syed Alwi Road were two brothers and a father and son, keen to learn skills to build a more harmonious family from EMCC's Parent-Teen Conflict Resolution workshop organised under the auspices of Dads@Communities.

EMCC's Parent-Teen Conflict Resolution programme, part of EMCC's upstream initiative to help build stable families, covered topics such as types and levels of conflicts and five golden rules for conflict management.

"Fathering is not just a responsibility but a relationship as well," noted participant Sanjay Rai who found the workshop positive and informative.

After listening attentively for half a day, Udaya Rai summed up the three learning points he found most useful and applicable to him as a father: "Conflict resolution, understand nature of conflict and seek professional help."

For 2013, EMCC has scheduled up to 10 Father-Teen Conflict Resolution workshops at various community venues under Dads@Communities, an initiative by the Dads for Life movement and the Fathers Action Network.

Healing childhood wounds of fear

EMCC's counsellor recently helped May (pseudonym used to protect her identity), whose unresolved childhood issues affected her physical health. A mother with a son, May was recommended by her physician who thought her physical illness may be due to psychological causes.

During the sessions, EMCC's counsellor found out that May grew up in a very difficult environment, with her mother suffering from a serious mental condition and married to a man who has more than one family. May has not felt "safe" as a child as she perceived threats lurking somewhere, waiting to pounce on her, or her family. Her autonomic nervous system is on overdrive.

The counsellor facilitated a series of learning, unlearning and relearning for May. She had to unlearn her "highly strung and hyper vigilance" stance since she is now an adult and has access to more resources and is more capable. She is now relearning how to have her own needs met, which have been neglected so far because there was always someone with greater needs.

There are many troubled individuals in Singapore who carry childhood and other emotional wounds into their adulthood. Like May, they can benefit from the counselling process. May's physical illness flares up less often. And EMCC's counsellor continues to work with how she can communicate her needs, and have them met, especially with her husband.

Upcoming workshops in March



EMCC will be running family mediation workshops in March at the Social Service Training Institute (SSTI). The March 26-27 basic level workshop is designed for social workers, counsellors, case managers, teachers, heads of Voluntary Welfare Organisations, mediators, family dispute resolution practitioners, psychologists, volunteers (social service work), educators and other professionals dealing with relational/interpersonal conflict issues.

For previous participants of the two-day basic workshops, EMCC is holding an advanced mediation workshop from March 12 and 13 at EMCC's premises in Liang Court. A second part to the EMCC mediation training, this two-day workshop provides participants with a deeper understanding of interpersonal conflicts, especially in handling relational and family disputes.