

## PRESS RELEASE

29 September 2005

### **Remembering the needy children on Children's Day** **- TCS takes the charity message to schools in conjunction with TCS Flag Day 2005.**

TOUCH Community Services (TCS) will hold its 10th TCS Flag Day on **1 October, 2005 - Children's Day**. TCS will dedicate this special event to the more than 300 children clients under its care. To raise greater awareness about needy children and the less fortunate, TCS has partnered three primary schools, reaching out to 4,000 students, to organise a **special Children's Day programme**. Themed *One Touch Many Lives*, the TCS Flag Day seeks to convey how one kind act of giving can touch and impact many lives.

On 30 September, coaches from TOUCH Character Development will conduct a special Children's Day programme comprising a motivational talk filled with interactive games and an educational video clip showing the needs of children from low-income families. The objective of the programme is to promote the character values of Gratefulness and Thriftiness - to encourage the children to "Save More" and "Give More", and do their part to help those in need. The children will also learn about the needy children that TCS helps. They will then be encouraged to practise what they have learnt by sharing with their parents and donating to the TCS Flag Day.

Said Mrs Cheng Huey Teng, Principal of Ngee Ann Primary School, "We have always wanted to organise something meaningful and fun for our pupils on Children's Day. So when TOUCH Community Services approached us on organising a special Children's Day Programme for our students, we were excited. Learning the values of gratefulness and thriftiness is timely and meaningful. We want our children to realise that there are other less fortunate children – some of whom may be in their midst – and they should do their part to help them in whatever way they can."

To maximise the learning experience for youth volunteers this Flag Day, 24 facilitators including students from Singapore Management University (SMU), National University of Singapore and National Technological University will run **Service-Learning (S-L) programmes** for 200 student volunteers. Initiated by

TOUCH Youth Services (TYS), the aim of S-L programmes is to enable volunteers to better understand social issues and the needs of the community as they serve. This is the first time that the S-L programme is conducted on such a large scale. Said Ms Lily Chu, Manager of Leadership and Mentoring, TYS, "The S-L programme is based on the basic belief that every volunteer can make a difference; they are not just the 'hands' and 'legs'. Their small act of service can impact many lives. With the S-L element in this year's Flag Day, we hope our volunteers will walk away from this experience knowing that they have done something meaningful, and learn lessons that can be applied into their daily lives."

To qualify as S-L facilitators, students have to undergo at least a day of basic facilitation skills training where they learn how to set service and learning objectives, and how to facilitate learning after the service is rendered. Using S-L, facilitators create awareness about the needs of TCS and encourage volunteers to initiate new ideas for TCS Flag Day. For example, facilitators from SMU have plans to make the TCS Flag Day more exciting and fun by having the volunteers change location every hour and answering questions on TCS at the same time. Further, the volunteers will work together to piece a jigsaw puzzle related to the TCS Flag Day.

TCS hopes to mobilise some 10,000 volunteers from all walks of life to participate in this Flag Day. The volunteers include students, supporters, TCS staff and clients. In conjunction with Children's Day, volunteers will also be giving out sweets to the children they meet on the streets. TCS serves some 7,000 clients each month including children, youths, families, people with special needs or disabilities and the elderly. TCS hopes to raise S\$400,000 from the TCS Flag Day.

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**About TOUCH Community Services (TCS)**

TCS is a not-for-profit and non-religious voluntary welfare organisation officially registered in 1992. TCS has been a member of the National Council of Social Service since 1994. TCS is committed to the well-being of all people, reaching out to various levels of needs in the community. Our mission is to establish and provide for the needy and disadvantaged in our society an integrated network of community-based services that strengthens the family, believing that every individual is unique and capable of reaching his or her highest potential.

TCS has an integrated network of 16 services located at different parts of Singapore, including Bukit Merah, Clementi, Geylang Bahru, Hougang, Serangoon, Toa Payoh, Ubi and Yishun. Each month, it supports some 7,000 regular clients. Over the last 13 years, TCS has reached out to more than 80,000 individuals from all religions and races, including children, youths, families, people with special needs or disabilities and the elderly.