

PRESS RELEASE

EMBARGOED UNTIL SATURDAY, 26 NOVEMBER 2005, 11.30AM

23 November 2005

LAUNCH OF LANDMARK GAMES MANUAL FOR SENIORS AND CAREGIVERS ON 26 NOVEMBER 2005

A first-of-its-kind games manual in Singapore for seniors and caregivers will be launched by Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS), and Second Minister for Trade and Industry, at the inaugural Family Carnival @ Geylang Bahru.

The Carnival is organised by TOUCH Seniors Activity Centre (TOUCH SAC), a service of TOUCH Community Services, and will be held at the Amphitheatre facing Block 69 Geylang Bahru on Saturday 26 November 2005. Please refer to the event programme and highlights on Annex 1.

“Scissors, Paper, Stone! 70 Fun Ideas + Games Guide for Seniors & Caregivers” is a compilation of games and activities that have been painstakingly conceived, developed and adapted by TOUCH SAC staff since its inception in 1998.

This resource book will be useful for those who want games and activity ideas for the seniors around them – caregivers, social workers in the eldercare sector, students reaching out to older folks or even grandchildren trying to interact with their grandparents.

Says Mr Eugene Seow, Executive Director of TOUCH Community Services, “We hope that this resource book will positively contribute to the arena of eldercare and may it also be instrumental in forging intergenerational interactions in Singapore and beyond.”

Each day, 60 TOUCH SAC clients eagerly gather and look forward to the afternoon game and activity sessions, which are a welcome relief from their boredom and loneliness. Says 69-year-old Mdm Ng Lai Mui, “I never played any games in my younger days. I am so glad to make new friends and learn new skills now”.

Through play, TOUCH SAC has seen its clients transformed in their countenance and outlook. Although some newcomers started out feeling shy and inhibited, the environment of friendly and affirming staff and clients helped them quickly overcome their fears, and become more positive and confident in trying new things.

Besides the social and recreational benefits, these games and activities also aim to keep the seniors physically and mentally active, by promoting hand-eye coordination, stimulate creative thinking and encouraging cognitive exercises such as recall and problem-solving.

While many of these games use simple props such as drink cans and ping pong balls that are easy to obtain or purchase, TOUCH SAC clients have also added their

personal touches by hand-making or hand-painting other props, such as decorated shoe boxes and coloured egg trays.

A carpenter by profession before he retired, 70-year old Mr Sim Boon Kwee has been using his skills to specially hand-craft his own version of props, such as toy guns that shoot down plastic toy soldiers, a pinball machine and an indoor golf putting set. He says, "I felt a bit lost after retiring. Now I'm happy that my friends enjoy themselves using what I've made. TOUCH SAC has become my second home where I found meaning and purpose even in my retirement."

We are pleased to invite your reporters and photographers to cover the event.

Date: Saturday, 26 November 2005

Time: 10.30 am to noon

Register at: TOUCH Seniors Activity Centre

Block 61 Geylang Bahru, #01-3293 (see map attached)

For media enquiries and attendance, please contact:

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About TOUCH Community Services

TOUCH Community Services is a non-religious, not-for-profit voluntary welfare organisation officially registered in 1992. TOUCH was granted the charity status and became a full member of the National Council of Social Service on 12 December 1994. Over the last 13 years, TOUCH has reached out to more than 80,000 individuals from all religions and races. The clients of TOUCH include children, youths, families, people with special needs or disabilities and the elderly. To find out more about TOUCH, please visit the corporate website at www.tcs.org.sg.

About TOUCH Seniors Activity Centre

Located in Geylang Bahru, TOUCH Seniors Activity Centre (TOUCH SAC) serves as a focal meeting point for elderly residents in the vicinity. With only a one-time membership fee of \$3, those above 60 years of age can take part in a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities organised for them. Besides social and recreational activities, the Centre provides welfare services for members and offers information and referral services for residents. To keep the spirit of volunteerism alive among the elderly, mutual help groups are also organised to encourage members to care for one another.

PROGRAMME FOR FAMILY CARNIVAL @ GEYLANG BAHRU ON 26 NOVEMBER 2005

- 10.30 am** **Arrival of guests and media**
- 11:00** **Arrival of Guest-of-Honour**
- 11:10** **Welcome Address by Mr Eugene Seow**
Executive Director, TOUCH Community Services
- 11:15** **Opening Remarks by Dr Vivian Balakrishnan**
Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports
and Second Minister for Trade and Industry
- 11:20** **Prize-giving / Presentation of Tokens**
Madam Liow Hup, 104-year-old TOUCH SAC client to present token of appreciation (Ferris-wheel) to Minister. (Ferris-wheel is made by Mr Sum Kin Nar, 65-year-old TOUCH SAC client-turned-volunteer). **(Photo Opportunity)**
- 11:25** **Launch of Games Manual**
“Scissors, Paper, Stone!
70 Fun Ideas + Games Guide for Seniors & Caregivers”
Minister, together with 6 TOUCH SAC clients, will play 2 games featured in the games manual, called “Passing Ball” and “Can or Can Knock?” **(Photo Opportunity)**
- 11:30** **Performance by Kolam Ayer Performing Group**
Performances by TOUCH SAC clients
- 11.50** **Tour of Carnival Stalls**
Among the stalls are 14 games stalls which showcase the games played by the TOUCH SAC clients and the props they hand-made. Minister will tour 2 games stalls - “Rambo!” and “Electrocute!” **(Photo Opportunity)**
- 12.00 pm** **Tour of TOUCH SAC and “Heritage Corner”**
Donated by its clients over the years, the Heritage Corner boasts a collection of more than 50 antiques dating back to the 1920s. 5 TOUCH SAC clients who are the “Heritage Corner” tour guides will share the background of the artefacts with Minister. **(Photo Opportunity)**

S/N	“Heritage Corner” tour guides	Age	Languages spoken
1	Macik Ainon Bte Abass	64	Malay
2	Mdm Chiang Yee Choo	75	English/Mandarin
3	Mdm Chong Yoke Yoong	80	Mandarin
4	Mr Kong Yew Wah	73	Mandarin/Cantonese
5	Mdm Quah Lian Gek Beauty	71	English

- 12.10** **Refreshments**
Minister may wish to take media interviews.
- 12:30** **Minister leaves**

Carnival programme continues with games and speciality stalls, hourly lucky draws, stage performances, stage games and contests for families ending at 7pm.