

GLADIOLUS PLACE NEWSLETTER

JULY – DECEMBER 2025

EVERY GIRL

Loved,

EVERY LIFE

Transformed

Bi-Annual Events & Updates



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FOREWORD

As the year drew to a close in 2025, we reflected on the journey that has brought us here — moments sustained by faith, and strengthened by a community that continues to believe in our work.

These moments came to life through events such as CycleHome 2025, the ‘Friends of GP Appreciation Ceremony’ and Glowing Pigments 2025, as well as through programmes that have nurtured our Girls’ growth and potential. They have also been found in the quiet, everyday interactions — in shared meals, a listening ear and simple check-ins between our Girls and the Staff, Volunteers and wider community who journey faithfully with our Girls.

Behind every programme and milestone are the people who made this work possible. Our Staff have continued to walk closely alongside our Girls, while members of our community have given generously of their time, skills and resources. In this SG60 year, we have been encouraged by acts of support that have shown a shared passion in caring for one another — including Sean and Geraldine, who took on a 60km run to raise funds for our Girls. Together, these efforts reflect the kind of society we hope our Girls will grow up in — one rooted in compassion and hope for the next generation.

As we close this chapter of the year, we remain deeply grateful — for the small wins, steady progress, and countless blessings that have carried us through. While the road ahead continues to call for courage and commitment, we are encouraged by the community that journeys with us. This continues to strengthen and encourage us as we show up, day after day, for the Girls entrusted to our care.

In the pages ahead, we invite you to read on, of the stories, moments, and people that have shaped this season.

Your feedback is important to us! Feel free to share what stories you would like us to cover in future newsletters. Whether you want deeper insights into our programmes, stories from the Girls, upcoming events, or ways to support our cause, your input will help guide our future content creations.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S NOTE



Dear Friends, Supporters, Partners of Gladiolus Place, warmest greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! Welcome to our second bi-annual newsletter of Gladiolus Place for 2025!



Being present and sharing a joyful moment with our Girl.

Dr Henri Nouwen, Catholic priest, professor, theologian and writer, was born in 1932 in the Netherlands. For close to two decades, Nouwen held prestigious teaching positions at universities like Notre Dame, Yale, and Harvard. In the course of his lifetime, he published 39 books and authored hundreds of articles. His academic work and writings on spirituality, pastoral care, and theology are still widely respected and studied today.

However, Nouwen's focus was not solely on academic achievement. He was deeply committed to living out his faith and serving others, especially the marginalised or vulnerable. In the final decade of his life, Nouwen dedicated his time and service to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities at the L'Arche Daybreak community in Ontario, Canada. His experience at the L'Arche community was to greatly shape his spirituality and writing.

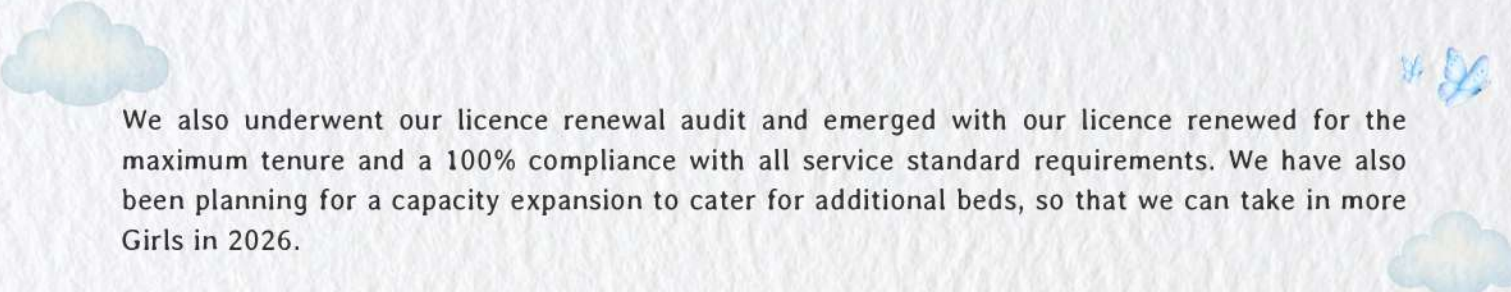
While at L'Arche Daybreak, Nouwen was particularly drawn to a resident, Adam Arnett, who was non-verbal and had significant developmental and physical disabilities. For 7 years, until Adam's death in 1993, Nouwen performed ordinary and simple daily tasks for Adam — like bathing and dressing him, feeding and reading to him, spending quiet time with him, and simply holding Adam's hands. Nouwen's experience of caring for Adam taught him deep lessons in being present, showing compassion, embracing vulnerability, and valuing the ordinary. To Nouwen, "Being is more important than doing." He realised that Adam, despite his limitations, was a beloved child of God. And indeed, Nouwen went on to insist "It is I, not Adam, who gets the main benefit from our friendship."

What profound humility and wisdom!



"Being" is more important than "Doing"


In the pages ahead of this newsletter, you will see highlights of what our Girls experienced, and the journey we took as a Home and an organisation in the second half of 2025. Just like many families, we took the time to prepare our Girls for their year-end examinations (this year we had a bumper crop of Girls taking national level exams), and immediately after, switched modes to immerse our Girls in exciting and enriching fun-filled holiday programmes. We organised Home-wide events like CycleHome which encouraged sports and an active lifestyle, and the year-long visual arts programme which nurtured artistic talents while harnessing therapeutic effects of art-making, culminating in Glowing Pigments, our art exhibition at The Arts House.




We also underwent our licence renewal audit and emerged with our licence renewed for the maximum tenure and a 100% compliance with all service standard requirements. We have also been planning for a capacity expansion to cater for additional beds, so that we can take in more Girls in 2026.

And these are important. It is important that we do good work well. Delivering high-quality services, achieving positive outcomes, and ensuring our programmes are effective and efficient cannot be less than key priorities for us as we serve our beneficiaries. However, beyond the “doing”, we must never forget the “being”. It is the reason why we existed in the first place.

In a world that often prioritises action and achievement, it's easy to get caught up in the "doing" — the programmes, the services, the outcomes, even the profile. But we are reminded through Nouwen's life story and reflections that it's the "being" — the presence, the compassion, the love — that truly makes a difference for those we care for.






In our work with our Girls, we've seen time and time again how the simple act of being present with them, caring for them, offering a listening ear and a kind smile, can be a transformative experience. It's often the ordinary moments that leave the deepest marks. The everyday and often time mundane work of feeding them, waking them up and making sure they leave in time for school (and for some, work), wiping their tears when they cry, rejoicing with them in their achievements — it's in these simple acts that we embody love and compassion. To us, it's not just about providing a roof over their heads; it's about creating a community, and offering a sense of belonging, where our Girls can heal, grow, and thrive. It is humbling, yet critical for us to remember that Gladiolus Place's work isn't just about grand gestures; it's about **recognising the sacred in the everyday**.



Gracy's story on pages 20 & 21 recognises the deep value of her everyday work with our Girls. Her story also reminds us that there is another dimension to the “being”. As Nouwen had frequently emphasised, our identity (“being” the beloved child of God) must precede and inform our actions (“doing” ministry or work). And it is this very reason that keeps us going day after day, as our everyday acts of care and compassion are prayers not just in words but in action, and an expression of our love for God.

Our collective “being” and presence




As we walk alongside our Girls, we are deeply convicted that our work is not just about helping our beneficiaries. It's about recognising our shared humanity, our interconnectedness, and our collective responsibility to care for one another. Your love and support for our Girls and us as individuals and as an organisation have been a multiplier, as your collective “being” and presence have made a life-changing impact on these Girls that we serve together. Your support is a beacon of hope for our Girls. And as we find depth in the everyday, and embody love, kindness and compassion, thank YOU for being part of our community, my heart is full!

And as we begin the new year of 2026, I would like to share this encouragement with each one of you.

*‘For we are God’s handiwork,
created in Christ Jesus to do good works,
which God prepared in advance for us to do.’*

Shalom,
Michelle



- Ephesians 2:10



SEEING OUR GIRLS SAFELY HOME

CycleHome 2025



Some moments of our Girls enjoying the outdoors as they cycled for CycleHome 2025.



Did You Know?

CycleHome is a home-grown initiative by Gladiolus Place (GP), created to invite supporters to come alongside us in raising the crucial funds needed to help our Girls reintegrate back into safe and loving biological homes.

The name “CycleHome” took shape during a simple drive home. As Michelle, our Executive Director and Head of Home, was ferrying her daughter back from school, a sobering thought struck her — many of the daughters at GP do not yet have a safe home or family to be ferried back to. That moment became the heart of CycleHome, reflecting GP’s mission of restoring families.

CycleHome 2025 continued as an inclusive movement that brought participants of all ages together. Through cycling, running and walking, friends and families took part as individuals or in teams, creating meaningful opportunities for multigenerational bonding. Some took on remarkable personal goals, like Peter, who cycled the height of Mount Everest in 28 hours (without sleep) at Mount Faber to raise funds, while others pushed themselves through ultra-distance challenges overseas. This unwavering support and commitment of our participants has also influenced our Girls to persevere in their journey of healing, growth and restoration with hope for the future. We were also encouraged by participants who have been with us since the inaugural CycleHome in 2023, using every kilometre to spark conversations and rally their networks to give.

Behind every personal goal and distance was a community choosing to advocate for our Girls. Their collective effort translated into real impact: CycleHome 2025 met its fundraising target and welcomed 111 new participants, bringing the total number of participants to 473.





To honour the achievements of our CycleHome 2025 leaderboard winners and our long-time Supporters, Donors and Partners, we gathered at the ‘Friends of GP Appreciation Ceremony’ on 16 August 2025. This year’s ceremony was different from past years — through the personal sharings of our Girl and Supporters, the heart of GP’s work was brought to life in a more intimate and genuine way.



Elish (pseudonym) sharing her Mae Sot experience, with Michelle offering support beside her.

Michelle opened the ceremony with a warm welcome before introducing a special speaker, Elish (pseudonym), one of our Girls who participated in the Overseas Service-Learning Programme to Mae Sot, Thailand, in March 2025 (featured in our [Jan-Jun 2025 newsletter](#)).

Stepping forward with visible nerves, Elish gradually found her voice as Michelle remained beside her, simply being present, while our Girls in the audience encouraged her with cheers and smiles. As Elish spoke about her time in Mae Sot, everyone was drawn into her experiences at The Light ASEAN Children’s Home (TLACH) — from navigating how to teach English and Math through games to creating simple activities with limited resources that helped the children learn through play.

Elish shared that many of the children, who had experienced displacement and trauma, approached each day with remarkable energy and determination. Reflecting on these experiences, she spoke about how their resilience and motivation reshaped her perspectives. Witnessing their perseverance, even in the smallest moments, stirred her to continue living her life to the fullest with purpose and gratitude, while cherishing the care and stability she has found at GP.

“Even though they had so little in terms of material, they had such a positive spirit...It was a great reminder that resilience is not about the absence of hardship but about how we respond to it.”
- Elish

The sharing continued with three of our Supporters — Gary, Peter and Dr. Adrian — who each spoke about what first moved them to fundraise for GP and why they continue to walk alongside our Girls. (Read more about Dr. Adrian’s and Peter’s fundraising journeys in our [Jan-Jun 2025 newsletter](#).)



(from left) Gary, Peter and Dr. Adrian sharing about their motivations behind their fundraising journey and support for our Girls.

The ceremony then moved into its finale, where we celebrated our CycleHome 2025 leaderboard winners across both Fundraising and Distance categories.



Here are some of our CycleHome 2025 leaderboard winners!



Top Individual Fundraiser
Mark



Top Tier Individual Fundraiser
Audrey



Top Tier Individual Fundraiser & Runner Up Individual Cycling Distance
Gary



Top Tier Individual Fundraiser & Top Tier Team Fundraiser (on behalf of PPCOC)
Iris



Top Tier Individual Fundraiser
James



Top Tier Individual Fundraiser & Top Individual Cycling Distance
Peter



Top Team Fundraiser
CPC



Top Tier Team Fundraiser & Top Team Cycling Distance
ASH Cyclists



2nd Runner Up Individual Cycling Distance
Chandan



2nd Runner Up Individual Running/Walking Distance
Clarence



Runner Up Team Cycling & Running/Walking Distance
Faber X



2nd Runner Up Team Cycling Distance
Sunny Grace

More than results, the CycleHome 2025 leaderboard reflected the stories of supporters who chose to give in more than one way. Among them are Audrey and Gary, who have been cycling with us since our inaugural CycleHome in 2023 and have consistently shown up as Top Tier Individual Fundraisers for three consecutive years. In 2025, Audrey clocked a cycling distance of 215.89 km while Gary achieved a personal milestone with a 226 km single-day ride — the second-longest of his lifetime cycling journey.

Even though CycleHome 2025 has ended, we remain grateful for every supporter who chose to show up, believed, and pedalled, ran or walked alongside our Girls. We look forward to welcoming you back for CycleHome 2026!



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STORIES THROUGH ART

Glowing Pigments 2025



Some of our guests appreciating our latest artworks while others connect over warm conversations on our opening night.

Glowing Pigments returned for a second year in 2025. From 16–19 October 2025 at The Arts House, the exhibition brought together both returning and first-time Artists, who shared fresh stories through colour, strokes, and texture.

Gladiolus Place (GP) also continued our collaboration with renowned local artists Barry Yeow and Evangeline Ang of 5seventeen Studio. Under their patient guidance, our emerging Artists, consisting of our Residents and Staff, had a safe space to build technical confidence and explore self-expression, as ideas gradually took shape over eight months.

Along the way, our new Artists learnt the fundamentals of painting. They were introduced to blending through the concept of “Value Keys”, learning how contrast and tonal balance can add depth to their artwork. Our Artists also experimented with different painting techniques such as *pointillism* (which uses tiny, repetitive dots or dashes of colour) and *impressionism* (known for its rapid and thick brushstrokes), among other techniques. Through creative brainstorming, our Artists began shaping the direction and story of their artworks. This process was not always linear. At times, Artists had to start afresh and rework an idea. Nevertheless, each step was an opportunity to refine their craft and create collection-worthy pieces.

Eight months flew by and before we could catch our breath, opening night had arrived. Our Resident and Staff Artists began setting up the exhibition space as early as 8 am that morning. In those moments, they stepped fully into their roles as Artists. For our Residents, this moment was especially meaningful, as they learnt to take ownership of their artwork and see their creative journey come to life beyond the canvas.



Barry Yeow guiding one of our Residents on her artwork at 5Seventeen Studio.



Adjusting the lighting for our Resident's artwork.



One of our Resident Artists unwrapping her artwork carefully.

We launched our exhibition with a warm and cosy opening at The Arts House, where we joyfully unveiled our newest artworks to guests from diverse backgrounds. Among them was Mr Eric Chua, Senior Parliamentary Secretary (SPS) for Law, as well as Social and Family Development, who joined us once again after gracing our inaugural arts exhibition as our Guest-of-Honour in 2024. We were heartened by his continuous support. We also welcomed Mr Ng Shi Xuan, Member of Parliament (MP) for Sembawang GRC, who has long been familiar with our work. During his time leading the MacPherson Youth Network, he had engaged in many conversations with Michelle, our Executive Director and Head of Home, on the meaningful programmes we bring to our Residents. Seeing our Artists' artworks in person allowed him to witness the impact of one such programme. The presence of our guests that evening was a true blessing and encouragement to our Artists!



Glowing Pigments 2025 — Snapshots of our opening night



(from right) Gregory and Patricia, who was our ex-Chairperson, with Michelle



SPS Eric Chua and MP Ng Shi Xuan, with Michelle and our Board Members Rev Abel, Rev Carrie and Elder Teck Meng



(from right) Glen and Martin with Michelle and her husband, Joshua



A guest taking a closer look at the textured details of the artwork



Our Resident Artist Zanne sharing about her artwork 'Finding Peace', with SPS Eric Chua



(from right) Our ardent supporters, Mark and Evelyn, with Artist Wan Lin



Our Resident Artist J. G. sharing about her artwork 'Berry Expressive' with MP Ng Shi Xuan



(from right) Peter and Ginny with Michelle and Artist Joelle



Messages filled with encouragement and hope, written for our Girls



Ben and Li Szu, art collectors of Resident Artist Zanne's "Finding Peace", exploring other artworks with their daughter



(from right) Richard and Lili with Michelle



Redemption Hill Church (RHC), one of our key church partners

In the days that followed, the exhibition opened its doors to the wider public. Our Girls took on different roles — from initiating conversations with visitors and sharing about their artworks to leading a full tour of the gallery. What began with uncertainty gradually turned into confidence, as our Girls found pride in their voices and their ability to connect with others of different backgrounds and experiences through art.

At the heart of the exhibition were the Artists themselves. Below, two of them share their experiences of participating in Glowing Pigments 2025.

At first, I really did not know what to expect. I heard a fellow resident was participating in Glowing Pigments and I was curious. To be honest, I was not confident in my skills and felt embarrassed to even touch a brush. Despite starting with little interest in this style of art and thinking I had no skill in it, the compliments I received at 5seventeen Studio lifted my spirits and encouraged me to continue. One of my proudest moments was knowing that a kind family adopted my piece. That mattered to me as I personally felt my work was too childish and overly vibrant, and I did not believe anyone would want it. This journey has pushed me out of my comfort zone, to discover creative abilities I never thought I had! - Zanne (GP Resident)



As someone exploring art for the first time, I felt both curious and challenged. Stepping into a new space was inspiring and humbling, but I was grateful for the opportunity to learn. Art quickly became something I truly enjoyed. For my first Glowing Pigments piece, I chose to paint a lighthouse, as it symbolises guidance, hope, and direction. The piece is inspired by my childhood favourite verse, Matthew 5:14, “You are the light of the world.” Just like a lighthouse guiding ships safely to shore, it reminds us to stay rooted in God’s promises and reflect His light in every season of life — through Truth, Hope, and Love. It is also especially meaningful to me, as my name means “a bright light in the darkness”. More than anything, I am proud that this artwork was created with heart, for a purpose bigger than myself.

- Binsan (GP Family & Youth Specialist)



Beyond showcasing the transformative and therapeutic power of art, Glowing Pigments was created to help aspiring young talents explore visual arts and to open pathways for our Girls to pursue further studies and careers in the arts. The reflections above offer a glimpse of this vision in motion as our Artists continue to grow in confidence and skill. We were especially grateful that the artworks created by these Artists have found new homes through the generosity of our Art Collectors, and it is our hope that these artworks will continue to inspire others.

Looking ahead, we are excited for what is to come. Get ready for a new year of bold imagination, meaningful connections, and inspiring experiences — because the journey of creativity continues and we cannot wait to share it with you!

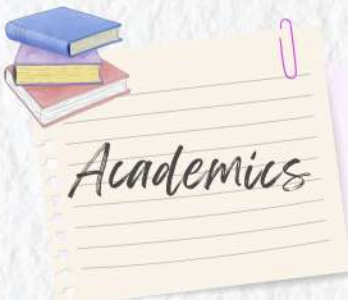
PROGRAMMES



Our Girls in Bloom

At Gladiolus Place (GP), programmes shape the rhythm of everyday life for our Girls, who enter our care during the formative years of adolescence. Centred on four areas — Academics, Sports and the Arts, Life Skills and Socio-Emotional Resilience, and Character and Values — these programmes create space for our Girls to explore their interests, discover their strengths and grow in confidence.

This space opened up even wider in the last six months of 2025. Alongside their regular programmes, our Girls stepped into new experiences, including sharing moments of joy with the wider community during the year-end festivities. Below are some moments that shaped this season of growth.



Each week, volunteers such as Shi Hui from MacPherson Youth Network – Safe Harbour, and other dedicated individuals like Carol, Kai Xin and many others, journeyed with our Girls through consistent academic support.

Our Volunteer tutors' steady presence has created a supportive space where our Girls feel safe to ask questions, work through challenges and discover learning approaches that suit them. We remain deeply grateful for our Volunteers, especially in 2025 when many of our Girls took on national examinations. Knowing they were supported helped our Girls approach school with greater confidence and assurance. For some, weekly tutoring sessions have sparked a renewed joy in learning and we hope that these Girls will, in turn, encourage others to discover that joy along their own learning journey.



Volunteer tutors help to bridge learning gaps, offer guidance with schoolwork and revision, allowing each Girl to learn at her own pace.



Sports and the Arts play an important role in helping our Girls grow holistically. Such programmes offer alternative pathways for our Girls to discover their strengths and thrive beyond academic achievements.



Sports and the Arts



Sports programmes offer our Girls structured ways to stay active, expend energy and lift their moods through the natural release of endorphins during physical activity. Through courtyard sports facilitated by GP Staff, volunteer-led pickleball sessions with Volunteers Thomas and Eliza, and experiential activities like scuba diving with DiveNut, our Girls were able to explore different sports and discover their interests.



Our Girls learn to scuba dive and play pickleball as part of sports programmes.

The Arts also create space for self-expression and confidence-building. Through dance classes and music lessons — guitar and vocal lessons — our Girls experienced how consistent practice builds confidence over time. One such example was a five-day Chinese drumming workshop led by professional instructor Jo Brooke, supported by Do Good International Foundation.



Performing arts like guitar lessons and dance classes help our Girls express themselves creatively.

Prior to the in-person drumming workshop, our Girls took part in a practice session guided by GP Staff, using instructional videos of basic beats that Jo had previously taught some of the Girls. This early preparation helped the Girls ease into the workshop with confidence — even surprising Jo with how quickly they picked up more advanced rhythms from the very first session.

As the sessions progressed, Jo appointed three Girls — Talia, Ariel, and Jerica (pseudonyms) — to lead the group, intentionally nurturing their leadership skills. Together, they guided their peers in synchronising beats and creating their own drumming sequence. While it was challenging initially, the Girls persevered and slowed down when needed for their peers who required more time to catch up. This turned the process into a creative expression that also cultivated teamwork and their resolve to forge ahead as one team. On the final day, our Girls delivered a seven-minute performance filled with energy and pride. When the final beat landed, their smiles reflected the fruits of their practice and the joy of accomplishing something together flawlessly.



Snapshots of our Girls in action during the five-day drumming workshop with Jo Brooke.



Life Skills and Socio-Emotional Resilience

Life Skills and Socio-Emotional Resilience programmes support our Girls in developing self-confidence, empathy and independence, to help them gain practical competencies for daily living and work readiness.



Building confidence in skills to face everyday life.

With the support of our Partners and individual Volunteers, our Girls learn practical life skills in the areas of hygiene and housekeeping, home economics (cooking, baking, sewing, and crocheting), crafts and edible gardening. Our Girls also learn to recognise emotions and respond to challenges constructively through emotional regulation drills and empowering skills workshops. Together, these programmes support our Girls in preparing for life beyond the Home.

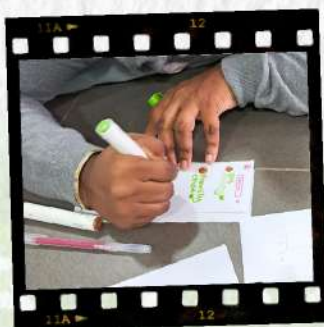


Character and Values

Character and Values focus on nurturing the inner growth of our Girls. Such programmes unfold over longer periods and are typically conducted through guided reflections and relational engagement.

Through guided sessions, our Girls explore themes such as forgiveness and resilience, respect and gratitude in relationships, as well as responsibility, empathy, and care for others within the community. These topics are intentionally chosen to help our Girls reflect on real situations they face each day, supporting them in building healthier relationships with themselves and others through programmes like 'When Life Gives You Lemons' conducted by long-time Volunteer Emi.

Beyond these sessions, our Girls also continue to serve the elderly at the Thye Hua Kwan (THK) Active Ageing Centre @ MacPherson, where they spend time teaching simple craft activities, listening, and learning the importance of being present. Through these experiences, we saw our Girls grow in emotional awareness — how they relate to one another and GP Staff, expressing greater respect, patience and thanksgiving in their daily interactions.



Partner-led Initiatives

Beyond programmes within the Home, our Girls also stepped into meaningful experiences with the wider community during the Christmas season. We were grateful to be the beneficiary of several partner-led initiatives such as the BLCCS Christmas Fundraiser, Jam for Joy concert and Celebrate Christmas In Singapore (CCIS).



Guest-of-Honour, Mr Goh Pei Ming, interacting with the GP team.

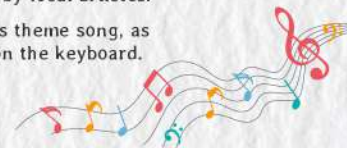
The **BLCCS Christmas Fundraiser** was organised by Boscombe Life Church Community Services (BLCCS) and brought the Joo Chiat community together in the spirit of giving. We were delighted to have Mr Goh Pei Ming, Minister of State for Home Affairs, as well as Social and Family Development, joining us to learn about our work during the event. As our Girls soaked in the Christmas mood through festive craft activities and carolling, they were also quietly observing how volunteers and the community came together with generosity and care.

Organised by our Chairperson, Rev Abel Lee, **Jam for Joy** was held at the Amphitheatre at Punggol Coast, a venue kindly sponsored by SBS Transit. In the spirit of SG60, the evening brought the community together through the music of local singer-songwriters like Lyla Ng, Huang Yi Ren, JustJaewin and more, with Ms Sun Xueling, Senior Minister of State for National Development, as well as Transport, in attendance. As we shared about GP's work to the public, our Girls also settled into the audience to enjoy the lively music and atmosphere. The night also marked the debut of GP's theme song 这地方 (In This Place), composed and produced by Rev Abel and performed by Joelle, daughter of Michelle, our Executive Director and Head of Home.



(left) Guest-of-Honour Ms Sun Xueling joining us for a night of original songs by local artistes.

(right) Joelle performing GP's theme song, as Michelle accompanied her on the keyboard.



The public learned about our work and took practical steps to support our Girls.

On 16–22 December 2025, our team was invited to **CCIS** to raise awareness of vulnerable children and youth in Singapore, and to share about our work at GP. Taking the opportunity to engage the public daily, we spoke about GP's work and the role Children's Homes in Singapore take on to provide care and safety for vulnerable children. CCIS also offered a meaningful way for our Girls to enjoy Christmas as they soaked in the festivities with the light displays along Orchard Road and carolling performances. By watching the GP team in action, our Girls could better understand how the team works to support and provide care for our Girls, other than our work within the Home.

Many Roles, One Heart:

Thomas M.

Behind every programme at Gladiolus Place (GP) are volunteers who show up consistently, often quietly, to walk alongside our Girls. In this edition, we shine a light on one of our volunteers, whose presence has made a lasting difference in our Home.

Thomas first approached GP eager to volunteer, asking how he could contribute meaningfully to the Home. After conversations, an idea took shape. Thomas decided to introduce pickleball to our Girls and went on to sponsor the painting of a pickleball court in our courtyard, so the Girls could enjoy the game within the Home. Once the court was ready, Thomas also began coaching our Girls in pickleball alongside another Volunteer, Eliza.

Over the past year, his presence has brought consistent joy and encouragement to our Girls. Affectionately known as "Uncle Thomas", he has quietly stepped into other roles off the court, supporting our Home in ways both seen and unseen — from generously sponsoring our Girls' first overseas service-learning trip to The Light ASEAN Children's Home (TLACH) in Mae Sot, Thailand, in March 2025 (featured in our [Jan-Jun 2025 newsletter](#)), improving our facilities and amenities to providing transportation for our Girls whenever he can. Read on to hear his story.



(From left)
Volunteer Thomas, GP's Executive Director
and Head of Home, Michelle
and Volunteer Eliza.

Q Tell us about how you came to volunteer at GP.

I have a passion for volunteering, so one morning I googled for the nearest charity closest to home and GP popped up! I was impressed with the work the Home was doing to transform the lives of the Girls that came under their care. The dedication, care and concern of the Staff, and programmes that are built to support the Girls resonated well with me. So I started volunteering!

Q What made you choose sports as a way to connect with our Girls?

First and foremost, I love sports. Since pickleball was growing in popularity, I felt it could be a fun outdoor activity that the Girls at GP would enjoy, and a natural way to connect with them.

Q How do you encourage our Girls when they face difficulties on their Pickleball journey?

My team and I encourage the Girls with affirming words when things do not go well, reminding them that mistakes are part of learning. We also teach them to support one another when a shot goes wrong, so they learn resilience as a team. From time to time, we organise friendly competitions to keep them engaged and excited about the game.

Q As a volunteer, how do you care for yourself and stay encouraged?

I try to keep a steady rhythm outside of volunteering. I eat well, get enough sleep, and clear my mind through evening walks and exercise. These simple habits help me recharge.

Q What have the Girls taught you, or what have you learnt about yourself through volunteering at GP?

Volunteering at GP has been an amazing experience. Seeing the smiles my effort brings to the faces of the Girls at GP, has encouraged me to keep showing up.

Q Can you share one of your fondest memories with our Girls?

As a male volunteer, I have to keep my interactions with the Girls limited, since there are boundaries around mixed-gender engagement. But one of my fondest memories was when I offered to build a boat (Noah's Ark) for the Home as part of an arts and craft session — but I ended up making a mess of it! Two of the Girls stepped in to build it instead, and what they created was beautiful.

Q How has volunteering at Gladiolus Place shaped the way you think about vulnerable children and youths in our society?

Volunteering at Gladiolus Place has helped me see that many vulnerable children and youths have been through very difficult times through no fault of their own. It has reminded me to show up for them whenever I can, whether in small or big ways.

Q If you could say one thing to someone considering volunteering with us, what would you tell them?

Volunteering gives you a sense of satisfaction and energy, because you know you are contributing to something bigger than yourself. I believe a part of our lives should be set aside to serve others — it reminds us of the purpose behind our existence. Volunteering with GP will give you that realisation. Go for it!



A sweet treat! Thomas chopping fresh coconuts for our Girls and Staff.



The Noah's Ark that our Girls helped to build. They also creatively added animals using air-dried clay.



LETTER TO MY FUTURE SELF



As part of a guided reflection exercise, our Girls wrote letters to their future selves. Guided reflections help our Girls to make sense of their experiences and turn specific moments into meaningful learning. Through this process, our Girls were guided to recognise small wins and the strengths and potential they discover within themselves. The reflection is also a form of visioning — to envision the person they hope to become and the future they want to build.

Dear future me...

I am proud of myself for learning how to manage my emotions and understand what triggers them. I have learnt that it is good to ask for help from staff, teachers or a trusted adult whom I feel comfortable with.



On difficult days, I think of my grandmother. She was always there for me, but she passed away in 2025. I remember a moment at GP when I was feeling very overwhelmed and opened up to Sis Roko. Her words stayed with me: "There is always hope if you believe in it. Don't give up". It reminded me that there are people who care about me, and that I am not alone in this struggle.

In the future, I want to become someone who helps others, especially those going through hard times. To my future self: there will always be good days and bad days, but brighter things lie ahead. I will keep praying to God to help me through the difficult moments and make it easier for me to move forward. I also hope I continue to take good care of my body by staying active through exercise, so I can grow stronger.

- Love, Ariel (pseudonym)

up myself be... It's your to ask for help
trusted adult that I've...
because if you better up, you will...
that you could do in the future...
thing that helps me going is my grandmother, she was always there for me...
during my hard time but sadly she has passed away in 2025 but I
had a sister in law, her name is sis Roko, I always remember the words that
she said, "There is always hope if you believe in it. Don't give up" that
tells me that there are people that cares about you and you are
not alone in this struggle. I discovered that I am able to manage
with my emotions if I thought of positives and do grounding skills.
I want to become a person that helps people like help them to be
active, help if they having a hard time with mental health if there is
danger in the house like abuse. I want to say to my future self
is "There are always hard and good days but there is always brighter
things ahead". I always think that it won't happen like grand
things but I...
for



Hello me!

I want to say that I am proud of myself for learning how to cope with my emotions and for trying to understand why I feel certain ways. When life feels hard, I am thankful for my loved ones who keep me going. With their support, I have learnt that I can get through difficult seasons, even when it feels overwhelming.



I have also realised that I am able to manage my emotions for long periods...and this has shown me that I am stronger than I think. To my future self, have you become someone you can be proud of? My hope now is to grow into a new person and break this cycle.

To my future self, please remember your worth. Your past does not define you. You are beautiful and unique. I hope you continue to hold yourself together during hard times.

It is alright to take a break and rest.
Stay healthy too!

- Love, Maya (pseudonym)



and times are the people you
need support, I want to say to my future self, even though I am
I am...
I hope to become a person that made in life. I want to
to show people that I am not a weak person. I want to be
person and help the world.
to the future me, please remember your past don't define
person. you are unique, beautiful and unique.
I hope that we can take to hold ourselves together during
I hope that we can take to hold ourselves together during
to my healthy too.

Dear future me,

I am proud of myself for overcoming two personal obstacles. I have learnt to stay positive, appreciate myself, and keep going during tough periods. When I do something meaningful for others, it reminds me that I can make a difference too.

When I face difficult times, I reach out to my friends and family. Advice from my loved ones helps me ease stress and make sense of what is happening. Instead of facing my problems alone, I have learnt to lean on others and draw strength. I have also discovered that I am dedicated and creative, and I hope you continue using these strengths to help others along the way.

One piece of advice I want to give you is this:
"Align yourself with those who matter to you.
Never be afraid to be yourself."

I hope you are still journaling and exercising regularly. These habits will help keep you grounded.

Love, Talia (pseudonym)



to reach out to others...
- I reach out to others. I cannot walk my friends and family through tough times. Getting advice from loved ones can help boost my mood and make sense of all the change and stuff of facing my problems alone. I can draw strength and build, having others to lean on.
03 - I am dedicated being focused on tasks and staying motivated. I set in my convictions, and I face threats, challenges, and pain, despite my doubts and fears. I am creative, conceptually useful, coming up with ideas that result in something new.
04 - I wanted to be a person who took time to truly see others out and pull them up along with me. I want to be grateful. I learned from people around me and let them know how much inspired me.
05 - "Align yourself with those who matter to you. Never be afraid of yourself."
06 - Daily journal writing might seem like a chore to some but it can help me in the future. Regular exercising, maintaining a sleep schedule, learning something new.

Dear future me,

These days, I have learnt to step out of my comfort zone — from opening up to my psychologist and counsellor, to making new friends and trying new things like cycling, which has become a useful skill. I am thankful to Gladiolus Place for nurturing and shaping me into who I am today.

Through all that I have learnt, I hope I have grown into someone who always tries to empathise with others as we may not know what they have been through. I also hope I continue to hold on to what is emphasised at GP: "Love one another as I have loved you".

Always remember, "Don't let others' judgement define your worth. Prove them wrong". I hope my future self continues choosing healthy habits like positive thinking and perseverance, and to ask for help when needed.

Love, Faye (pseudonym)



After all that I've been through...
After all that I've been through, I want to be remembered as someone who always tries to empathise with others as we may not know what they have been through and that what Dr. says "Love one another as I have loved you" is though my religion is different, the values taught are still beautiful and meaningful.
- when I would give myself to "Don't let others' judgement define your worth, prove them wrong."
I hope I keep choosing healthy habits like positive thinking and perseverance. Ask for help when I need. Thank you GP for finally making these values.

A LOVE SO FREELY GIVEN:

Gracy



Gracy's work at Gladiolus Place (GP) is shaped by a love that is freely given — steady, patient, and deeply intentional. As a Family & Youth Specialist (FYS) Lead, she walks alongside our Girls in the everyday moments that often matter most, offering consistent care and a safe presence they can return home to.

In this feature, Gracy shares her heart behind the work — what it means to show up day after day, the lessons she has learnt along the way, and the small, faithful moments that shape healing and hope for our Girls.



Q If you could share one thing with our readers about your work at GP, what would it be?

For me, working at GP is more than a career — it is a calling and a ministry. No two days are the same, but each day begins with the same purpose: showing up for our Girls with consistency, care, and love. As an FYS, my role centres on walking alongside the Girls in their daily lives. Some days are filled with conversations, school-related support, and helping them regulate big feelings. Other days are quieter, marked by shared meals, laughter, simply sitting together in comfortable silence or playing the guitar and singing along. While the tasks may look ordinary, every interaction is a chance to help a Girl feel loved, seen and safe.

Q What was your experience before joining GP?

Before joining GP, I was a Biology teacher. Teaching gave me a strong foundation in patience, observation, and understanding how young people learn and grow. I remember praying for God to allow me to serve Him through my work, using what I had learned not just in academics, but in serving people. Looking back, joining GP feels like an answer to that prayer.

Q How did you first get interested in social services?

My interest in social services grew from a desire to journey with young people beyond the classroom — supporting not just what they know, but who they are becoming. I wanted to be present in spaces where healing happens, especially for those who have experienced instability or loss.



Q As an FYS, your work often happens in small, everyday moments. Why do these moments matter so much for the Girls' healing?

Much of our impact happens in small, everyday moments — a gentle check-in, a calm response during a meltdown, or a shared laugh after a tough day. These moments matter because healing does not always happen in big conversations. For many of our Girls, trust has been broken before, and it is rebuilt slowly through repeated experiences of safety, respect, and care. Each small moment tells them, “You matter. You are loved,” and together, these moments become building blocks in their journey towards wholeness.

Q What keeps you going in this work, especially on difficult days?

This work is deeply meaningful, but it can also be challenging. On difficult days, what keeps me going is remembering why we do this: for the Girls. Progress is not always immediate or visible, yet healing is taking place even when it feels slow. I am reminded that consistency matters and builds trust, and that love, when given freely and patiently, has the power to transform lives. At GP, I have found a space where service, compassion, and purpose come together.

Q What was your most memorable moment at GP in 2025?

One of my most memorable moments in 2025 was meeting the baby of a Girl who had once been in our care. Seeing her growth from a teenager at GP to a mother lovingly caring for her child was deeply moving, humbling, and full of hope. It reminded me that transformation takes time, and that the impact of our care often extends far beyond a Girl's season with us.

Q Since becoming an FYS Lead, what is something new you have learnt about yourself?

Since becoming an FYS Lead, I have learnt more about humility, growth, and self-awareness. Assuming a leadership role has taught me that supporting others also means staying open to feedback and reflection, and learning to trust the collective strength of the team. It has been a journey of discovering not just how to lead, but how to serve more faithfully.

This journey has also shaped what I want the Girls to carry with them beyond GP.



More than rules, routines, expectations or consequences, I hope our Girls carry with them the memory of being seen, loved, and valued. I hope they remember how it felt to be with us — cared for by adults who showed up faithfully, believed in them, and walked alongside them through their struggles. When they leave GP knowing they are worthy of love and capable of becoming more than their past, our vision of “Every Girl Loved, Every Life Transformed” becomes real.

With lots of love, *Gracy*



(above) Gracy with two of our resident therapy cats.

ABOUT US

If you're new here, let us share our story!

Gladiolus Place is a non-profit Children's Home for vulnerable teenage Girls from all walks of life aged 11 - 21 years old who have experienced abuse, neglect and trauma. With our vision to have Every Girl Loved and Every Life Transformed, our mission is to bring about Healing, Renewal, and Restoration to families and communities. A charity with IPC (Institution of a Public Character) status, Gladiolus Place is licensed by the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) in the administration and upholding of high standards in the care of our Girls.

Every Girl Loved,
Every Life Transformed

Our Mission

For every Girl who walks through our doors — healing for their brokenness, renewal to their minds, and restoration to their families and communities — so that they may contribute to society and fulfil their God-given destinies.

Our Story

For a quarter of a century since 1998, Gladiolus Place has been a safe, healing space for vulnerable teenage Girls who have come under our wings in their time of need. It was founded as Andrew and Grace Home to provide refuge for troubled teenage Girls and sheltered protection for mothers and mothers-to-be by now-retired Pastor Andrew Choo and Mrs Grace Choo. The Home was renamed in 2018 and took the namesake from the Gladiolus flower which was named after the Latin word for 'sword' and represents strength, honour and dignity. It is our sincere hope that each Girl who passes through Gladiolus Place will bloom with such virtues and values.

Ms Michelle Tan took over the management helm as Executive Director and Head of Home in September 2018 and has been actively working with the Girls and Staff to drive improvements since then. Today, we care for up to 45 Girls from all races and religions, actively creating platforms for them to rise above their unfortunate circumstances and backgrounds, so that they can have equal opportunities in society to fulfill their purpose and God-given destinies when they come of age.

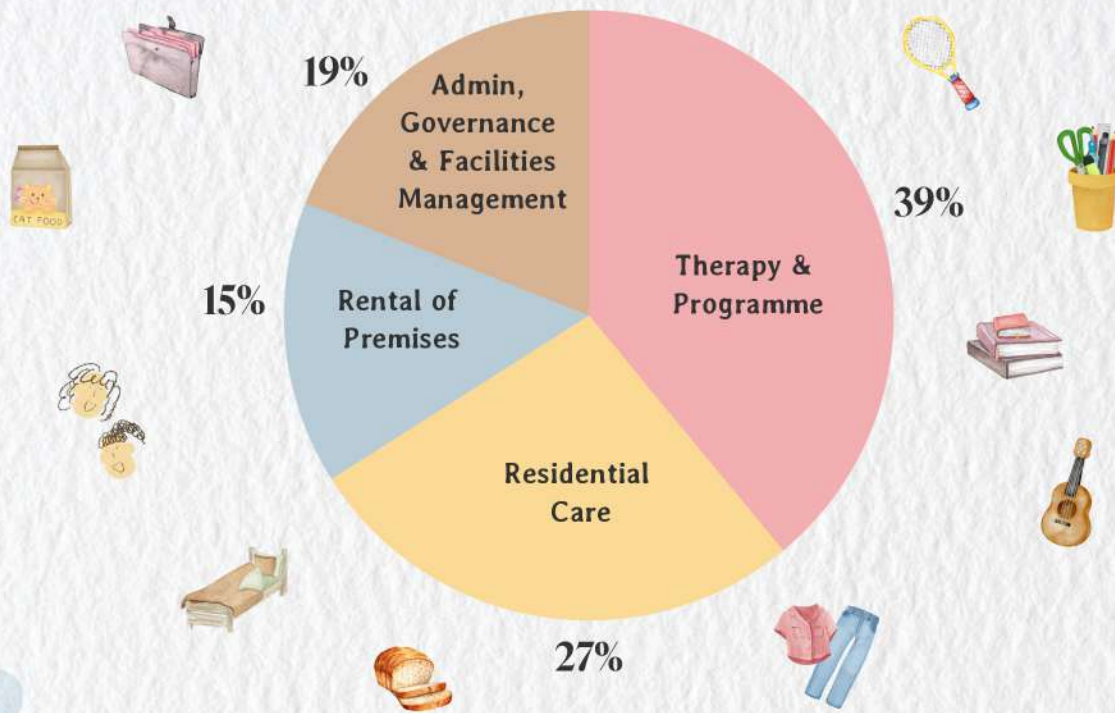
Our Philosophy

From the very first day a Girl arrives at our door, we view and respect her as a uniquely designed child. Through our rigorous assessment, we create individualised, tailored interventions and programmes for her, which will address her unique rehabilitative needs, as well as interests, abilities and gifts.



RESOURCE ALLOCATION

A brief breakdown of Gladiolus Place's Operating Expenditure



Annual Financial Support Required for Key Areas[^]



**Our Residential Care ensures holistic support for our Girls. From nutritious meals to daily personal care, school necessities, and healthcare support, we prioritise every aspect of their well-being. This includes but is not limited to meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner, tea time & supper), daily care essentials (toiletries, laundry, and hygiene care), school-related needs (transportation, books, stationery and extracurricular fees) and emergency medical assistance.*

[^]Key areas are subject to change, to cater to the ever-evolving needs of our Girls. GP may reallocate funds to other key areas of operational works.

WHAT WE DO: Programmes



Academics

Academic excellence is the pathway to opportunities and success. Hence, we place importance on helping our Girls by addressing back-to-school bridging issues and provide the required support and education for Girls who struggle in this area.



Sports & the Arts

We strongly believe that a healthy mind begins with a healthy body. Physical activities help to maintain a healthy physical body while the Arts help to stimulate brain development. Both activities require practice and drive while opening up opportunities to cultivate and display the Girls' talents and interests.



Life Skills and Socio-Emotional Resilience

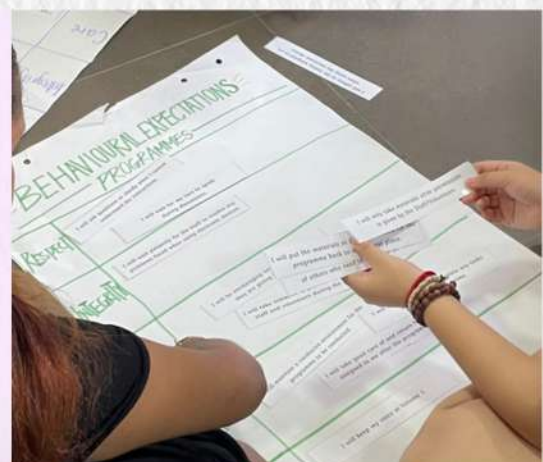
We see the importance of equipping our Girls with life skills such as cleaning, cooking, financial literacy, self-care and securing stable jobs, especially for the older Girls working towards independent living. We also believe in the importance of empowering our Girls with socio-emotional resilience to weather future challenges. Through programmes that focus on emotional and mental wellness, our Girls learn to understand their feelings and respond to challenges in healthy, constructive ways.



Character & Values

Teenage years are a formative period in one's life. During the Girls' time away from their families and communities, we seek to impart sound and wise values to help them build good character.

Respect, Love & Courtesy, Integrity, Care, Excellence in attitudes and Discipline that is consistent are the core values that we pass on to our Girls, in hopes that they will live out these principles even when they leave Gladiolus Place one day.



WHAT WE DO:

Therapeutic Interventions



Psychotherapy

In safe spaces of non-judgement, our Girls have weekly 1-1 sessions to navigate through difficult past experiences and walk towards healing.



Family Therapy

Reintegration of our Girls back with their families and communities is the mission of Gladiolus Place. To facilitate this, family therapy offers the opportunity for our Girls and their Family members to work through any challenges in communication and expectations.



Art Therapy

Trauma-related emotions and non-verbal memories are often difficult to put into words. Thus, art therapists work with our Girls to understand their past, and look towards the future. Using Art as a universal language, our Girls are guided to verbalise what words often cannot.



Animal-Assisted Therapy (AAT)

In partnership with NParks Animal Veterinary Service (AVS), Gladiolus Place fosters cats, as part of our Animal-Assisted Therapy. Our Girls care for these cats daily and through that, learn the discipline of taking care of loved ones and form strong attachments with them. This human-animal bond helps in the healing of psychological and emotional trauma.



SUPPORT US!



Donation & Support



As a non-profit residential Home, we are continuously seeking out like-minded individuals or corporations who would support the work of the Home by funding the needs of our Girls which include meals, daily necessities, academics, therapeutic interventions, or to support us by extending their time and talents. This enables us to carry out our mission to bring about healing for brokenness, renewal of minds and restoration of our Girls to their families and their communities.



Here are some ways you can help:



1. Make a Donation

Recurring monthly donations or once-off donations may be made via 4 channels. Gladiolus Place is a charity with Institution of a Public Character (IPC) status. As such, donations of \$50 and above are entitled to a tax deduction of 2.5 times the amount received. Official tax-deductible receipts will be issued to individuals or corporations who provide their **NRIC/FIN/UEN**.

2. Grant a Wish List

The everyday needs of the Girls and the running operations of the Home are relentless. The daily essentials, household appliances and necessities are items which often require replenishing. Gladiolus Place's wish list can be found here: gladiolusplace.org.sg/donate.

3. Volunteer your Time and Talents

Over the years, individual volunteers and corporations have extended their willing hands and their loving support to touch the lives of our Girls and Staff. We are grateful for their support. We continue to seek skills-based volunteers as well as volunteers for programmes and events. Getting started is as simple as registering your interest with us at info@gladiolusplace.org.sg and we will be in touch!



SPONSOR-A-GIRL

Join many others who are regularly sponsoring our Girls' daily necessities in the amount shown below, or any other amounts you wish to contribute!



Cost per month per Girl:

- \$100**
School Necessities
- \$150**
Utilities & Daily Care
- \$300**
Counselling & Therapy
- \$450**
Meals
- \$600**
Reintegration work for the Girl & Family

You may also visit our website for more information:
gladiolusplace.org.sg



4 Donation Channels

Paynow via QR Code



Add your **Name, Contact Number & NRIC/FIN/UEN** under the UEN/Bill Reference section

Bank Transfer/GIRO

Kindly arrange a standing instruction with your bank to:

PCS - Gladiolus Place
DBS Autosave Account No.
033-900043-4

Cash/Cheque

Write a cheque in favour of
PCS - Gladiolus Place
and mail it to us at:
6A Mattar Road,
Singapore 387715

Online Donation Platforms

Make a **one-time** or **recurring donation** securely with your credit/debit card via our online donation platforms where every transaction enjoys **250% tax deduction** at:


Giving.sg: giving.sg/donate/campaign/GP2026
Give.Asia: give.asia/charity/gladiolusplace


EVERY GIRL LOVED, EVERY LIFE TRANSFORMED.


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