

# Sharing From A Teacher

The role of the parent volunteers in promoting resilience in teenagers through the Rainbows Programme in Cedar Girls' Secondary School

Our school's vision is A dynamic organisation of educational excellence with a strong culture of innovation and collaboration that brings out the best in its people. It is with the vision in mind that we have worked closely with our Parent Facilitators to run the Rainbows Programme to develop our pupils' capacity to face, overcome and even be transformed by adversity.

The Rainbows Programme was started in 1996 in Cedar Girls' Secondary School for the Lower Secondary pupils only. We started with the help of only one parent. This year, in 2006, there are six groups on this Programme, all managed by Parent Facilitators.

The pupils have given very positive feedback in their reflections. Reading through the remarks have been encouraging to all the Rainbows Facilitators who have been very kind with their time and money in helping the school run the Programme. The following are some comments made:

*“Before I joined this programme, I cried before sleeping, thinking of the problems faced by my family and me. But now, I'm not sad anymore, my family and I are always in a happy mood now.”*

*“It is hard to let others know of our family situations but with Rainbows I feel more comfortable in sharing my problems.”*

*“Rainbows Programme is now an important memory and stage in my secondary school life. I always look forward to the sessions where we get yummy food to eat and talk to our parent volunteer. I really enjoyed the Rainbows Programme!”*

*“We were very quiet at first. Nobody said anything. Then after the first few lessons we opened up. The lessons have made me uncover some truths. It has also set me thinking. It has helped me to realize that I do have grief even though my dad died when I was very young. I wish to continue with Rainbows next year.”*

The **Key to the Success** of our Rainbows Programme are:

## **Curriculum Time**

The school support given by the Principal in incorporating the Rainbows Programme within curriculum times very effective. This provides the opportunity for the pupils to have their sessions without having to stay back after school hours as the pupils are engaged in CCA and remedial lessons.

### **Our Stakeholders – The Parent Volunteers**

The committed Parent Volunteers who provide food to the pupils over and above their time and effort spent with the pupils. The pupils look forward to sharing the meal and their experience.

### **Orientation Programme for Rainbows**

The Rainbows Programme Orientation held before the start of the programme in the beginning of the year, has its impact on the Secondary Ones as they feel relieved that there are many others in the same situation as they are. This gives them comfort that they are not the only ones from single-parent homes.

### **Close Monitoring/Level Head Meeting**

The Level Head Meeting provides feedback on the pupils' needs and strengths. The pupils at risk are closely monitored.

### **Focus Group Workshop**

Pupils who are underachievers are put on a special programme to build up their life skills and resilience to help them cope with their challenges.

### **Parents' Support**

The parent volunteers provide support as a “Foster Parent” to the girls. They keep in touch through MSN, SMS, email and phone. The parent volunteers take them out on outings and constantly keep in touch.

### **HELP FSC Support**

The HELP FSC provides the training to the Parent Facilitators and through the Networking Sessions, there is an ongoing exchange of ideas to help improve the Rainbows Programme

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