

FAMILY LINK

Vol. 7 Issue 2
May 2008

(published by Curriculum Development Unit of MINDS Schools)
M.I.C.A (P) NO. 292/06/2007

Dear Parents / Guardians,

A very warm Hello again to you parents! And for parents whose children have just been admitted into one of our schools, we welcome you to the many services that MINDS provides for the development and self-actualization of persons with special needs.

This newsletter from MINDS Curriculum Development Unit is our effort to keep in touch with parents and to share information and resources with parents to enhance your skills in enabling your child to achieve his potential.

We would like to invite parents to share with each other and with us your feedback and your experiences. If you have any information or personal stories on your how you assist your child to achieve a skill, do share them with us.

Do email your story or information to us at CDU and we will gladly publish your contribution in this newsletter. We hope in this way, parents can be actively involved and most of all, become a strong source of support for each other in terms of knowledge and skills.

We at CDU, look forward to hear from you and to be of assistance to you in any way. Just give us a call or drop us an email. Let's all connect to pave a great future for our children and ourselves as well!

MINDS SERVICES FOR MINDS SCHOOLS' GRADUANDS

Your children in MINDS schools will graduate from our schools at the end of the academic of the year they turn 18. This is a time of concern for all parents as their now teenage children enter into the adult phase of their lives – a phase that may stretch beyond the parents' life span. Concern about what they would be doing and where they could possibly go to live a normal useful adult life may flash in your minds.

Worries set in regarding their limitations to cope with life's requirements without the presence of the parents. Indeed, the question of 'what will our young adults be doing' after schooling is every parent's mental burden.

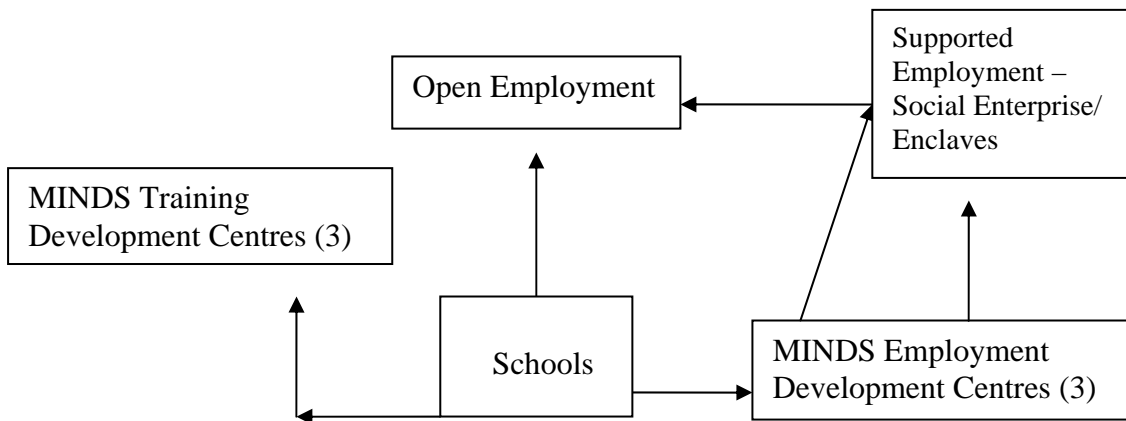
In this issue, we would like to share with you the services MINDS can and is offering to our teens after schooling and the challenges MINDS faces in this task.

Referral Process from MINDS Schools to MINDS Adult Services

Every student who is with our school system till the graduation age of 18 years, would be referred to MINDS adult services for possible admission into MINDS Employment Development Centres or Training Development Centres. Application forms to MINDS adult services would be sent to parents in the early part of the graduation year. The schools would then submit these applications together with the required documents on the students' performance level and attributes, to MINDS adult services. These applications would be processed and would then be channeled to the appropriate respective centres serving the catchment areas that the students' residential addresses fall into.

The respective centres would then call parents in for interviews to ascertain the suitability of the graduand for admission. These interviews could be called in the latter part of the year subject to available vacancies in the centres. If the graduand is found suitable and there is a vacancy, parents would be required to bring the young adult for a medical assessment on their health before admission. Admission would likely to be in the following year after graduation, subject to available vacancies.

Flowchart of Movement from School to MINDS Adult Services



As can be seen from the above flowchart, a student upon graduating from MINDS Schools may usually move into MINDS Employment Development Centres or Training Development Centres. Sometimes there are graduating students who have high ability and ready for direct open employment. The schools may then place them out directly if there are suitable jobs available, that match the ability and personality profile of the students.

Even if a graduand is placed out into open employment, his name would still be referred to MINDS adult services for future follow up action if required.

For adults in MINDS Employment Centres, there is the possibility of future placement into open employment or into MINDS social enterprises depending on their ability and work performance progress. Essential skills expected of adults for placement into open employment or social enterprises include ability to travel independently and be totally self independent in life skills and have acceptable social interaction and behaviour skills.

Information on MINDS Adult Centres

Training and Development Centres (TDCs)

- Caters to individuals 18 yrs and above who need greater specialised intervention to enhance their independence in daily living skills.
- Training is provided to modify inappropriate behaviours that affect their social integration and their skills acquisition and in improving independent living skills.
- Criteria for admission-
 - Exhibit potential to acquire self- help skills
 - Be ambulant
 - No serious medical problem or contagious disease
 - No violent/destructive behaviour and
 - No serious undesirable social behaviour
- MINDS have 3 such centres and they are in Ang Mo Kio, Lorong Napiri and Clementi.

Employment Development Centres (EDCs)

- Caters to individuals aged 18 years and above, who are independent in their daily living skills of self- maintenance.
- Activities are targeted in training for improvement in the above areas and in vocational ability of the clients
- Criteria for admission - Independent in mobility and daily living skills – feeding/toileting/ personal care and grooming
 - has minimum attention span of 20minutes
 - has no tendency towards aggressive or disruptive behaviours

MINDS 3 EDCs are located at Margaret Drive, Rosyth Road and Woodlands Ring Road

Supported Employment – Social Enterprise & Enclaves

Criteria for Eligibility

- Successful work record in EDC/School
- Functional independence in most daily living skills
- Independent in traveling by self
- Concept of time and money value
- No serious medical issues
- Has ambition to work and to achieve goals

Challenges faced by MINDS Adult Service Provision

As the young adults enter MINDS adult services at age 19 years, majority are likely to remain there till they become senior citizens. Hence the number of vacancies for new graduands will decrease with each passing year.

The challenge of providing services for the annual cohort of school graduands is indeed great as the availability of open or supported employment is difficult to come by. Thus, graduands will have to await placement in the EDCs or TDCs and our concern is the length of this wait.

MINDS is constantly searching for ways to meet this challenge as our vision is to see every person with intellectual disability, living a meaningful life, productively and socially engaged so as to maintain their cognitive, social and physical well being.

In view of these challenges I would like to throw out some thoughts for parents to ponder on:-

--- Assisting the young adult to maintain his cognitive development

- Enhance your child's capability in independent living skills by providing training and ample opportunities for practice at home..
- During the wait for placement, engage your child in activities like enrichment classes/ sports and make sure he helps in home chores and tasks.
- Make sure he maintains exercise and is mentally active and challenged.
- Maintain conversations with him.

---- Initiating Activity/Work Ventures

- Parents running own businesses could consider providing job opportunities for our capable graduands.
- Parents can get together to create a business or social enterprise to provide work opportunities.
- For the adults who are not ready for work, parents can get together to run once a week activities in your own home for a small group. Activities could be on simple food preparation, dance, karaoke sessions, craft work etc.

These are but some ideas for reflection. There must be many more that you parents with your diverse expertise can come up with. *You can make things happen!*

Up Coming Workshops for Parents/ Caregivers

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Venue</i>	<i>Topic</i>
10.05.08 :	10.00am-1.00pm	MINDS Seminar Rm 6 th Level , Margaret Drive	Transition: Going from schools to adult services (In Mandarin)
12.07.08	9.30am-1.00pm	MINDS Seminar Rm	Developing basic Self Help Skills: A Step towards Successful transition
16.08.08	10.00am- 1pm	MINDS Seminar Rm	Sexuality amongst individuals With intellectual disability
16.08.08	2.00pm-4.30pm	MINDS Seminar Rm	Enhancing Gross Motor Skills In children aged 4 to 10 years
23.08.08	9.30am-1.0pm	MINDS Seminar Rm	Positive Behaviour support for children & adolescents

For the above workshops, please contact the respective schools or Ms Lohsnah at MINDS Tel 64737512 for more details.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- * As mentioned in the last issue, our unit will be located at 2nd Level at Fernvale Gardens School, No. 7 Fernvale Road with effect from 16 Jun 08.
- * Yio Chu kang Gardens School will be renamed Fernvale Gardens School and relocated to No. 7 Fernvale Road from end June 08.
- * MINDS Yio Chu Kang Employment Development Centre will be relocated to No. 30 #01-02 Woodlands Ring Road from July 08 together with Jurong Gardens School which will be renamed as Woodlands Gardens School.

Quotable Quote

Self determination—control over one's life and choices—is the critical difference separating people with disabilities from those without disabilities.

Paul Wehman, in his foreword for the book- "Teaching Self-determination to students with disabilities" by Michael L Wehmeyer, Martin Agran, Carolyn Hughes



Curriculum Development Unit

802 Margaret Drive
Singapore 149311
Tel: 6472 1520
Fax: 6473 4776

Email: CDU@minds.org.sg
lindychiam.cdu@minds.org.sg
chiapohhong.cdu@minds.org.sg
tansoofang.cdu@minds.org.sg

