

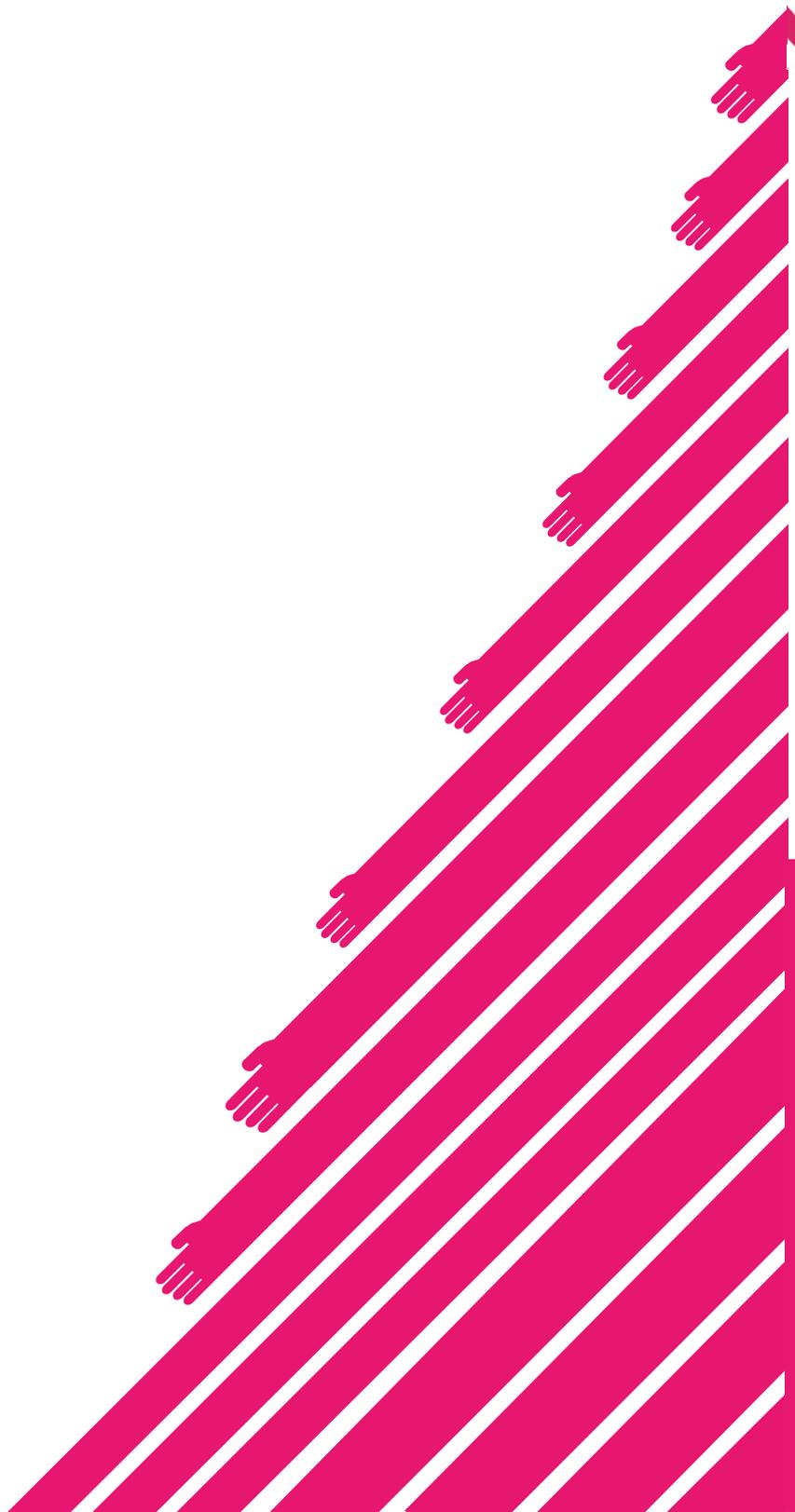
JANUARY TO JUNE 2018



NEXT STEPS

WITH YOU, EVERY STEP OF THE WAY







Greetings from all of us at Babes Pregnancy Crisis Support Ltd (Babes)!

The 1st half of the year has been fruitful for us. We have had to increase our focus on counselling as we have seen a steady increase in case numbers compared to 2017. Nevertheless we managed to maintain a high level of engagement with our existing service users and the broader community through a number of events (see ‘Calendar of Events’ section).

The 2nd half of the year will also be busy for all of us at Babes, as we have planned many activities for our service-users and volunteers. We are placing our emphasis on fundraising as well and have planned a calendar of fund-raising events, the main of which is in collaboration with NUS Alumni.

We are always grateful to all our valuable partners and volunteers and hope this support will continue for many more years to come. Stay healthy and happy always.

Christina Vejan
Executive Director



In 2017, we journeyed with 112 teenage girls and supported them in their unplanned pregnancies. Through understanding their unique needs, we ensured that they were empowered to make informed decisions about their pregnancies and obtained the resources they needed to be well-supported. In this issue, we chat with our Outreach executive, Santhiya, to find out more about the challenges of reaching out to the public.

WHY DO YOU THINK IT IS IMPORTANT TO SPREAD WORD ABOUT BABES?

There are other organizations in Singapore that help single mothers, young mothers and pregnant women. Society generally wouldn't frown on a 25-year old woman for getting pregnant at her age but this is not usually the case for our girls. I think it is essential that we, as the only organization that targets our services exclusively to girls aged 21 and below, let more people know that we exist to garner more support for those girls.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES YOU FACE WHEN IT COMES TO REACHING OUT TO YOUR TARGET GROUP?

The challenge in reaching out to youths is raising awareness in schools. Schools tend to take a conservative approach to sex education, and they fear that students might misunderstand our message. To tackle that, we use innovative approaches such as distributing interesting collaterals in schools and putting up our ads at bus stops near school zones. In reaching out to potential partners and donors, our size sometimes sets us back as some prefer to support charities that are larger and better known. However, we do receive support from partners who appreciate and see value in the work we do!

WHAT ARE SOME EXCITING INITIATIVES YOU HAVE IN STORE FOR THE YEAR?

We are hoping to roll out a new program for our beneficiaries to teach them new skills such as candle-making and soap-making. The merchandise made can then be used for fund-raising purposes: it will not only give the girls a source of income, but it will also help raise awareness of Babes.



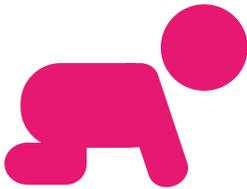
FOR MORE INFORMATION ON OUR OUTREACH,
YOU CAN CONTACT SANTHIYA AT [SANTHIYASUBRA@BABES.ORG.SG](mailto:santhiyasubra@babes.org.sg)



BABES FACTS

APPROXIMATELY

70%



OF OUR SERVICE-USERS
RETURN BACK TO
SCHOOL.

CLOSE TO **60%**
OF OUR SERVICE-USERS STAY IN



RENTAL APARTMENTS.



TEENAGE GIRLS SPEAK

“I HAD TO DEAL WITH THE NEWS OF

AN UNPLANNED PREGNANCY

I first came to Babes because I wanted to learn more about my rights as a young, unmarried, pregnant teenager. I also needed financial assistance. I was already half way through my pregnancy. Even though my boyfriend was supportive, I was still anxious. I wanted to give my baby a good life.

Initially, I was hesitant to talk about much else apart from working through practical issues. However, over multiple sessions with my Babes caseworker, I gradually felt more comfortable to explore what was truly troubling me. As a young child, I watched helplessly as my father walked in and out of my life. My mother did all she could to support my brother and me, but she was physically and emotionally exhausted. When my father moved out permanently, and my brother also left home to join a gang, I felt my family was crumbling. My mother would lock herself in her room when she came home from work, and whenever I wanted a little of her time and attention, my grandmother would scold me and tell me to be understanding of all of the difficulties my mother was facing. I quickly learnt that in order to win my mother's affection, I had to be supportive and not add to her burdens. I often fell asleep to the sound of my mother sobbing in her bedroom.

While it was difficult for me to grow up without a stable parent-figure, things became even harder when my mother started to bring in multiple boyfriends after divorcing my father. Her boyfriends were sometimes quite young and they would misbehave with me. I felt scared and I was really upset when my mother would take their side over mine.

With all of this, the one person I could count on was my boyfriend. We met in school and he was good to me. He included me in his family life and when he found out that I was pregnant, he wanted to get married. I wanted to marry him too, but I discovered that I might need my father's consent to do so because of my age. I did not want my father to be a part of my life anymore and the last thing I wanted to do was to ask his permission to get married.

With all of the emotional baggage I was carrying, being pregnant, and with the financial pressure of raising a child, my relationship with my boyfriend also started to come under great strain. I felt things were becoming really hopeless.

At Babes, over several sessions, I gradually picked up the tools to help myself. I was directed to financial aid and was advised on my rights given my age and situation. Moving beyond just logistical support, my caseworker provided tremendous emotional and psychological support. Initially, I was reluctant to take charge of what was going on in my life, but I slowly learnt to recognize and safely explore many of my hidden emotions. I also learnt how to best communicate what I was feeling without alienating or blaming the other person. I learnt how to keep my anxiety under control using breathing techniques, and kept a journal to elicit deeper reflection. All of this was very empowering for me and, combined with my commitment to do the best for my child, I started healing and worked on the strained relationship with my mother.

I gave birth to a healthy baby, and when I was holding my child in my arms, I had the grace to realise what my mother must have gone through, and decided to forgive her and move ahead. I really felt like a heavy stone was being lifted off my chest and that I was now able to untie a big knot. I also used the communication tools I learnt at Babes to improve and secure my relationship with my boyfriend, whom I married.

I feel confident enough with my new abilities and my family support system to suspend sessions with Babes, knowing that I can always come back to them if I need to. I continue to write journals and strongly feel that reflection is an important tool to know oneself better. By knowing myself deeper, I have been able to be kinder to myself and improve my relationships with others.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

BABES DAY

11 MAY

On 11th May, we celebrated our Annual Babes Day! at Royal Palm Singapore with over over 70 guests in attendance. They participated in games, makeovers, sock tie-dye activities, dream-catcher making, face-painting, henna art. We also conducted a lucky draw and so much more! It was a day for our beneficiaries to have have some fun and take a short respite from their daily routines

We would like to give special thanks to our volunteers who helped make Babes Day possible! From herding rambunctious children to transforming the place into a floral fantasy, our Babes volunteers were fabulous!



CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE (NUS) DAY OF SERVICE

1st September 2018

This September, NUS alumni are organising a fundraising concert and movie screening to help raise funds to support our beneficiaries. Join us to watch 'Wonder Woman' at NUS Alumni Guild House and enjoy an amazing serenade of voices at the concert.

FAMILY STRENGTHENING CHALET

14th – 16th September 2018

Community and family support is crucial for the vulnerable group of girls we assist especially if they choose parenthood. So, as part of our casework, Babes will be organising a chalet stay for our service-users and their families with programs and activities that focus on family mediation and family bonding.

BABES PRODUCTION

12th – 13th October 2018

This October, Babes will be putting up our first ever drama production. It will be an in-depth performance by trained actors exploring the issue of teenage pregnancy in Singapore. Inspired by our casework, the script will be devised by our own in-house forum theatre actors. This will be a ticketed event at a Black Box Theatre Singapore.





VOLUNTEER & PARTNERS APPRECIATION NIGHT

27th October 2018

We are a small team so our resources and manpower are often limited. We can only achieve the things we do with the help of generous volunteers who answer our call for help without fail. To express our appreciation to our volunteers and partners for their enduring support, each year we hold an event to thank them for their selfless contributions of their time, effort and passion to our cause.

BOUTIQUES FAIR AUTUMN/WINTER 2018 EDITION

8th to 11th November 2018

Babes will be at Boutiques Fair 2018 Autumn/Winter 2018 edition to run an outreach and fundraising booth 100% run by our volunteers. Stay tuned to learn about the fun and exciting activities we have in store!

BABES OPEN MIC NIGHT

17th November 2018

Babes Open Mic Night is a platform for young talent to showcase their talents for social good,--be it stand-up comedy, singing or spoken word. Just as importantly, it also raises awareness of our cause and stimulates conversation about teenage pregnancy in Singapore. Through this platform, we aim to engage with the youth community and encourage them to think beyond the narrow stereotypes that teenage pregnancy is often relegated to.

VOLUNTEER WITH US!

We are always looking for volunteers to fill in roles in areas such as Marketing, Advertising, Events, Public Relations IT / Website, Management, graphic design, etc..

In addition, we are specifically looking for:

1) Copywriters

We are looking for passionate people who would like to pen the courageous stories of our service-users to share with the world.



CONTACT DETAILS



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