



**11 February 2009**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**BOOSTING MANY HELPING HANDS:**

**MORE AND BETTER TRAINED SOCIAL WORKERS  
TO STRENGTHEN FAMILY SERVICE CENTRES**

The Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS) expects to spend \$16 million in FY09 to better support the work of Family Service Centres (FSCs), following a recently-concluded review. FSCs will continue to play a critical role in supporting families, especially during these difficult times.

**(A) EMPLOYING MORE SOCIAL WORKERS**

2 The 23 percent increase in budget over FY08 will allow for FSCs to increase manpower and build capabilities. At maximum capacity, each FSC can receive additional funding to hire 3 more social workers and 2 social work associates. These would be on top of the current establishment of 12 staff in the planning norm. With more social workers per FSC, each social worker will see a reduction of caseloads. This will raise their capabilities to provide more intensive social work intervention to families with complex or multiple problems. The additional resources will be available to FSCs from April 2009.

**(B) BUILDING MORE FSCs**

3 More FSCs will be built in areas with high and sustained demand. MCYS will fund FSCs on a scalable funding model. Effective FSCs with high caseloads will be able to grow and expand. These FSCs can set up branches, and scale up as caseloads grow. This model allows FSCs to respond to demand for their services as ground needs emerge.

**(C) BUILDING CAPABILITIES OF FSCs**

4 To strengthen the capabilities of staff at FSCs, training modules on core competencies will be enhanced. These enhancements will take into consideration emerging needs such as help for dysfunctional families, closer linkage and collaboration with government agencies etc. There will also be training to build capabilities among FSCs to work with families from different ethnic groups.

**(D) STRENGTHENING LINKAGES WITH PARTNERS**

5 FSCs will strengthen working linkages with other community touch points including the Community Development Councils, schools and grassroots organisations. The ComCare Local Networks are a useful platform for these organizations to meet regularly to network, to coordinate assistance for the needy in the community and to collaborate on local projects. The FSCs will also enhance operational protocols with their partners and develop new ones as necessary, to improve the coordination of services for needy families.

**(E) MERGING FSC HELPLINE WITH COMCARE CALL**

6 The FSC Helpline will be merged with ComCare Call from April 2009 to consolidate efforts in responding to queries on assistance. Singaporeans who do not know where to seek social and financial assistance can call ComCare Call at 1800-222-0000.

**ISSUED BY**

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**MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, YOUTH AND SPORTS**