

# Building Self-Esteem and Confidence

When I was in school, I was afraid to even raise my hand to answer questions. I lacked confidence and courage. This went on through my schooling years. Growing up was painful as I was always in the shadows, in the background. Finally, as life began to pose its various challenges I decided to break free and take steps to build up my confidence in my own way.

Just like any children who suffer from low self-esteem, our children in Shelter also suffer from severe low self-esteem due to much abuse and trauma in their lives. In school, low self-esteem only propels girls to fall prey to boys at the first sign of interest or affection shown. In the same vein, the boys fall prey to bullies who may take advantage and lure them into drugs, gangsterism or violence giving these boys a false sense of confidence and acceptance. Feeling little self-worth, these children, believing they cannot amount to anything, lack the drive to perform well in their studies. Unable to 'break away', their future seems just as bleak as their past!

Thus self-esteem and confidence are essential ingredients in a changing world with its new challenges. Confident children become happy and satisfied in who they are and who they might become. They will be ready to rise to challenges and take on the world, theirs to start with! Every individual therefore, would want to be confident and courageous in whatever circumstance one is in. In his many books on self-esteem, Dr Nathaniel Branden believes self-esteem and confidence is knowing that you have the wherewithal (what it takes) to function reasonably well in the world. In other words, you cannot be confident if you are fearful and easily intimidated.

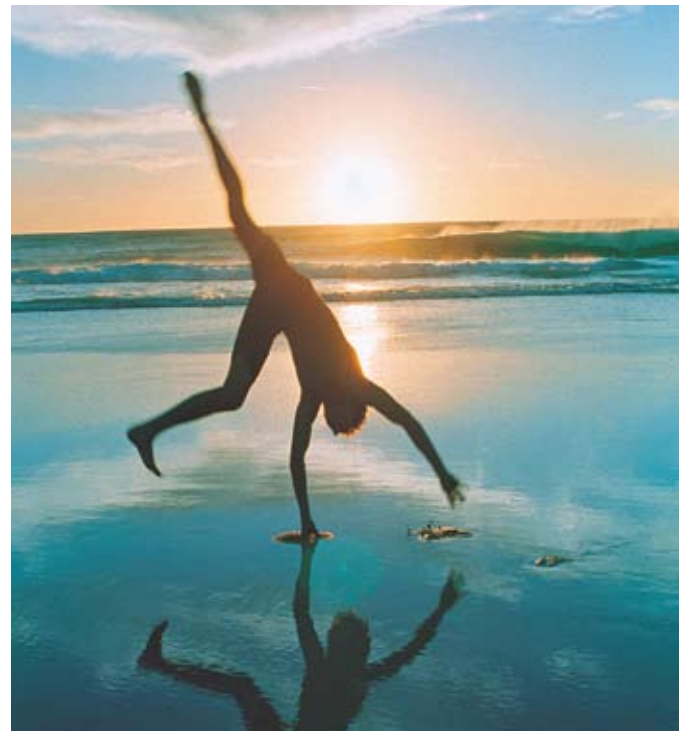
Real self-esteem and confidence result from small victories and accomplishments. Slowly you begin to know you can handle yourself well in almost every situation. But sadly, in the real world many of us grow up with a dominating figure in our lives. Subsequently, we can either turn out to be tough (when we assert ourselves and fight for what is right) or timid (when we let that person control us).

Listed below are various steps you can take for yourself or for the children under your care to develop their self-esteem and confidence.

**Acknowledge your attempts.** List out major and minor accomplishments and experiences in the past that have boosted your confidence no matter how insignificant. When your confidence is low, look at the list to remind yourself of your successes and work harder and rise higher. Acknowledge your hard work, time and sacrifices made.

**Appreciate the qualities you have.** Remember your uniqueness, special qualities and strengths. Use some of these skills to help a discouraged person or a child.

**Praise others when they do something well.** This will affirm their effort and make them want to do the better and take on more challenges.



**Move on and get over mistakes.** Failing does not matter. What counts is the attempt, is not giving up. Each time you fail is not the final time. Try again. Try harder. When children fail, encourage and guide them to strive a little more to be better in areas where they did not perform well.

**Thank others, even children.** When they do something nice or something right. This will make them feel good about themselves and increase their confidence.

**Repeat praises.** Steve Biddulph an Australian psychologist tells parents and caregivers that using repeated praises and comments to children is the same as hypnotizing them to react in a specific way. This will result in establishing positive images about themselves. On the other hand, regularly telling children they are lazy or disobedient will only result in those very negative qualities taking root in their thoughts and hence actions.

## The Golden Thread

There is only one real failure,  
 And that is losing the will to overcome, giving in to despair.  
 When your entire world is torn with grief and strife,  
 Think yet- when there seems nothing left to mend.  
 The frail, time-worn fabric of your life,  
 The golden thread of courage has no end.

# A GLIMPSE INTO OUR COMMUNITY...



Approximately 15 years ago, Mr. Murugan (then, 48 years old) used to operate a 'mamak' stall in one of the stalls along Jalan Tunku Abdul Rahman. His business grew and with his earnings he and his family were able to live comfortably. His circle of friends increased as his business expanded from just a 'mamak' stall to a restaurant! Nothing could possibly go wrong now, as he and his wife worked hard to provide a better future for their only son.

Then, 10 years ago all his dreams were dashed when he was struck down with stroke and he became incapable to fend for his family anymore. Life was harsh and unsympathetic as his so-called 'good friends' deserted him, in fear that he might borrow money from them. Such was the heartbreaking reality of life. Sadly, five years later misfortune struck again! He was diagnosed with diabetes! At the beginning, his wife struggled hard to keep up payment of the utility and high medical bills. Unable to do so as time passed, they had no choice but to sell off the restaurant and their son was forced to quit school. Mr. Murugan who loved his son so much, then decided to use part of the money from the sale of the restaurant to send his son to a vocational school in Seremban. Unfortunately, his son could not keep up academically as he has been out of school since Standard Five. His son went back to look after his sick father.

His son faithfully accompanied Murugan to go for dialysis in the General Hospital 3 times a week. While other teenagers in the neighbourhood were gallivanting with their friends, Murugan's son sacrificed his time taking care of his father. As Murugan had difficulty walking due to the stroke, his son literally piggy-backed his father down from their low-cost flat to the taxi stand. Murugan's son sacrificed his time, taking care of his father without complaining.

Murugan's wife became the sole breadwinner, worked hard and doing her best to help the family to survive. They have no savings and sometimes there is no food on the table! Her monthly income is solely allocated for Murugan's medical expenses, and is not enough to cover the house rental of RM 125 per month... This is only one of the many 'hidden' life stories in our community.

## How Shelter lends a hand...

We made a visit to Murugan's home in Setapak end of last year. The future may look grim for this family, especially for his son whose schooling came to an abrupt end. We have encouraged him to opt for an apprenticeship job in the hope that he would be of greater financial assistance to his family.

As for the family, Shelter has decided to provide Murugan's family with monthly food provision. We have done so for the past 3 months. We get the opportunity to chat with the family, and hear of their daily struggles. We never fail to encourage Mr. Murugan to hope and believe that one day he may walk again as he diligently exercises. We also hope that one day his son would be in a position to look after the family. Shelter believes in standing alongside with the community - to shape a better future for them.

## How YOU can lend a hand to our community....

While you may not know any less fortunate families, you can certainly be better 'neighbours'... We would like to offer you an opportunity to make a difference for this family. Kindly contact us at 03-7955 0663 for more details on how you can help.



# WORKING WITH REFUGEE CHILDREN



The UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) was established on December 14, 1950 by the United Nations General Assembly with the primary purpose of safeguarding the rights and well-being of refugees who are people compelled to leave their countries of origin because of armed conflict, serious public disorder or complex human rights issues. UNHCR therefore strives to ensure that refugees can seek asylum and find safe refuge in another state, with the option to return home voluntarily, integrate locally in the countries of asylum or resettle in a third country. Using a world wide field network, it also seeks to provide at least a minimum of shelter, food, water and medical care in the immediate aftermath of any refugee exodus. In more than five decades, the agency has helped an estimated 50 million people to restart their lives. For the year 2008, official figures showed 13,163 refugee children in Malaysia, 7211 male and 5925 female. Unofficial figures may be a few times more.

Our staff Choy Swee Chun is currently attached to the UNHCR office in Kuala Lumpur since February 2007. She is with the Best Interest Determination (BID) section of which Shelter is the implementation partner. Her duties include interviewing and writing reports on unaccompanied (no parents or relatives) and separated (have families) refugee children. The BID panel then decides whether a refugee child should be repatriated, integrated locally, resettled or removed from abusive circumstances and fostered. She also plays a coordinating role by monitoring logs, fixing appointments and following - up cases with home visits.

On the plight of refugee children, Swee Chun says they are at risk physically (arrested, detained, deported, deprived of physical activity and proper nutrition) and psychologically (real fear of being arrested, detained, deported, deprived of education and basic human rights).

On her feelings of the situation, she says she is saddened that human beings created by the same Creator are treated differently and unfairly. She would like to see the Government which is a signatory of the Geneva Refugee Convention, implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child, namely the right to survival, the right to development, the right to protection and the right to participation. She says people should also stand in the gap and fight for the rights of those affected so that they are not deprived of a future with a right to education, play, decent living conditions and nutrition.

On a personal level, Swee Chun says she has definitely found a sense of fulfillment in just talking to children and letting them 'unload' their cares and pain without being emotionally affected or burnt out. She has also learnt to be thankful and content with what she has. Her lifestyle has changed in that she is unable to live as before, spending money on frivolous things, knowing now that there are people out there going without basic necessities.

Can we too make changes, not only in our lifestyles but in the lives of these unfortunate and underprivileged children? Are we willing to move out of our comfort zone and offer our time, skills and resources and help make their world a better place? So if you have time, skills and resources we urge you to come and partner with us at Shelter in this worthy call.



1. Afghan Refugee Children ([www.prweb.com](http://www.prweb.com))
2. Iraq Refugee Children ([www.thewe.cc](http://www.thewe.cc))
3. Refugee Children gathering firewood ([www.bookwish.org](http://www.bookwish.org))
4. Sudanese Refugee Children ([www.msnbc.msn.com](http://www.msnbc.msn.com))
5. Group of Refugee Children ([www.ipvt.org](http://www.ipvt.org))
6. Refugee Children in need of help ([www.abc.net.au](http://www.abc.net.au))
7. Southern Sudanese Refugee Children ([news.bbc.co.uk](http://news.bbc.co.uk))
8. Burmese Refugee Children ([burmadigest.info](http://burmadigest.info))
9. Afghan Refugee Children ([www.gbgm-ume.org](http://www.gbgm-ume.org))
10. Cambodian Refugee Children ([www.country-data.com](http://www.country-data.com))
11. Refugee Children in the Chouf Lebanon ([vcnv.org](http://vcnv.org))
12. Burmese Refugee Children ([www.thewe.cc](http://www.thewe.cc))



# The A1 Team Malaysia Outreach Programme at Shelter 2



On Saturday, 15 November 2008, the A1 Team Malaysia arrived at Shelter 2 to paint the interior and exterior of the home. In addition, the team planned to refurbish the storeroom into a laundry.

The mechanical, engineering, administrative and marketing personnel from A1 Team Malaysia gathered at Shelter 2 and Mr. Owen Leed, the Commercial Director of the A1 Team Malaysia briefed them on the jobs that needed to be done at the home. Later he divided them into teams and assigned them to their respective stations.

Our girls too joined them in the painting of the home. The girls got on well with the A1 Team and enjoyed themselves. It was a joy to see how well they mingled and interacted with the team. It was like a family activity because the A1 Team treated the girls with love and understanding. They advised the girls as they would a family member.

The Malaysia A1 Team drivers, Fairuz Fauzy and Aaron Lim made a special appearance to meet the girls of Shelter 2. They also joined in the painting of the house.

The following day, the team returned to the home with another group of volunteers to complete the project. The team took the opportunity to celebrate the birthday of one of the team members,

Darren Bandy. Our girls presented him with two cakes. Darren was moved to tears when he saw the girls bringing the cakes singing 'Happy Birthday'. The team also got to taste Veronica's 'vadais'.

The painting and refurbishing works were completed late Sunday afternoon and it was wrapped up with a group photo of the team members, volunteers, the girls and staff of Shelter 2.

The A1 Team was happy and pleased that they had undertaken this project at Shelter 2.

We at the home were pleased and extremely satisfied with the outcome that followed the huge effort the A1 Team Malaysia and volunteers had put in to fix the home.

The girls learned some things that they had been struggling with namely commitment, teamwork and attitude. Now the girls have learned to set higher standard and goals.

On 21 November 2008 Shelter 2 girls and staff had the opportunity to visit the A1 Team Malaysia at their pit stop at the Sepang Circuit. We had a closer look at how they worked as a team on their car. We were given tickets to the A1 Team Malaysia motor racing on 23 November 2008. After the race we went down to the pit stop to say, "Thank you" and "Good bye" to the A1 Team Malaysia.



How about yellow?



Easy does it!



Almost missed a spot there!



Let me give you a hand.



Many hands make light work.



Together let's put it together.



Time for a much needed break.



# My New Year Resolutions

My New year resolution is to be a top student in my class.

I want to write as many essay as i can.

- I want to brush up my english.
- Be practical and observant.
- Be polite and humble.
- Respect the elders and be helpful.
- Do more
- Eat less
- 



I must listen to Uncle Nelson and all the Staff.

From:

Vasanthra

I will study hard and pass all my exams. I will listen to all my teachers.

From: Jessica

My resolution ~

study hard, be a good girl, respect elders, good runner and get a good result...

I want to become as in my study hardworking child. St. cassandra Ngr Pei Ping

Respect others and be more obedient and considerate

I will exercise everyday and try to loose weight. I must learn to keep clean too.

From: Kar Yee  
Thank you

My resolution

change myself to be better in my studies, hardwork my characters. Be more and persevere. No giving easily in anything I Active in cocurriculum in School. Eat lesser and eat only health food

year resolution is to be a I also want to aim high the wants to loose some weight and take a be truthful and polite to the elders

myself in sport necessary, and respect all not talk rude

in my

behaviour in



## DONATION SLIP

### I want to give hope to children

• Please fill in block letters

Full Name : Company / Organization / Dr / Mr / Mrs / Ms

Address :

Tel : (H) (O)

(h/p) Fax :

Email:

- ☐ Please include me in the Shelter newsletter mailing list.
- ☐ I would like to sponsor a child. Please contact me.
- ☐ Please provide me with more information to serve on a voluntary basis.
- ☐ I would like to contribute RM \_\_\_\_\_ per month for \_\_\_\_\_ months / year(s).
- ☐ Enclosed is a cheque / bank draft / money order no. \_\_\_\_\_ payable to **Shelter** for RM \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Please charge my donation of RM \_\_\_\_\_ to:
- ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express

Card Number :

Name on the card :

Expiry Date : \_\_\_\_\_

Signature : \_\_\_\_\_ Date : \_\_\_\_\_

Started in 1981, Shelter is a registered voluntary welfare organization for children and teenagers who have been abandoned, neglected, orphaned or abused. Shelter is supported by donations from the general public. **ALL DONATIONS TO SHELTER ARE TAX EXEMPT. (No.8954 / 90)**



P.O. Box 23, Jalan Sultan, 46700 Petaling Jaya, Selangor D.E., Malaysia.  
Tel : 603-7955 0663 Fax : 603-7956 2384 / 603-7956 3940

Shelter 1 : No. 4, Jalan Tinggi 6 / 12, 46000 Petaling Jaya,  
Selangor D.E , Malaysia. Tel : 603-7781 4885  
Email: shelter@po.jaring.my Website: www.shelterhome.org

## MICRO-CREDIT PROGRAMME



### What Is Micro-credit?

Micro-credit is the extension of loans (micro-loans) to the unemployed, poor entrepreneurs and others living in poverty who are considered non-bankable.

These individuals lack collateral, steady employment and proven credit history. They therefore, cannot meet even the most minimal qualifications to be eligible for traditional credit. Micro-credit which is a part of micro-finance is the provision of financial services to such individuals. Micro-credit includes savings, micro- insurance and other financial innovations.

### Why do we do it?

Throughout the years, our food and financial aid programmes have always been on a handout basis. Some families manage to attain self-sufficiency but many others merely become more dependent on such handouts. Handouts being handouts also do not encourage the growth and development of the families. This restricts our involvement with the families to the occasional visits.

### How does it work?

Successful candidates will be assisted and guided by a mentor to start businesses of their own. Funds are given according to the amount approved at different stages of their businesses. Shelter's goal is to empower single mothers with the means and opportunities to be independent. Through this programme, Shelter believes it will enable them with all the resources needed to raise up their children in better living conditions.

### Who should apply?

Single mothers who are interested in developing businesses of their own.

### Who to call?

For more information, please call:

**The Community Services officer at 03 – 7955 0663.**

## Sponsor A Shelter Child



If you have any questions regarding Shelter's Sponsor a Child Programme, or are interested to be a sponsor, please call Deborah at Shelter office or you could download the Sponsor Form from the website (www.shelterhome.org) and send it to our postal address. Sponsorship is for a minimum period of 12 months and most of our sponsors continue with this meaningful experience of helping change the world for at least one disadvantaged child after just trying it for one sponsorship term. So, do not delay and call us now at 03-7955 0663.

## Volunteer



Interested in volunteering at Shelter? Do contact Elaine for more details at 03-7955 0663 today!

We appreciate all that you do to make a difference! Child sponsors and volunteers are invaluable to us!

## Dropzone



DropZone is a Shelter youth community centre project, which offers an alternative hang-out place for young people and runs activities which focus on the personal development of youth.

Contact Keat Lim at 03-7782 7448 if you would like to know more about DropZone's activities – happenin' Mondays to Fridays from 11.00am till 6.00pm.

DropZone is at: No.92-A, 1st Floor, Jalan Othman 1/14 (PJ Old Town), 46000 Petaling Jaya.