



The Yellow Ribbon Project *Advocating Community Acceptance & Enhancing Community Involvement*





Why Community Involvement?

- 10,000 ex-offenders released annually
- “Second Prison” of stigmatisation & prejudice
- Community acceptance to reduce re-offending





The Yellow Ribbon Project

- Launched in 2004 by CARE Network
- Change society's mindset to offer ex-offenders a second chance in life
- “Help Unlock the Second Prison”



CARE
NETWORK



ISCOS



The Inspiration

- “Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Ole Oak Tree”
- 1970’s hit song

“I am really still in prison and my love she holds the key, a simple yellow ribbon’s what I need to set me free...”





Objectives of YRP

- Creating “Awareness” in giving second chances to ex-offenders who want to change
- Generating “Acceptance” of ex-offenders & their families
- Inspiring Community “Action” to support the rehabilitation & reintegration of ex-offenders



Thematic Development

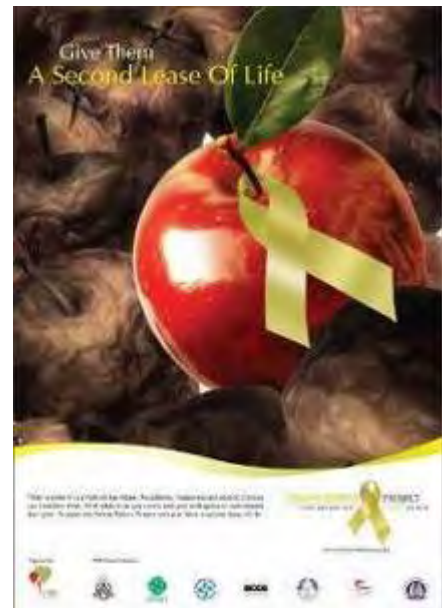
- Creating awareness
- Deepening the Message
- Reformed ex-offenders to engage the community





Publicity & Media Engagement

- Iconic “Yellow Ribbon”
- Consistent Messaging
- 2010 Campaign “This is my Yellow Ribbon. This is my Journey.”





Publicity & Media Engagement

- Media as strategic tool
- Utilise all mediums
- Media engagement for all events & activities

Right: Print Media



Below: Media write up on success stories

Father of 3 outruns his drug-abusing past

Reformed addict will take part in Ironman race to help raise \$10,000

By KIMBERLY SPEKKEMAN

MR. HANNEL Cheong had a knack for running – from the cops. With officers from the Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB) hot on his heels, he once jumped from a third-storey flat to escape them.

He was caught, with both ankles crushed. But Mr Cheong is back on his feet and running again, this time with the blessing of the authorities.

The 47-year-old is part of a team which will compete in the Aviva Ironman 70.3 Singapore triathlon later this month.

The aim: to complete the race in under five hours 15 minutes. The timing set by last year's prisoners team.

The reward: Aviva, a leading financial service provider, will give \$10,000 to the Yellow Ribbon Project, a fund to help the rehabilitated men into society.

Teaming up with Mr Cheong is Mr Ramnath Pao Yi, from the Singapore Corporation of Rehabilitative Enterprises (Score), who will start the race with the 1.6km open water swim. Senior prison officer Mohamed Farik Omar, 36, will then take over with the 50km bike ride, before Mr Cheong rounds the remaining 18km on foot to the finish.

Mr Cheong credits running for wanting him off an addiction that spanned almost two decades.

Back in 1977, at the age of 11, he was introduced to heroin by the older kids in his Queenstown neighbourhood.

The youngest of five children, he dropped out of school at Primary 6 and began work as a waiter at a restaurant in Shaw Tower. His earnings fuelled his drug habit.

He kept his addiction a secret from his parents by smoking heroin at his friends' homes or at the staircase landing – till officers from the CNB came knocking on their door a few months later.

Mr Cheong was carted off to a drug rehabilitation centre, the first of many incarcerations. "I wanted to run by my lily. I didn't want to listen to my family. I was young, restless and had no focus."

Being jailed for trafficking did not stop him either. He would ask his father or siblings for money. They did not refuse him as they were unable to bear watching him suffer the drug's withdrawal symptoms.

Even after he crashed his ankles jumping out of the flat in 1983, he had a friend bring him heroin to smoke while recovering from surgery in hospital.

Feeling off his socks to reveal his slightly misshapen feet, Mr Cheong says ruefully: "The big toe on my right foot cannot bend properly any more."

The last time he saw the inside of a drug rehabilitation centre was in 1997, after a stint at his parents' house. The Helping Hand introduced him to Christianity. "I know that if I continued on this path back to drugs again, it would lead to destruction. Either I would be sentenced to death one day, or overdose."

Mr Cheong, who got married in 2002, now works full-time doing maintenance at a church in Adam Road to support his three young children.

Running calms him.

He runs four times a week either at MacRitchie Reservoir or around his home in Sengkang, and has completed four full and three half-marathons, including the adidas Sundown Marathon last year.

Not bad for someone who started running intensely only in 2005.

He said: "There are many ways you can enjoy life fully, and running gives you an aim and a focus. Not like drugs, where there is no focus and no end. When you're running, at least you can focus on achieving something."

www.yellowsign.org.sg

Community Engagement Activities

- Yellow Ribbon Activities in month of Sep
- Yellow Ribbon month
- To ensure recall & familiarity





Active Involvement of Inmates & Ex-offenders

- Inmates & ex-offenders are an integral part of the YR campaign
- “Giving Back” is key
- Community service projects
- Support events & activities

Below (left): Inmate participant in YR Art Competition



Ex-offender turned Singapore “Superband” winner performing at a YR event



Celebrity Engagement & Rehabilitation Ambassadors

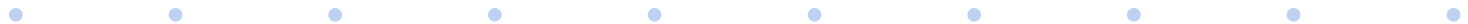
- Popularity & Influence
- Local & regional artistes



Local artiste Irene Ang in YR Docu Drama “Turning Point”



International Singer Chou Wakin performing with ex-offender at YR Concert





Community Partnerships

- Campaign for the community, by the community
- Corporate support
- Prominent political, grassroots & corporate leaders

Right: President S R Nathan launching YRP



AVIVA donating S\$10,000 to YRF through “AVIVA Triathlon”





Community Partnerships: *key lessons learnt*





The Impact

- Amendments to Registration of Criminals Act
- Review of Land Transport Authority Guidelines for vocational licenses
- High awareness (94% recall rate, 2007)
- International & local recognition
- 1.895 million Yellow Ribbons distributed
- 313,000 Singaporeans participated in YRP events
- 807 employers signed up with SCORE
- 908 new Volunteers
- S\$7.8 million raised for YRF



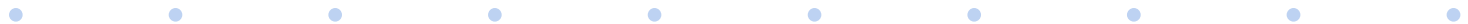
The Success Factors

Passionate
Core Team

Branding

Effective
Use of
Levers

Touching the
Heart of the
Community







Thank You

“The last thing we need is a revolving door of ex-offenders landing back right behind bars because the society is not willing to give them a second chance.”

Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Community Development, Youth & Sports

