

**University Women's Association (Singapore)  
The Singapore Girls' Home Project  
Jan–July 2007**

**Background**

The UWAS's (University Women's Association Singapore) outreach programme for under privileged girls was made possible as a result of the kind support and generous donation of Dr. Della Lee and the Lee Foundation. In 2005, under the able leadership of the then UWAS president, Ms Brenda Goh, a community outreach programme for female juvenile delinquents in the Toa Payoh Girls' Home (TPGH) was initiated. The programme topics ranged from personal grooming to communication skills and therapeutic art. It was initiated with the aim of providing these girls with learning opportunities that would help them in restorative rehabilitation. Subsequently, the TPGH was renamed the Singapore Girls' Home (SGH) and relocated to 1, Defu Avenue 1, S(539540). The present manager of the home is Ms Foo Chuen Yann.

In the past, Esther Joosa was the coordinator of the series of workshops for SGH. From Esther's report the volunteers included the following UWAS members: Brenda Goh, Esther Joosa, Tan Chor Suan, Chan Fong Kin, Chenise Lim, Leong Chooi Peng, Marianne Teo, Serene Low, Yip Siew Har and Quek Geok Cheng. A total of 18 workshops were conducted in the last Exco term (2004-2006). Feedback from past volunteers had shown that generally these girls' learning styles were more suited to activity based learning.

**The Singapore Girls' Home Project (SGHP), 2007**

At the beginning of 2007, Ms Quek Geok Cheng volunteered to revive and coordinate another series of workshops. The Exco had given their support and consent to utilize

the funds sponsored by the Lee Foundation for the project. Geok Cheng communicated with Ms Foo, the SGH manager and after discussion, it was agreed that a series of art and craft workshops would be appropriate for a group of 11 girls whose ages ranged from 11 to 17. Their educational background was primary school. From past experience and feedback from the volunteers, it was decided to explore a more broad based skills approach that develops the girls intellectually, emotionally, aesthetically and socially.

Five UWAS members (Quek Geok Cheng, Serene Low, Vijaya Mohan, Yvonne Ying and Isabella Phan) volunteered for the programme. Geok Cheng also recruited two non-UWAS members (Vickie Lee and Gladys Quek) to help conduct the programme. Based on the volunteers' skills (clay craft, fabric block printing, art therapy and communication skills) a programme was planned and sent to Ms Foo, the SGH manager in March 2007. The details of the programme are reflected in the table below.

**Creativity Workshops for Singapore Girls' Home  
(28 June to 26 July)**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Date/Time Every Thurs</b>	<b>Name of Volunteers</b>	<b>Workshop Session</b>	<b>Materials and tools used in workshop</b>
1.	28 June 07 2pm – 4.15pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Vickie Lee</li> <li>▪ Quek Geok Cheng</li> <li>▪ Isabella Phan</li> </ul>	Japanese clay craft	Ceramic/light clay, oil colour, toothpicks, glue
2.	5 July 07 2pm – 4.15pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gladys Quek</li> <li>▪ Quek Geok Cheng</li> </ul>	Creative Printing	Water based paint, fabric
3.	12 July 2pm – 4.15pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Vijaya Mohan</li> <li>▪ Yvonne Ying</li> </ul>	Art Therapy	oil pastels, colour pencils, marker pens, poster paints, coloured paper and coloured sand.
4.	19 July 07 2pm – 4.15pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Serene Low</li> <li>▪ Yvonne Ying</li> </ul>	Communica tion through Art	crayon, colour pencils, water colour, paper, cards, markers,

				pens, brushes
5.	26 July 07 2pm – 4.15pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Vijaya Mohan</li> <li>▪ Yvonne Ying</li> </ul>	Art Therapy	oil pastels, colour pencils, marker pens, poster paint and coloured paper

### **Volunteers' Feedback and Reflections**

Generally the girls enjoyed the programme. They were happy that the workshops provided them with the opportunity to express themselves and to learn skills. The volunteers interacted well with the girls and were able to communicate with them effectively. This was evident from the girls' positive response to the lessons. The art and craft workshops were hands-on sessions that provided the girls the platform to explore their creativity. The volunteers felt that the workshops have a positive impact on the girls. Vijaya has expressed interest in exploring and coordinating future art programme for the SGH.

Report written by

Quek Geok Cheng (SGH Coordinator)

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