

Gladiolus Place

July-Dec
2022

Newsletter



Bi-Annual Events & Updates

Contents

<i>Foreword</i>	2-3
<i>Executive Director's Note</i>	4-5
<i>Cyclical Maintenance</i>	6-7
<i>Major Events and Regular Happenings</i>	8-9
<i>September Holidays</i>	10-11
<i>December Holidays</i>	12-15

Foreword

How did the second half of the year fly by before our eyes, as we busied ourselves with running Gladiolus Place? We are now getting ready to say goodbye to yet another fruitful year, shortly after ushering in another year.

2022, a year of endless sowing and reaping, of watering, pruning and the inbetweens. We have seen so much sprouting from those under our care, and it keeps us grounded in why we persevere with what we do.

2022, a year of much change we learnt to grow into, gracefully going along with the trials and triumphs in our path. We have come so far since the start of the year.

2022, a year of many hellos and goodbyes. We waved farewell to 16 Girls as they were reunited with their families, and warmly embraced 19 Girls who came into our Home as Residents.

The second half of the year taught us the gift of being malleable in the face of change. The commencement of the long-awaited renovation works showed us the importance of being flexible with living and office spaces, as we shifted our spaces around the home to accommodate the various works.

<i>Testimony</i>	16-19
<i>To All Who Walk With Us</i>	20
<i>Campaigns</i>	21
<i>Support Us!</i>	22
<i>About Us</i>	23



We went on many outings together during the holidays, bundled up as Girls, Staff and Volunteers spent hours outside of the Home on adventures, picnics, and days spent with joy.

In the spirit of learning how to bless others, our Home decided to take a step towards more intentional community service, where we did food distribution drives, packed Christmas packs for cancer patients and their parents at AIN society, decorated scarves for children in Myanmar, all under and with the guidance of our Volunteers who have modelled well the path of love for our Girls.

Time has been a faithful friend, gently shepherding us in our work that stretches on for days, months and years on end. We are in constant thanks, for the journey that Gladiolus Place traversed through for the past 24 years.

2023, a year we are excited to step into, for all its dreams and possibilities!

Executive Director's note



Dear Friends, Supporters, Partners of Gladiolus Place, warmest greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! Welcome to our second bi-annual newsletter of Gladiolus Place for 2022!

As a teenager, my favourite pastime was scouring my father's bookcase, it was always filled with interesting books. At 16, I came across Viktor Frankl's *Man's Search for Meaning*. *Man's Search for Meaning* was one of those books that I read from cover to cover in one sitting, as Frankl wrote about his struggle for survival in Auschwitz. It was a life-changing book. An Austrian neurologist and psychiatrist, Viktor Frankl is the founder of Logotherapy and Existential Analysis. You can imagine my delight when I came across, recently, a compilation of his lectures which he delivered in 1946, just nine months after he was liberated from a Nazi concentration camp, where a short time before, he had been on the brink of death.

In one of his lectures, Frankl shared about an experience he had with a young man, a tailor's assistant, who confronted him about the meaning or meaninglessness of life. Frankl wrote of the tailor's assistant:

"His [the tailor's assistant's] argument was as follows: It's easy for you [Frankl] to talk, you have set up counselling centres, you help people, you straighten people out; but I – who am I, what am I – a tailor's assistant. What can I do, how can I give my life meaning through my actions?"

"This man [referring to the tailor's assistant] had forgotten that it is never a question of where someone is in life, or which profession he is in, it is only a matter of how he occupies his circle in life and fills his place. Whether a life is fulfilled does not depend on how great one's radius of action is, but rather only on whether the circle is fully filled out."

What a perspective! "Whether a life is fulfilled does not depend on how great one's radius of action is, but rather only on whether the circle is fully filled out."

Rather than trying to expand or even change one's radius of action, (and sometimes in so doing miss out on aspects of one's own circle), this perspective encourages us to first define our own circle and seek first to fill it out. *Expansion of the circle, and hence our radius of action, will come naturally when we have fully filled out our own circle.*

Over the past few years, I have witnessed many encouraging stories of how individuals, no matter their age, have sought to fully fill out their circle. And in so doing, brought meaning and fulfillment not just to their own lives, but also to the lives of others around them. In our Jan – Jun 2021 newsletter, I spoke of Uncle Loo, a retiree, who would come to GP regularly in the early mornings to tend our garden. We fondly name the fruit garden he tends as Uncle Loo's Garden. And over the years, GP has also been the beneficiary of several children-initiated donations, including children from Henry Park Primary School and a group of children who are alumni of Maris Stella Kindergarten, who on their own initiatives designed, campaigned and raised funds, support and gifts for GP. In each of our newsletters, you would have also seen how youths of various educational institutions, such as Hwa Chong Institution, National Junior College, Raffles Institution, Nanyang Girls' High School, Raffles Girls' School, and Anglican High School, have also come alongside our Girls to spend time with them, design and run programs for them, and raise funds for GP.

For Christmas in 2022, we adopted the theme of *"My Christmas Gift – A Smile on Another's Face"* for our Girls. In the pages ahead, you would read of our Girls' endeavours to reach out to other disadvantaged populations in Singapore and even Myanmar, so that they can put a smile on another's face. Regardless of age, life circumstances, and challenges we may face, we can all fill out our circles, and in so doing, bring about joy and blessings to others around us, as well as meaning and fulfillment in our lives.

Come 2023, Gladiolus Place celebrates our 25th Anniversary. Throughout these 25 years, we have witnessed God's faithfulness to us, in providing for and sustaining us, giving us an opportunity to partner with Him in this piece of work to minister to each and every vulnerable Girl who walks through our doors. We eagerly await the unfolding of the next 25 years in the journey of our Home, as we lay our plans at His feet. *Just as He has been faithful to us, I pray that we have too been faithful, to the best of our abilities, in filling out the circle He has entrusted to us.*

As we dive into the new year of 2023, I thank the Lord for the very good run we had in 2022. We hope that the pages ahead will offer a glimpse into the fruitfulness of the year that has just passed! And may we all be encouraged by the words of the psalmist *"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. His love endures forever."* (Psalm 136). Our Lord be glorified always!

Shalom,
Michelle

CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE HAS BEGUN,

Our Cyclical Maintenance renovations began in September, and by November our Home was fully surrounded by scaffolding. The works started with roof works at the dining hall, kitchen and residential block for a safer Home. The new bedrooms with furnished walls, ceiling fans, brand new furniture and bed frames on the 4th floor are ready in mid-January of 2023, and the 4th floor has been named 'Gift of Grace'!



Progress of Level 4 in January!



PROPOSED

OF

SEPT 2022 - JAN 2023

*Roofing works,
Level 4*

JAN - MARCH 2023

*Level 3,
Fire staircases*

During the holiday season when our Girls are around throughout the day, our church partners were able to provide us with a conducive and safe environment away from Home. Special thanks to Grace Baptist Church and Covenant Presbyterian Church for their hospitality in lending us a space to continue operations and provide care for our Girls! With their generous hospitality we were able to host programmes and create many memories to cherish during the December holidays!

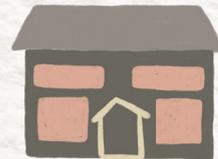
AND WE ARE SO EXCITED FOR A NEW SPACE!



Sneak peek of the new bedroom furnishings for each Girl!



We are so excited to use new and refreshed toilets!



TIMELINE

WORKS

APRIL - JUNE 2023
Level 2 Staff Offices,
Programme rooms

JULY - SEPT 2023
External Facade,
Level 1 groundworks

We would like to thank our major donors - Rotary Club of Raffles City, Redemption Hill Church, Covenant Presbyterian Church, Grace Baptist Church, and many others who wished to remain anonymous. During further renovation works that are slated to end by September 2023, we are still garnering additional financial support to fund the increasing renovation costs and ongoing operations. Your aid is greatly appreciated as we face the woes of inflation, increasing labour costs and price hikes.

Major Events &

Fundraising Concert with Covenant Presbyterian Church (CPC)

In celebration of CPC's Chinese Ministry 20th Anniversary, CPC held a concert to raise funds for GP. The concert consisted of songs composed by Pastor Abel, performed by himself and members of the ministry. We also performed a dance to the popular song "What Makes You Beautiful" by One Direction!



Celebrate Christmas in Singapore (CCIS)

This Christmas, we're finally having our first roadshow fundraising booth since the pandemic. With the partnership and collaboration of CCIS and Community Matters, we managed to spread the good word of our Work, while sharing the story and joys of Christmas along Orchard Road. We had lots of fun making shrink art keychains under the teaching of Volunteers and they were gifted to donors at the booth, along with sustainable air plants, wooden stump ornaments and thermal flasks!



Marina Bay Gives Back Charity Bazaar

Volunteer Bee Khim from 528 Olive Tree, our long-time partner, taught us how to make cute and dainty multi-purpose pouches and drawstring bags to be sold at the charity bazaars in OUE Downtown, Marina One and One Raffles Quay. Our hard work paid off as all of our handicrafts were sold out!



Regular Happenings



Plalking with Boscombe Life Church

This year is our second time 'Plalking' (picking up litter while walking) with Boscombe Life Church! Over 40 of us scoured from Marine Cove to both ends of East Coast Park. Several groups even made it as far as Bedok Jetty! We ended the purposeful and fun-filled day with McDonald's lunch under the pavilion.



Children Initiated Donations

We have been a beneficiary of children-initiated fundraising projects, where children from Henry Park Primary School and children who are alumni of Maris Stella Kindergarten made great efforts to raise awareness about our Home, and garner support from their peers and the wider public. We are thankful and blessed by the young lives that have well modelled the way of love for us.



Bless-the-Parents Initiative

A group of Volunteers sponsored and packed gift bags and delivered them for the families of our Girls, and we included a card deck of reflection questions for families to play, ponder and reflect on as the year draws to a close. We are so thankful for this chance to extend love to our Girls and their families in such a manner as this!

Bunny Bonding!

We handmade treats, held rabbits in our arms, and learnt more about the basic care and handling of them from **Youth For Christ (YFC)** and **Human-Animal Bond In Ministry (HIM)**!



Banner Painting

Our **SUSS interns**, Sister Jolia, Sister Megan, Sister Rachael tasked the girls to paint a 6 by 3 metre banner to replace our previous banner, which has been subjected to wear and tear. Over the week-long holiday, we got to work on the floor, with the canvas laid out and us working together to bring our vision to life!



September



Photoshoot Day!

We transformed various places in GP into shoot backdrops! All styled up, we angled and posed for pictures in GP in the morning.

After lunch, we headed out to Botanic Gardens for a photo walk and a picnic!





Celebrating Mid-Autumn Festival

We made snowskin mooncakes together with some Volunteers to celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival, and sang Miley Cyrus' 'The Climb' for them!



Singing Practice with Volunteer Natri

Volunteer Natri spent time with us to rehearse for the performance we put up during our Mid-Autumn Festival celebration!



Holidays



Lion City Sailors (LCS) Football Match

*If there was one thing we remembered about this year's Singapore Premiere League (SPL), it would be screaming and cheering our hearts out at Jalan Besar Stadium for the **Lion City Sailors (LCS)** men's team during their games, thanks to the kind sponsorship of match tickets by LCS, our friendly next-door neighbour.*



We made **fresh flower arrangements** from scratch! With **Volunteer Esther**, we learnt floral conditioning, handling and arrangement of our bouquets! We then gave our wrapped bouquets to the people we appreciated!



A Trip to the Singapore Zoo!

People's Association sponsored our trip to the Zoo! We spent the day touring the various enclosures and learning fun facts about different animals!



December



We learnt how to care for the hygiene of our furry friends at **PawPals Cat Cafe!**



With trolleys of food we went around the **MacPherson community** alongside **Volunteer Emi** to distribute meals and have conversations with friendly residents!





We learnt how to paint animal portraits from Volunteer Sophie!



Donor Nick sponsored a day for us to learn scuba diving from diving professionals! For most of us, it was the first time we put on diving goggles, wetsuits and oxygen tanks! Thank you Dive_Nut for helping to organise this opportunity for us!



Holidays

Snuggled in the comfy chairs at EagleWings Cinematics, we watched a screening of 'Overcomers', sponsored by Donor Jenny!



We went out to the community in Jalan Kukoh to deliver goodie bags, guided by Volunteers from Redemption Hill Church!

We went ice skating together at Kallang Ice World! Thank you Redemption Hill Church for the treat!



BLOOM Conducted by Therapy Team

BLOOM is Gladiolus Place's signature workshop conducted once yearly in-house! Our Therapy Team engaged our Girls through 6 workshop sessions to learn about the 5Cs (Competence, Communication, Connection, Character and Compassion)! The hours the Therapy Team spent labouring over preparing the materials for the sessions paid off when we saw how the Girls grew in their understanding of the 5Cs, and were able to verbalise their takeaways!



*Under the guidance of **Volunteers from Bible Church**, we sewed on cutout felt designs to scarves for an orphanage in Myanmar!*

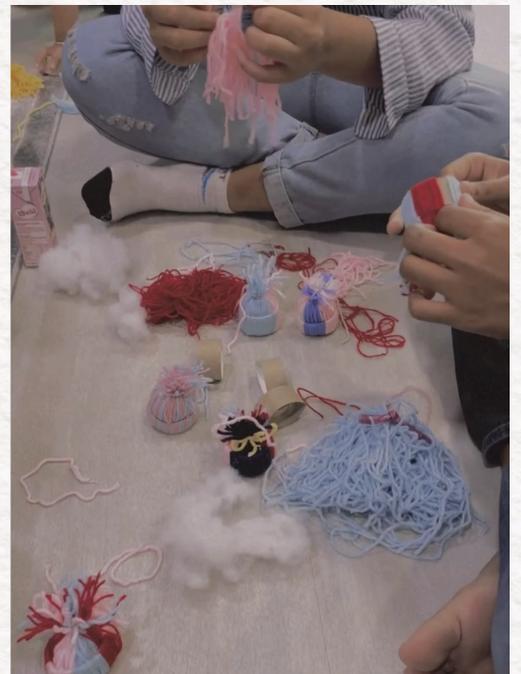


***Volunteers from Pasir Panjang Church of Christ** brought us bowling!*



*We planned and prepared a programme for the **community engagement** with **AIN society**, a voluntary welfare organisation that helps those afflicted with cancer. We spent several weeks sewing drawstring bags, painting cards and packing care packs to gift the children and their parents at AIN society!*

On the day of the visit to AIN Society, our Girls spearheaded a craft session with the beneficiaries where we made Christmas ornaments out of recycled materials!



GP Christmas Party!

Our annual Christmas Party commenced once again in person on the 23rd of December, as all Staff and Girls gathered for a time of celebration and thanksgiving. With a festive programme planned by the Christmas Party committee, we had a blast with the various games and bonding moments with one another.



*We went for a picnic with **Volunteers** from **Bible Church** at West Coast Park! We had fun bonding and playing group activity games crafted and planned by the Volunteers!*



30th December BBQ Under the Stars

*We ended the year with a blast! With **Volunteers** **Joycelyn, Jonathan, Desmond, Alicia and Jean**, GP's Staff and Girls gathered together to celebrate the farewell of 2022! As we watched the sun set, we ate garlic bread, meats and salad lovingly prepared and cooked by the Volunteers. We had much fun dancing and playing musical chairs!*



BONDS MENDED

For the first time in 10 years, our Home saw over 30 beds filled with hearts broken and souls in need of rest. As we provided, nourished and nursed various wounds, there was greater surety than before that the need for safe spaces for vulnerable youths in Singapore is growing. Our work is nowhere near finished.



Alina posing with other Residents at a photobooth!

We are no magicians, or genies, who can exchange trauma for mended relationships between our Girls and their families. What we are, however, are consistent labourers in a field of crop, showering each child with the daily and consistent doses of love and therapeutic intervention. There are no magic potions to healing, other than our tried and tested methods of unceasing care and non-judgemental spaces of being present.

What comes after is our hope that each Girl and their family will mend what is broken, with the resources given to them. And from there we walk together towards wholeness and eventual restoration.

Gladiolus Place recently watched the bond between mother and daughter mended and strengthened, through months of investment, encouragement and patience. Watching daughters of families reintegrated back to their biological environments are reasons enough to celebrate, and with great warmth say goodbye to our Residents.

Alina (an alias) came under our care at Gladiolus Place in 2021, and in her time with us, we saw big shifts in her attitudes towards life and relationships with the people around her.

From young, Alina and her brothers were left to fend for themselves, often returning to a house with an empty fridge, and instant noodles became their staple diet. Her siblings worked odd jobs to give pocket money to the younger ones. Their mother was too, struggling to make ends meet for the family and spent long hours away from her children.

Due to the lack of adult supervision at home, Alina easily turned to at-risk behaviours such as smoking and vaping as a coping mechanism for her depressed moods and feelings of loneliness and helplessness. She also lacked motivation to turn up for school, and her irregular school attendance had a negative impact on her learning.

Her mother, who did not know how to deal with her daughter's experiences, persistent low moods and outbursts, often expressed her frustrations in verbal altercations between the two. On top of that, her mother's stressful work commitments led to a further strained relationship between the two.

When Alina first entered the arms of our Home, she struggled with adjusting to the rules of the Home, and the routines that she initially complained about as being "too inflexible". As a result, many disagreements she had with both Staff and other Girls would lead her to tears of frustration, and she often refused to return back to GP at the agreed timing. One day, as she felt more and more suffocated, she decided not to return to GP after school.

After her eventual return back to Gladiolus Place, Alina's caseworker explained the rationale behind the routines in our Home to help her understand why things might be seen as rigid in her perspective.

Part of trauma-informed care in a residential care setting like ours seeks to instil a sense of normalcy for a teen after traumatic events have taken place in their life. As such routines are in place to ensure that there is stability in each Girl's life, we also hope that our Girls will come to understand that they are safe with us here at Gladiolus Place.

As Alina slowly became more familiar with living in an out-of-home environment, she also grew in learning how to manage her emotions when she felt stressed and overwhelmed with school. Her mother saw how Alina managed to better regulate her emotions in situations that previously would lead to outbursts.

This definitely didn't come easily for the teen, who had to undergo multiple distressing situations that usually came from social and academic pressures, and from each breakdown having to reflect and learn how to regulate with increasing ability.

Being a teenager in Singapore is already challenging, given the societal pressures posed to them, but being a teenager who had to grapple with standing on her feet despite her traumatic childhood experiences, on top of desiring to do well academically - Alina is someone whose character we have seen moulded through the trials of life, and the weapon that she wields is one of strength and integrity. With the tutoring supported by GP, she successfully completed her 'N' Levels!

Through Alina's receptivity to therapeutic interventions in GP which included art therapy, counselling, and emotional regulation group work sessions, she was made more aware of her emotions. Her caseworker noted that Alina was increasingly able to regulate her own emotions, and she was making good progress.



Alina's growth in mental resilience was evident to her mother, and through family intervention we encouraged her mother to take steps to understand the needs of her teenage daughter. From learning how to respond to her daughter during moments of stress, to hearing her out and providing comfort, these sure steps of progress paved the way for a closer bond between mother and daughter.

Shortly after Alina's discharge, she sent us a text for everyone in the Home:

"This is a message to everyone in Gladiolus Place (GP)! It has been an interesting ride with GP including the sweet and sour times. GP isn't GP without everyone who contributed to keep us girls safe and also the girls that always keep me company. *A lot of my milestones in life have been achieved in GP and that taught me that wherever you are in life no matter the circumstances, if you have the mind and will to do it, it is possible.*

I thank everybody who played a role to guide me and *keep me going to achieve what I couldn't if I was alone.* I will always cherish the moments I had with everyone, even the ones who have left to pursue their endeavours.

I miss everyone and I sincerely thank everyone, even the oldest staff to the newest ones, *thank you for embarking on a very tough field but know that every hardship you have gone through and efforts that you have put in, could change one's life like mine. Thank you!"*

We fondly remember Alina as the Resident who has a great singing voice, nimble hands for sewing and crocheting, and a kind heart for others!



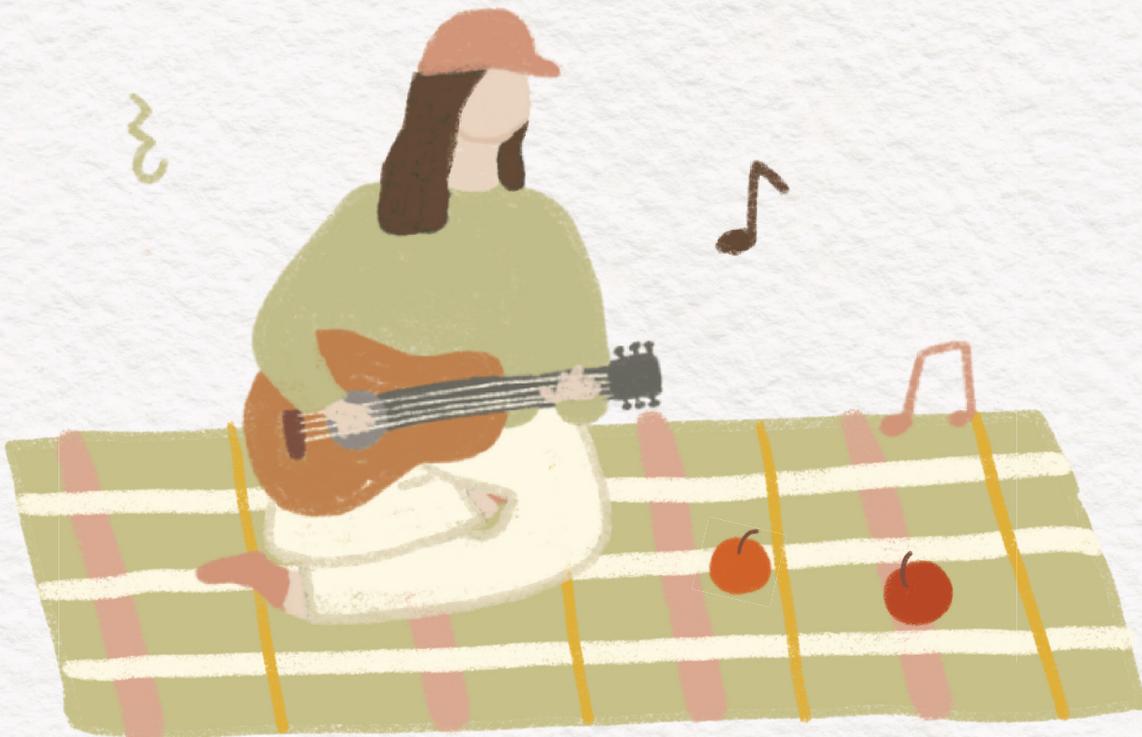
Dear partners,

Thank you for this faithful journey that you have embarked on with us. In your giving, no matter the form it took, we have wholly embraced the heart and intentions borne by you, the giver.

Your cheerful contribution has made all the difference to the lives of the Girls we shepherd each day, and we couldn't have done it without your tender investment and steadfast care.

The warm embrace you have shown to each of us here at Gladiolus Place has lent us the strength to keep believing that there is still room for us to bloom, and that the world is a kind place for us to grow up and old in. The Home we are today would not have been complete without your kindness. You matter the world to us, so thank you for loving well.

With love,
Gladiolus Place



Sponsor-A-Girl

Make a monthly donation to provide the physical & emotional needs of our Girls!

As a non-profit residential Home, we are continuously seeking out like-minded individuals who would support the mission of the Home by funding the everyday needs of our Girls, which includes meals, school allowance, daily necessities and therapeutic interventions.

This enables us to carry out our mission to bring about healing for brokenness, renewal to minds, and restoration of our Girls to their families and their communities.

\$100

*School
Necessities*

\$150

*Utilities &
Daily Care*

\$300

*Counselling
& Therapy*

\$450

Meals



Scan to Sponsor A Girl today!

	PayNow QR
	Amount
	Reference No.

**Do remember to type "SAG" in the reference section!*

Support Us!

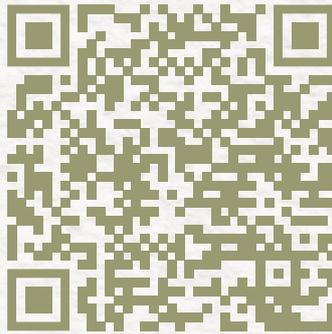
Volunteer

Have a desire to walk with and inspire our Girls?

We are always on the look out for individuals who want to make a difference!

Write to us at info@gladiolusplace.org.sg and we will get in touch with you shortly!

Donate



Scan this QR code to donate via credit/debit card, giving.sg, bank transfer/GIRO, or PayNow.

*For any queries, email us:
mingshiang@gladiolusplace.org.sg*

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About Us

Gladiolus Place is a Christian residential refuge for teenage girls. Here, we strive to develop each Resident holistically, in body, mind, soul and spirit, in a safe and loving family environment.

Our therapeutic interventions are specifically designed for this purpose, in the core areas of academics, life skills and socio-emotional resilience, sports and the arts, character and values. We envision for each girl, under our care and nurturing, to bloom like the Gladiolus flower.

The Gladiolus flower symbolises strength of character, honour and perseverance.

Likewise, we hope that each Girl that passes through our doors will be empowered to become women of dignity and confidence, so that they may live their lives to the fullest, as intended by Christ.



Scan our Linktree QR code to find out more!

*Every Girl Loved,
Every Life Transformed*

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