

Project No : 0157-02
Project Title : RAGE – Responsible Action, Genuine Encounter
Name of Organisation : 1) Department of Social Work & Social Administration, HKU
2) Department of Social Work, CUHK
Grant Approved : HK\$1,398,492 for a period of THREE years

Project Highlights :

- A mentorship scheme provided by **volunteer high quality mentors** (mainly university educated professionals) to marginalized and uninvolved youth recruited through outreach work.
- Through mentoring activities that include befriending, training by mentors, and networking with family members of the target youth, to **arrest the negative development** of these high risk youth who are prone to depression, suicide, delinquent acts, and drug abuse, and increase their positive mental health status.
- Through peer mentoring provided by reformed youth (having gone through the mentorship scheme), a ripple effect would result in creating a **positive network of supportive and caring relationships** to yet other marginalized youth, supported by adult mentors who serve as trainers and consultants.
- Under supervision, selected **mentees will provide volunteer community work** to the needy in the community (elderly, children from split families etc.).
- **Social capital** in the community and family contexts will be created and maintained through the building of trusting and enduring relationships between mentors and mentees, mentees and their estranged family members, mentees and community members.
- Ultimately, the project aims to set up a **self-help organization** for marginalized and uninvolved youth within a span of three years, transforming them from the status of being potential ‘clients’ in the social service sector to become useful members of society.

Brief Description of Programmes to be organized:

- Recruitment of high quality mentors mainly from university-educated professional sectors
- Matching of mentor and mentee
- Training courses in career and life skills and alternative skills for healthy living to be provided to mentees by mentors
- Training of peer mentors and matching of peer mentor and mentee
- Volunteer community services provided by mentees
- Sports and leisure activities for mentors, mentees and their family members

Unique Features of the Project:

- It targets the **risk and protective factors** in the growth and development of marginalized and uninvolved young people.
- To combat the decline in family solidarity, enhancement of **family social capital** through family involvement and bonding.
- Apart from increasing the personal competence of marginalized and uninvolved youth through empowerment by a high quality mentorship scheme, the youth will undertake **community service as an act of reciprocity**.
- A **large number of volunteers** will provide mentorship and training for uninvolved youth.
- A **self-help movement** for uninvolved youth would be generated.
- Generation of **social capital at multi-levels** through linked communities - fostering the development of a) personal competence of target youth, b) family social capital, and c) social capital at the community level by bridging the highly professionalized sector to marginal youth, an attempt that has never been tried in Hong Kong.
- **Vigorous evaluation** of the effectiveness of the proposed project utilizing quantitative and qualitative methods will be attempted. The built-in vigorous evaluation mechanisms can yield objective and credible data on the effectiveness of the project.

Project Duration: Three years

Target Groups: Marginalized and uninvolved youth who are prone to self defeating internalizing problems such as depression, suicide, drug abuse, or externalizing conduct problems like delinquent and anti-social behaviors, and their estranged family members.

Location of the Project: New Territories East District (NT-E): Shatin, Tai Po, Fanling, Sheung Shui

Expected outputs and outcomes:

1. Short-term basis

- Establishment of the mentorship scheme: number of mentor-mentee pairings; number of peer mentors trained; and number of peer mentor-mentee pairings
- Increase in mental health status and personal competence in mentees: decrease in depression index, increase in purpose in life etc.; number of training courses provided to mentees

- Improvement in family cohesion: nature and number of family activities
- Promotion of community cohesion: nature and number of community service activities by mentees

2. Long term basis

- The mentorship scheme could continue on a voluntary basis after the completion of the project
- Based on the demonstrated project, other similar initiative can be formed, thus forming a community movement in Hong Kong
- A self-help movement could be formed by the project participants, including the parents and young people
- Community perceptions of marginal youth will change
- Project participants will serve other young people with similar needs

Outcome Measures will include:

A pre-post assessment design will be adopted to examine the changes in social capital among the project participants:

Individual Level (Cognitive Social Capital)

- Improvement of social problem solving skills assessed by the Social Problem Solving Inventory (Siu & Shek, 2003)
- Improvement of mental health assessed by the General health Questionnaire (Shek, 1987, 1989, 1993), Mastery Scale (Shek, 2001), Purpose in Life Questionnaire (Shek, 1992).
- Improvement of sense of trust and perceived acceptance in the project participants in terms of indigenously developed measures with reference to the measures used in the literature (Cohen, Underwood, & Gottlieb, 2000; Grootaert & Bastelaer, 2002; Shek, 2003; Thomas & Schare, 2000;).

Family Social Capital

- Improvement of family relations assessed by the Self-Report Family Inventory (Shek, 1998, 2001, Shek & Lai, 2001).

Social networking

- Pre-post assessment of the social networks and volunteer activities of the participants, mentors, trainers, agencies receiving volunteer work from participants via indigenously developed measures with reference to the available literature (Cohen, Underwood, & Gottlieb, 2000; Grootaert & Bastelaer, 2002; The Saguaro Seminar, 2001).

Project Effectiveness

In-depth interviews of 20 mentors and 20 mentees will be carried out to document the project's success.