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News Release for the Editor's Desk

PSLE Wonder Girl Shares Her Childhood Cancer Journey in Singapore's First international Childhood Cancer Day Forum

Singapore (18 February 2009) – *Children's Cancer Foundation* (CCF) in cooperation with *Zhonghua Secondary School* is holding the first *International Childhood Cancer Day Forum* in Singapore. The forum entitled "*Welcome Back to School*" will feature an amazing girl's journey in her battle against childhood cancer and how the community played a role in helping her win against the life-threatening disease one day at a time.

"Proud and relieved," these are the words that described Gwen Ng's reaction to her PSLE result score. Her inspiring story started with a difficult road to trek as she took the PSLE exams at KK hospital while she was in treatment for cancer. Gwen managed to face the odds and passed with flying colors through her sheer determination and in her own words, "love and support of everyone around me."

Her primary school teachers Mrs Lee Yap Yng Ling and Ms Pay Hui Ling, supported her throughout. Both teachers have dedicated their time and effort in helping Gwen review for the exams. For the whole school year, Mrs Lee and Ms Pay spent their weekends and their own leisure time to be at Gwen's house for tuition. This admirable act of selflessness inspired Gwen to do well in her exams. And she did do well, getting an aggregate score of 241.

Ms Chee Wai Yee, Executive Director of CCF shares, "CCF salutes people like Mrs Lee Yap Yng Ling and Ms Ms Bai Hui Ling for their unwavering commitment to their chosen vocation. Their sense of benevolence towards Gwen is truly admiring and inspiring. May we have more people like them supporting children with cancer and their families."

The forum will feature sharing and talks from Gwen's former teacher and CCF social workers emphasizing the community's role in helping children impacted by childhood cancer to live a normal childhood and to be more understanding of their situation. The forum will be participated by 70 Secondary 1 students together with Zhonghua Secondary schoolteachers. Gwen's family will also attend the forum.

Participants of the forum will get to experience first hand sharing experience from Gwen and the people who helped her. It gives the students a very real and clear picture of how the support of a community can help a child impacted by childhood cancer and how they can make a difference in other people's lives.

The participation of Gwen's primary school teacher, Mrs Lee-Yap Yng Ling ,serves as a symbolic gesture of passing the baton to the next community, as Gwen will be joining Zhonghua Secondary School in March 2009.The forum aims to ease the integration of Gwen to her new environment and to help spread awareness on childhood cancer.

The international community celebrated International Childhood Cancer Day (ICCD) on 15 February 2009. CCF organised activities for the whole month of February 2009 to commemorate the journey of children with cancer and their families.

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Notes to Editor

About Children's Cancer Foundation

The **Children's Cancer Foundation (CCF)** is a non-profit organisation that aims to improve the quality of lives of children with cancer and their families through enhancing their emotional, social and medical well-being. Since 1996, CCF has helped more than 1,400 children and their families at its two family support centres at KK Women's & Children's Hospital (KKH) and the National University Hospital (NUH).

These children under the age of 19 have to go through a rigorous treatment regime. Besides the physical pain caused by cancer and its treatment, young patients often feel isolated because of the withdrawal from school and prolonged stay in the hospital. Cancer is a debilitating disease that takes its toll, physically, emotionally and mentally, not only on the child but also on his or her family. CCF helps our beneficiaries cope with their needs at different stages of the illness.

Among the free services and programmes CCF provides are:

- ✓ Counselling and Casework
- ✓ Public Education on Childhood Cancer
- ✓ Therapeutic Play
- ✓ Caregivers' Support Programme
- ✓ Sibling's Support Programme
- ✓ Financial Assistance
- ✓ Back-to-School Programme
- ✓ Childhood Cancer Transplant Programme
- ✓ Palliative and Bereavement Programme
- ✓ Social and Recreational Activities

For a full list of our services and programmes, visit us at www.ccf.org.sg.

Our Support Centres

CCF has adopted an integrated hospital-home-community service model for current and future generations of children and youths with cancer and their families, in order to effectively assist them through the different stages of the illness and recovery.

In the Hospitals

CCF has two Family Support Centres (FSC) located at the KK Women's and Children's Hospital (KKH) and the National University Hospital (NUH). Both Centres are tasked to help children who are newly diagnosed and under active treatment.

CCF social workers and counselors will participate in case conferences and meetings with parents, doctors, nurses, medical workers and patients. We offer counseling and casework services to the families. In addition, our staff conducts therapeutic play intervention and the children utilize the resources and facilities at the FSC to reduce the effects of isolation and anxiety in the hospital. Caregivers are supported through group work and have access to resources to help them better understand and cope with care-giving demands.

In the Homes of the Children

When a child is at the end stage of life, it is a tremendously challenging time for the dying child and the family members. Palliative support and bereavement support are critical services provided by CCF professionals to enhance the well-being of impacted families.

In the Community

As we see a gradual increase in the survivorship rate of childhood cancer, CCF has introduced its Community Team. CCF's Community Office in Tiong Bahru caters to beneficiaries who are on the road to recovery by facilitating their integration back into the community. A dedicated group of professional Social Workers works closely with the community and the families in ensuring their smooth transition back to the fold of the community. The new CCF set-up Community Team also provides opportunities for the development of new areas of services including survivorship outreach and psychological profiling and follow-up at post treatment.

Social and recreational activities are also organized to enhance bonding within families and among families. CCF will strive to contextually align our services with the journey of the children and their families in battling childhood cancer.

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