



Embargoed until 27 September 2009

MEDIA RELEASE

COMMUNITY CHEST NEEDS \$10.1 MILLION TO SUPPORT FAMILIES IN NEED *OVER 1,000 INDIVIDUALS AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS AT COMMUNITY CHEST PICNIC*

First Family-Themed Event to Raise Funds

More than 1,000 people packed their picnic baskets and spent a fun-filled day bonding with their family and friends at the ComChest Picnic held on Sunday, 27 September 2009 at the ComChest Green.

In conjunction with the first Anniversary of the ComChest Green at Labrador Nature Reserve, Community Chest organised its first family-themed event to raise funds for families in need. The ComChest Green was opened by Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong last year to mark the 25th Anniversary of Community Chest.

Organisations and corporations supported the ComChest picnic in donations and in participation. A total of more than \$300,000 was raised from the event. Corporates who donated included the NTUC FairPrice Foundation, Lee Foundation and Hewlett-Packard Singapore (Private) Limited. Five other corporates rallied their staff to bring their families to enjoy the great outdoors and to support the worthy cause by sponsoring picnic coupons for the beneficiaries.

“FairPrice is proud to be part of this meaningful event that provides a platform for family bonding, while lending a helping hand to those in need. Not only do we ensure that essential items remain affordable to families, we also believe that family love is the very basic ingredient for a happy life. As a long-standing partner of Community Chest, we will continue to support its various programmes to reach out to needy families,” said Mr Ng Ser Miang, Chairman of NTUC FairPrice and NTUC Fairprice Foundation.

What Family Means to You

Besides watching interesting performances and participating in games, participants were also encouraged to take a photo of their family and penned their thoughts on what family means to them, which could be placed on a specially created ‘Wall of Love’ at the ComChest Green.

“The funds raised by Community Chest will go to supporting programmes run by voluntary welfare organisations, which will help families in need to become more resilient. In addition, the ComChest Picnic is a good platform to bring the families out for a day of fun and bonding at the ComChest Green to mark its first Anniversary,” said Ms Tan Bee Heong, Director of Community Partnerships, National Council of Social Service.

Community Chest supports programmes that help troubled families overcome their problems – single parent family support, Family Service Centres (FSCs), counselling, helplines, case management and family life education. The programmes also provide support for families facing family violence, adolescence and marital issues.

This year, Community Chest will need to raise a total of \$10.1 million to fund programmes that aim to keep families together. Community Chest appeals to the public to contribute towards helping families in need.

Time Out at the Picnic for Beneficiaries

More than 300 beneficiaries and their families from Community Chest funded FSCs also came for the picnic. An exhibition showcasing the programmes and services offered by the FSCs was also displayed at the picnic to raise public awareness of the availability of resources for individuals and families in need.

Community Chest Funds 36 Family Service Centres

This year, Community Chest will need to raise a total of \$5.3 million to support 36 FSCs, \$300,000 more than what was disbursed in the last financial year. The FSCs are community-based focal points of family resources, which the public can turn to for social support. They provide three key services – casework and counselling, information and referral, and preventive developmental programmes. Last year, 21,000 individuals and their families achieved better self-reliance and resilience through the intervention of FSCs supported by Community Chest.

46-year-old Madam Faridah Tahir, one of Community Chest’s beneficiaries, made balloon sculptures at the ComChest Picnic. Madam Faridah, who has three school-going children, approached PPIS Jurong FSC for financial assistance five years ago. Her husband was working as a bus driver at that time but his employer defaulted on the payment of his salary for a few months. The family ran into arrears with their household bills and had difficulties meeting their basic needs. With the intervention of PPIS Jurong FSC, Madam Faridah signed up and completed courses such as parenting,

sewing, balloon sculpting and craft. With her new skills, she was able to take on freelance jobs at school and company functions to supplement the family's income. She strongly believes in sharing her skills and giving back to the society. "I am grateful to PPIS Jurong FSC as they helped my family tide over the tough times. Now, I am happy and willing to teach anyone who needs these skill to support themselves," said Madam Faridah.

For media enquiries, please contact:

Ms Kong Chui Fun
Corporate Communications Manager
Corporate Communications Division
National Council of Social Service
Tel: 62102636, HP: 9787 3120
Email: kong_chui_fun@ncss.gov.sg

Ms Goh Siew Hian
Assistant Director
Corporate Communications Division
National Council of Social Service
Tel: 6210 2638, HP: 9139 6543
Email: goh_siew_hian@ncss.gov.sg

Community Chest

Community Chest raises funds on a yearly basis to meet the needs of the social service programmes we help support. Community Chest ensures that the fund-raising costs are kept to a minimum. As these costs are covered mainly by Tote Board and Singapore Pools (Private) Limited, every dollar raised by Community Chest will be made available to social service programmes under its care.

Community Chest has made it easier for individuals to donate from the comfort of their homes via websites such as www.comchest.org.sg and www.vpost.com.sg, through the internet (DBS, UOB or Citibank) or phone banking (DBS or POSB) and even at SAM machines across the island. Individuals can also reap tax benefits on donations through hassle-free modes like the Community Chest's SHARE programme (the sign-up form is available at www.comchest.org.sg) where one can make monthly donations via GIRO, credit card or payroll and have his or her tax deductions automatically included in their tax assessments.

**Issued by: Corporate Communications Division
National Council of Social Service
24 September 2009**