

IMPACT REPORT

2017-2018

母親的抉擇
Mother's Choice

ABOUT MOTHER'S CHOICE

Mother's Choice is a local charity serving the many children without families and pregnant teenagers in Hong Kong. Since 1987 we have joined hands with our community to give hope and change life stories. Our vision is to see every child in a loving family.







PARTNERS

Mother's Choice is proud to receive support by these respected organizations:

社聯 HKCSS 香港社會服務聯會 The Hong Kong Council of Social Service

香港公益金 The Community Chest

香港賽馬會慈善信託基金 The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust

Mother's Choice has had Hong Kong IRD s88 charitable status since 1987.

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Adoption Services
Foster Care Services
Pregnant Girls Services
Youth Services
Units A & H,
21/F Legend Tower
7 Shing Yip Street,
Kwun Tong
Kowloon, Hong Kong

Child Care Home
5 Bowen Road
Mid Levels, Hong Kong

Community Connections
Pregnant Girls Services
Youth Services
42B Kennedy Road
Mid Levels, Hong Kong

Community Education
Volunteer Engagement
10 Borrett Road
Mid Levels, Hong Kong

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Co-Chairs

Ronald Lee
Lily J Ng

Directors

Ronna Chao
Andrew Gardener
Sunita Makhija
Phyllis Marwah
Gretchen Ryan
Joseph Wan
Patricia Chu
Matthew Ginsburg
Phyllis Marwah
Julie Parkinson
Dr. Gary W Stephens
Nancy Chang (Yang)

STANDING COMMITTEES

Adoption Committee
Gretchen Ryan
Erica Liu Wollin
Caran Wong
Christine Ma-Lau
Joseph Wan

Finance Committee
Matthew Ginsburg
Paul Kennedy
Niklas Rowold
Anna Woo

Investment Committee
Jason Brown
Matthew Ginsburg
Hung Kit Liu
Niklas Rowold

Services Committee
Gretchen Ryan
Erica Liu Wollin
Caran Wong
Christine Ma-Lau
Joseph Wan

Fundraising Committee
Phyllis Marwah
Mark Peterson
Deepak Rao
Joseph Wan
Tim Wannenmacher
Nancy Chang (Yang)

AMBASSADORS

Patron
Mrs. Purviz Rusy Shroff

Vice-Patron
Dr. Rosanna Wong

Celebrity Ambassador
Ms. Cass Phang

IN LOVING MEMORY

This Impact Report is dedicated to Rusy Shroff, a long-time supporter and beloved friend of Mother's Choice.

"To live is to give and forgive and forget" was Rusy's philosophy, which was evident in the way he lived a life of generosity. His commitment to Mother's Choice through the decades has touched the lives of thousands of 'pumpkins' and continues to give us great hope for the future of children and families in Hong Kong.

Rusy Shroff's legacy of generosity reminds us tonight that truly nothing is impossible, and encourages us in our work for every child to be in a safe, loving, and permanent family.



LETTER FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

Dear friends and family of Mother's Choice,

Inspired by the well-known book and film "Alice in Wonderland", this year's theme was Nothing is Impossible! We as Board members of Mother's Choice see miracles and things which seemed impossible being made possible by the Mother's Choice team of staff, volunteers and partners across our community.

As we reviewed the accomplishments of the past year, we want to report to you that we are extremely proud of the Mother's Choice leadership and staff who have shown great courage in being a voice for children and families. They have shown transparency and accountability in their financial reporting. They have shown a commitment to collaborating with community partners. They have been careful, conscientious stewards of the organization's resources and the generous gifts that have been received. The results of all of their efforts give us great hope for the future of Hong Kong.

As always, we would like to express our gratitude for your continuing support as we work towards our vision of seeing every child in a loving family.

On behalf of the Board of Directors,

Thank you,

Lily J. Ng and Ronald Lee
Co-chairs of the Board of Directors





LETTER FROM OUR CEO

Dear friends and family of Mother's Choice,

The Queen of Hearts told Alice in Wonderland, "Sometimes I believe as many as 6 impossible things before breakfast!"

Your heart for the babies and children without families and the pregnant teenagers that we serve in Hong Kong has enabled us to accomplish many more than just 6 impossible things at Mother's Choice! Your kindness is helping us continue to work towards our vision of every child in a loving family.

As we look to the future, we know that great courage is required. With your help, we will continue to be pioneers, leading the way for others to follow with high quality services that can change life stories. With your help, we will invest in building up our capacity so that we can scale our work and improve child protection in this city by investing in technology and training to equip staff and volunteers. With your help, we will intentionally engage the community so that we can collaborate together to see birth families strengthened and front line workers better equipped to be a voice for children and young women at-risk.

The issues we tackle are complex, and we know it will take all of us working together to bring the generational change that we long to see. I hope that you will believe there is hope for the future for vulnerable children, youth, and families in our community.

I want to thank you for your support over the past year. I want you to know that you are the reason we are able to share these inspiring stories of life transformation. You give our team the courage to keep moving forwards, and your giving will leave a legacy that fills all of us with great hope for future generations of children in Hong Kong.

With sincerest gratitude,

Alia Eyres
Chief Executive Officer



MOTHER'S CHOICE 2017-18 HIGHLIGHTS



84 CHILDREN JOINED SAFE, LOVING AND PERMANENT FAMILIES

SERVING CHILDREN

164	CHILDREN RECEIVED SAFE & LOVING TEMPORARY CARE
70	CHILDREN RECEIVED SAFE & LOVING TEMPORARY CARE IN CHILD CARE HOME; 60 BABIES + 16 SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN
2,000+	HOURS OF EARLY INTERVENTION THERAPY GIVEN TO CHILDREN
649	VOLUNTEERS DONATED 68,217 HOURS TO CARE FOR CHILDREN IN CHILD CARE HOME, VALUED AT ~HK$3.97 MILLION

SERVING YOUTH

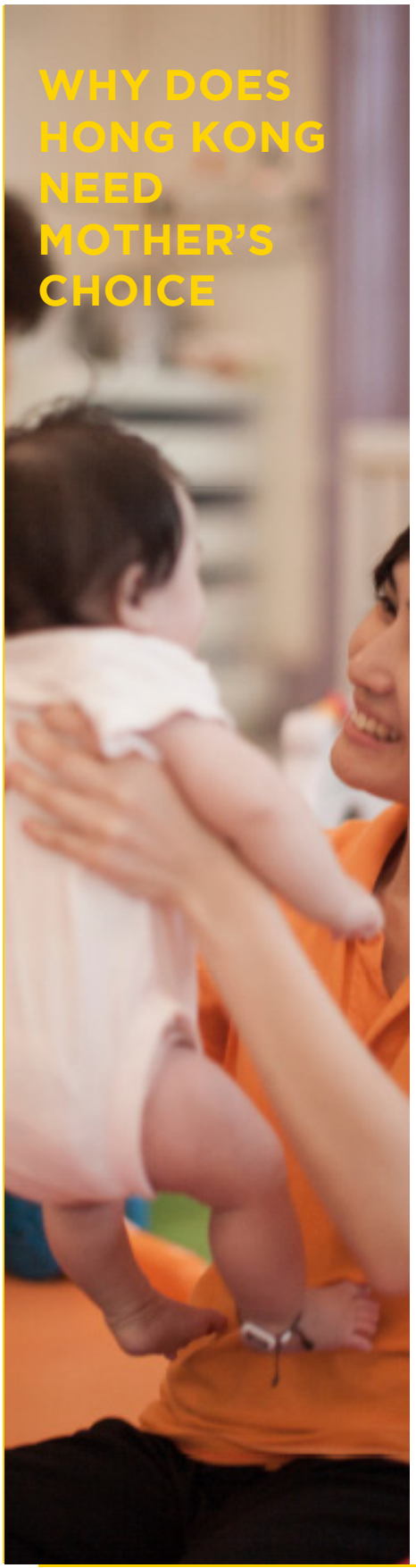
570	CALLERS RECEIVED SUPPORT THROUGH OUR CRISIS HOTLINE
134	GIRLS RECEIVED HOLISTIC CARE THROUGH OUR PRE-AND-POST PREGNANCY PROGRAMS; 74% OF GIRLS SERVED WERE UNDER 21 YEARS OLD
7,368	STUDENTS ATTENDED 510 COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION WORKSHOPS

SERVING FAMILIES

356	PARENTS & FAMILY MEMBERS RECEIVED INDIVIDUAL CHILD CARE TRAINING & SUPPORT
23	FAMILIES BUILT THROUGH OUR ADOPTION SERVICES
27	NEW VOLUNTEER FAMILIES JOINED PROJECT BRIDGE
1,010	HOURS OF INTERACTIVE WORKSHOPS HELD TO SUPPORT FAMILIES

SERVING COMMUNITY

461	PARENTS & FAMILY MEMBERS RECEIVED INDIVIDUAL CHILD CARE TRAINING & SUPPORT
7	CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING RESOURCES DEVELOPED
12	SUBMISSIONS MADE TO LEGCO & GOVERNMENT BODIES
407	PROFESSIONALS ATTENDED 33 CHILD PROTECTION & LEGAL EDUCATION WORKSHOP



WHY DOES HONG KONG NEED MOTHER'S CHOICE

Despite Hong Kong's reputation for wealth and business, the needs of our city are overwhelming. One in five children in Hong Kong live in poverty, and thousands are at-risk due to family breakdown, neglect, abuse, and abandonment.

At Mother's Choice, we focus on a key group of vulnerable people in our city – children without families and pregnant teenagers. Over 3,500 children in Hong Kong live in institutional care2, and are growing up without the presence of a safe, loving, and permanent family. Of Hong Kong's 7,000+ girls facing crisis pregnancy each year, the majority are young girls with no one to turn to.

The challenges of children living in institutional care, teenage crisis pregnancy, and family breakdown are a vicious cycle that is hard to break. Most young children who enter into institutional care stay for years, with many leaving the system at age 18 without ever knowing the love and support of a family. Research shows that when children live in institutional care, they are more likely to experience physical and mental health problems, be incarcerated, have addiction issues, and if they are a girl, to face a crisis pregnancy. Teenage mothers too often lack the support and resources they need, and are more likely to place their child into institutional care – and the cycle begins again.

Mother's Choice is committed to ending this vicious cycle.

Sources:
1. Hong Kong Poverty Situation Report (2015).
2. Examination of Estimates of Expenditure, HKSAR Social Welfare Department 2016-17.
3. Women and Men in Hong Kong Key Statistics (2016) HKSAR Census and Statistics Department.



WHAT WE DO

1 FOR CHILDREN

When a child without a family comes to us, we provide high quality, loving, temporary care with early intervention therapy and support through our Child Care Home, Project Bridge, or Foster Care Services. We are a voice for every child to be in a safe, loving, and permanent family as soon as possible. We believe that every child is special and deserves to be in a family every family is unique and it is love, not just blood, that defines a family; and, that it takes a village to raise a child.

2 FOR YOUTH

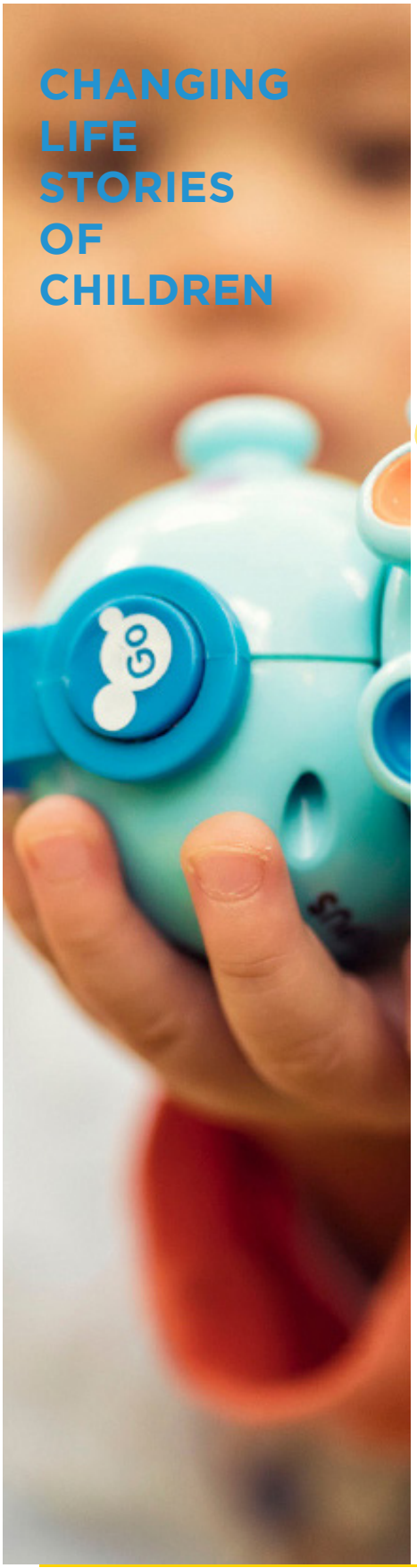
When a young girl facing a crisis pregnancy comes to our Pregnant Girls Services, we love and welcome her without judgement, provide information to show her that she has choices, build a supportive network around her, and give her hope to face her future. Our Community Education team also helps to prevent teenage pregnancy by delivering comprehensive sexuality education workshops to at-risk youth.

3 FOR FAMILIES

We help to build stronger families by providing the support and community needed in the lifelong journey of parenting. We run workshops, trainings, and reunions for foster and adoptive families through our Foster Care Services and Adoption Services, and we also identify and wrap around struggling birth families through our Pregnant Girls Services and services for children.

4 FOR COMMUNITY

We do not just want to be there at a point of crisis for vulnerable children, youth, and families, we want to be a catalyst to see generational change in our community! Our Community Education team educates and mobilizes our community to become champions for children. From sexuality education, child protection, and legal training – we help to equip those in the community who work with children, youth, and families with practical knowledge and skills to bring lasting change across our city.



CHANGING LIFE STORIES OF CHILDREN

Nolan and Francis' Story

At Mother's Choice, we believe that every child is special and deserves to have a loving family, even if it feels or looks impossible at times. Here is the story of the journey to family for two special little boys at Mother's Choice, Nolan and Francis, who became brothers halfway around the world.

When Francis was three years old, he came to live at Mother's Choice. Even though Francis has special needs that includes visual impairment, he took on the role of "big brother" to the babies. He was a bright, loving little boy and was particularly affectionate to Nolan, who was an infant with multiple medical needs including cerebral palsy. Francis loved to help push Nolan's wheelchair, and whenever he did, Nolan's smile would light up the room.

Little Nolan stayed with us at Wee Care, our facilities for children with mild to moderate special needs. He was an incredibly tough little fighter with so much potential! When Nolan was almost four years old, we received the incredible news that a family had been identified for him! Troy and Jocelyn Piper from the U.S. had been talking about adopting a child since they got married. They were open to adopting a child with special needs, and even after reading Nolan's complex medical reports, they knew without a doubt that he was their precious son.

When the Pipers came to Hong Kong to pick up Nolan, they knew that caring for him would not be easy, but their family was united in their love and commitment to their new son. From Nolan's face, we knew that he understood that he was loved unconditionally by the way his new parents gently held and spoke to him.

When Francis turned six, he moved from Mother's Choice to a boarding school for the visually impaired. The Mother's Choice team visited him often and our social work team worked tirelessly and did not give up on finding him a family. So when they heard that Francis was still waiting for a family, the Pipers flew back to Hong Kong in 2018and Francis instantly bonded with his new family. He still remembered Nolan from their time living together in our Child Care Home,and he still loves to push Nolan's wheelchair – just like he did when they were little.

We believe that there is a family for every child, but we never imagined that two of our boys would become brothers on the other side of the world! The Piper family reminds us that however hopeless a situation may seem, if we have the courage, nothing is impossible.

This year, with the support of 649 Child Care Home volunteers, 58 volunteer Bridge Families, and 43 foster families, we served:

60 Babies ages 0-3 years old in our Child Care Home waiting for family, through adoption or birth reunion

16 Babies and children with special needs in our Child Care Home waiting for adoption

29 Babies and children through Project Bridge, an innovative program to provide more placements for children in care

60 Children through Foster Care, working in collaboration with the Social Welfare Department

49 Children, who joined their forever family through family reunion, or adoption!



GIVING HOPE TO CRISIS PREGNANCY GIRLS



Becky's Story

Becky shared that running in a marathon is an exhausting experience and it represented life well.

Becky was 15 then, studying in Form 4 when she first suspected that she was pregnant. She was too afraid to face it – the fear of all the judgement that she had to deal with, and worried about her future. Becky avoided taking the pregnancy test until her teacher and classmates noticed her physical changes and approached her. When finally she went to the Family Planning Association, she was already 20 weeks pregnant. She panicked. Her school social worker referred her to Mother's Choice. She did not want to terminate her pregnancy, and decided to place her child for adoption.

During her days at the Mother's Choice hostel, Becky met with girls who were walking a similar same path as she did. Through the bonding with them, she felt happier. But as days flew by, Becky grew more and more sentimental, knowing that by the time her baby is born, they would soon be separated. Becky recalled the day when her child arrived, she shared that it was a painful process, but the pain was trivial when compared to the heartbreak of sitting alone in the ward, missing and worrying about her new born baby. Whenever there was a visitor, Becky would rush to see her child. She could feel the genuine love and care a mother has for her child. Becky's noticed that her emotions fluctuated more after her child's birth, and could help but kept missing her baby all the time.

Becky well knew that adoption is the best option for her child, and tried hard to suppress her emotions.

As in the analogy of "life is like a marathon", challenges come one after the other. One of Becky's reflections was the increased understanding of herself, and the discovery of being a strong-willed person. That despite all the pain and the thoughts of giving up, Becky held on believing that there would be a better tomorrow for her child and herself. That despite the fact that such obstacles were hard to overcome, she enriched myself going through it all, ever more inspired to keep pressing forward.

Becky also came to realize the love and support from her family. She also found her dreams! Knowing that with the support received, she is determined to do her best and strive to become someone of accomplishments. "My child is also my motivation!" Becky shared.

Mother's Choice would invite girls who had walked similar paths as Becky's to make return visits to the hostel, and do sharing sessions with girls in residence. These opportunities gave Becky the exposure to different views, often a fresh and eye-opening perspective, offered the directions to plan for herself and her child, making an informed choice of her own.

"My life at the hostel was fruitful. I discovered my strengths and brushed up my inter-personal skills, Mother's Choice really helped me a lot. I would love to share to girls who are walking in this path," as stated by Becky.

When a girl asks Mother's Choice for help, our first priority is to welcome her into a safe place where she knows she is loved and valued, and equip her to face the future of her choice.

This looks different for each of the 134 girls who we walked with this year, because we adapt our approach to the needs of each girl.

May's story reminds us that nothing is impossible with determination and support from a community which cares about youth and children with determination and support from a community which cares about youth and children.

This year:

570 Girls facing crisis pregnancy Received help through our crisis hotline[CB10]

134 Giirls received holistic care and support through our programs during and after their pregnancy.

74% Of pregnant girls served were under 21 years old

7368 Students received sexuality education

Becky also had a few thoughts to share...
To teachers – Leave no students behind. Every experience is a learning opportunity. Please also teach more knowledge on sexual health.
To girls – Protect yourselves well.
To parents – Give your children support and encouragement, avoid exerting too much pressure on them.



BUILDING STRONGER FAMILIES

Mindy's Story

At Mother's Choice, we believe it is love and commitment, not just blood, that defines a family. Here is the story of Mindy and the relationship she built with her foster family and Mother's Choice.

Craig Snow was Director of Children's Services at Mother's Choice from 1990 to 1994, and managed the Child Care Home. This story is one that is closest to his heart and embodies our belief at Mothers' Choice that "nothing is impossible":

"When I first met Mindy in 1989, I was told that she was not expected to have a long life expectancy. Mindy was left in the hospital shortly after birth and had multiple special needs, including cerebral palsy, epilepsy and visual impairment. It was clear to me that the hospital staff had given up on her as the nurses told me that this little baby didn't like to be held and had 'failure to thrive'.

Our team from Mother's Choice visited Mindy regularly in the hospital to give her the hugs and affection that are so critical in the early developmental stage. We were overjoyed to finally receive approval to take her into our Child Care Home, but even with the loving care she received there, I knew that Mindy needed extra attention.

I brought her home to be fostered by my own family, who embraced her with open arms. Mindy thrived in our home especially with four other children to play with. We were all amazed by the change we saw in this child and to see how she thrived in the loving care of a family environment. After 9 months, Mindy was adopted and moved to the U.S.

Many years have passed, but our bond has remained strong. In March 2018, Mindy fulfilled a lifelong dream of traveling back to Hong Kong to visit Mother's Choice. It was a privilege for me to accompany her.

Despite being legally blind, dealing with seizures, and walking with a cane, Mindy is now planning to earn her bachelor's degree in Social Work! She is determined to be an excellent student because Mother's Choice and our family have inspired her to want to help others also."

At Mother's Choice, we believe that when a family opens their hearts to a child, it builds a foundation of love that lasts a lifetime. Mindy's story reminds us that family is so much more than just blood. The love and commitment that our supporters, volunteers and staff pour into our children leaves a legacy and an impact that goes far beyond what we are able to see.

This year:

75 Birth parents, grandparents and caregivers received training to strengthen their parenting skills

19 Families were built through our Local Adoption Services.

130 Prospective adoptive families were supported through the early parts of the adoption process

68 adoptive family training workshops held with a total of 797 participants

27 New Project Bridge families were approved to provide temporary care to a waiting child.





BEING A CATALYST IN OUR COMMUNITY

At Mother's Choice, we don't just want to be there at a point of crisis for vulnerable children, youth, and families, we want to be a catalyst to see generational change in our community.

The Community Education team at Mother's Choice educates and mobilizes our community to prevent crisis pregnancy, and to be a voice for children in care.

This is a big task, and we can't do it on our own! With the support of so many volunteers from across our community, we believe the impossible is possible as they work tirelessly alongside Mother's Choice to ensure that youth are equipped with information to make healthy decisions, and to be the voice for children.

Monique Yeung, Director, Community Education

"One of our many amazing volunteers this year was Charlotte who was a recent high school graduate. For six months, she was willing to jump right in and explore the complex topics that we work on, including Sexuality Education, and Child Protection.

She joined our dedicated and diverse team of volunteer Community Educators, traveling all over Hong Kong every week, from Tuen Mun to Tin Shui Wai to deliver Comprehensive Sexuality Education to students in our partner schools.

Charlotte's voice was highly valuable and she encouraged us to think from a youth perspective which helped to refine our message. She also helped us research, write, and edit papers and look into areas of the law that help us keep children safe.

Charlotte, Student Volunteer 2017-18

"I've always been interested in women's empowerment and I am a strong advocate for women's rights. If I am going to study law, I want to have real life experience first. I researched many different charities and found Mother's Choice aligns perfectly with what I want to do.

Volunteering with Mother's Choice has given me a very full picture of the issues we face in Hong Kong. It has helped me realize this topic is something I really do care about. It's very much a family environment at Mother's Choice. The selflessness that everyone has is remarkable. Mother's Choice call themselves a family, and they really take it to a new level by helping and looking out for each other. It's been one of the best six months I've ever had."

Collaborating for Safe, Loving, and Permanent Families

Our first ever Child Protection Conference (held in spring 2017 in partnership with the University of Hong Kong and Hong Kong Council of Social Services) was the catalyst for social work, legal, academic, medical, family, and government communities coming together to join hands and learn from one another as we work together to be a stronger voice for the children in our city.

Mother's Choice has maintained an active presence among the children's rights network in Hong Kong by supporting for the establishment of the Children's Commission by the Government of the Hong Kong SAR. The network is a passionate group of community partners who we are inspired by each day as we work together to support policy changes which will give greater protection to vulnerable children in our city.

"The Hong Kong Council of Social Service is grateful to have Mother's Choice as a professional and dedicated working partner. Mother's Choice not only offers a choice for mothers and children in need, but also advocates for better policies and builds a caring community."

Karen Yiu, Chief Officer, Children & Youth Service,
The Hong Kong Council of Social Service

This year:

7368
Students attended 510 Comprehensive Sexuality Education workshops.

7
Child Protection training resources developed

461
Child welfare professionals learned to support youth through Comprehensive Sexuality Education workshops

407
Child welfare professionals attended 30 Child Protection & Legal Education workshops

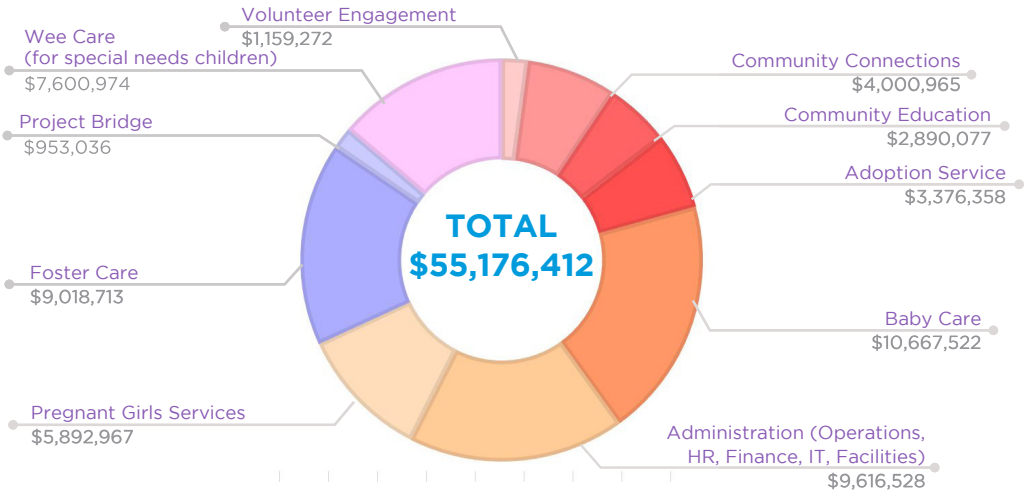
12
Research Submissions made to LegCo and government bodies

OUR FINANCIALS

EXPENDITURE

We take care to use our financial resources wisely. This year our expenses have been higher as we have grown our staff team, and invested in our infrastructure to ensure the strength and stability of our team and buildings.

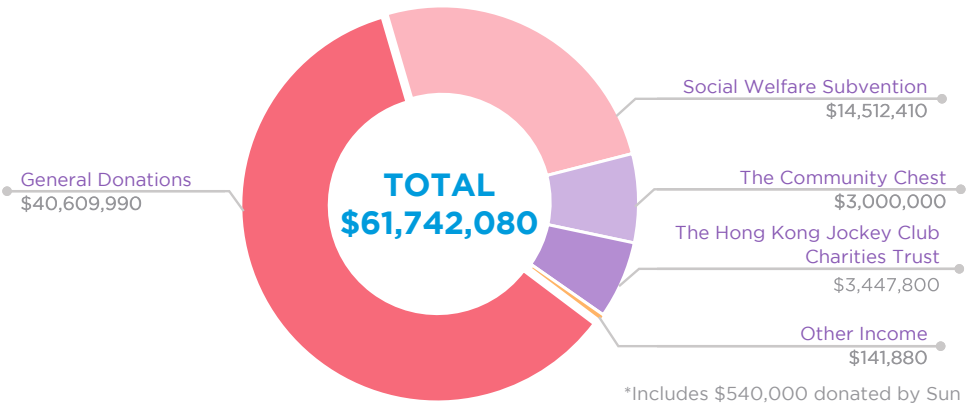
Here's how your donation gives hope and changes the life stories of children, youth, and families in Hong Kong:



INCOME

We cherish each and every gift we receive. Thank you for entrusting your gift with Mother's Choice.

This year, it has been particularly challenging for us to raise the funds we need to serve our children, youth, and families. During 2017-2018, our fundraising efforts did not cover 100% of our costs.



*Includes $540,000 donated by Sun Hung Kai Properties Charitable Fund Ltd.

Despite our challenging financial year, we continue to be encouraged by the creative ways our community has raised money for Mother's Choice, and we value every dollar you have raised by donating your birthdays, selling crafts and cakes, collecting coins, and joining our Walkathon!

FINANCIALS

	2015-2016 Audited Accounts***	2016-2017 Audited Accounts**	2017-2018 Audited Accounts*
INCOME			
General Donations	38,534,069	30,517,483	40,609,990
Government and Public Grants			
• Social Welfare Subvention	13,623,467	12,948,617	14,512,410
• The Community Chest	3,438,100	3,708,000	3,000,000
• The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust	3,237,300	3,237,300	3,477,800
Other Income	351,303	289,000	141,880
TOTAL	**59,184,239**	**50,700,400**	**61,742,080**
EXPENDITURE			
Pregnant Girls Services	6,497,045	6,426,467	5,892,967
Foster Care	8,305,900	8,686,447	9,018,713
Project Bridge	1,005,977	966,332	953,036
Wee Care (for special needs children)	7,451,256	6,643,084	7,600,974
Baby Care	10,181,291	11,006,602	10,667,522
Adoption Services	2,719,467	2,998,769	3,376,358
Community Education	2,387,970	3,203,056	2,890,077
China Project	887,346	404,846	-
Community Connections	6,083,447	7,364,272	4,000,965
Administration	9,804,857	10,818,075	9,616,528
Volunteer Engagement	-	-	1,159,272
TOTAL	**55,324,556**	**58,517,950**	**55,176,412**

All amount are in HK$.

*Financial highlights are extracted from 2017-2018 Audited Financial Statements (Financial year: 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018).

**Financial highlights are extracted from 2016-2017 Audited Financial Statements (Financial year: 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017).

***Financial highlights are extracted from 2015-2016 Audited Financial Statements (Financial year: 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016).

Our Audited Financial Statements, audited by KPMG are available to view at www.motherschoice.org.

Mother's Choice is a member of the Hong Kong Council of Social Services, and has Hong Kong IRD s88 charitable status.

母親的抉擇
Mother's Choice









THANK YOU

FOR JOINING HANDS WITH US
TO TRANSFORM LIVES AND GIVE HOPE
TO YOUNG GIRLS AND BABIES
BUILDING STRONGER FAMILIES
IN THE CITY OF HONG KONG

"IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO RAISE A CHILD"

Watch our video at www.motherschoice.org.`