

# District Youth Outreaching Social Work Service



I recalled that the first time I contacted outreaching social workers was three years ago.

I was a form one student in a secondary school in Tai Po. However, my school attendance was very unstable and had been on the verge of dropping out plus the lack of appropriate family support. I spent a lot of time and energy in the community every day and I thought I had a lot of time. I always hanged around in shopping malls with two or three friends in Tai Po District. Sometimes we hanged around in malls and sometimes we played video games in video games centres near a mall. One day, a strange young man approached and chatted with us. In the beginning, we felt a bit weird. Later, we found that he was not malicious and he was an outreaching social worker. At that time, I was fifteen years old.

Then, the days that I got lost most followed -- dropping out, following big brothers, recruiting triad members, drug abuse in Shenzhen and fighting.

Despite repeated persuasion and advice from outreaching social workers, I seemed to indulge in the lost world. We were sixteen at that time.

The outreaching social worker always met us in shopping malls and video games centres. Repeatedly invited by him, my friend and I began to join various activities such as Hip-Hop dance classes, self-employed stalls and band training. Initially, I joined the activities for fun. It seemed that my growth had undergone some changes. At that time, I was seventeen.

The outreaching social worker had once invited me to join a work experience program. The last phrase of the program was internship. During the internship, I was cared and admired by the company staff and I also committed whole-heartedly to the company. I appreciated the opportunities given by the company, the bridging of outreaching social workers and my persistence. It seemed that I had found a temporary shelter in the process of growing up.

Now, I am eighteen.