

Low-income families get help for new school year

Low-income families and their schoolgoing children yesterday received some help in preparing for the upcoming school year.

At the 13th annual Ready for School event, organised by the Chinese Development Assistance Council (CDAC), 6,300 beneficiary families, including 12,600 children, were given family and school-ready packs containing vouchers.

Each family pack contained \$140 worth of transport and NTUC Fair-Price vouchers, while the school-ready packs held \$80 worth of vouchers for school supplies.

Madam May Ng, 39, was at the event with her two children, who are in Primary 5 and 6.

Said the part-time administrative assistant: "These vouchers help to offset costs for school; the \$100 transport voucher can last my children three to four months."

This year's event at Nanyang Junior College rallied 800 volunteers and 24 partners, including schools, government agencies and businesses, and served about 5 per cent more beneficiary families than last year.

CDAC chairman Gan Kim Yong helped to distribute the packs at Nanyang Junior College, where students also received free haircuts.

Speaking on the sidelines of the event, Mr Gan, who is also Health Minister, said the CDAC will provide greater support to students and parents in the coming years by expanding school-based student

care centres. There are now 10 such after-school care centres in primary schools, and five more will be launched next month.

"Tuition alone is not enough, as students also need a supportive and conducive environment within the family," said Mr Gan.

The expansion is part of previously announced plans to fine-tune the CDAC's core programmes on the heels of its 25th anniversary next year.

More details will be announced at a later date, said Mr Gan.

GREATER SUPPORT NEEDED

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CDAC CHAIRMAN GAN KIM YONG,
on expanding school-based student care centres.