Building a Family Friendly Society In Singapore

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Families the Basic Building Block of Singapore Society

Safe & nurturing environment to grow

First line of care & support

Foundation to a cohesive & resilient society
Family Ties in Singapore are Healthy

91% feel family is the most important aspect in their life.

94% report that they have a close-knit family

Source: National Family Council, 2010
89% would share their troubles with their family

90% would give money to family members in need of financial support

Source: Ministry of Social & Family Development
We Continue to Reinforce It

- Emphasise Role of Family in Laws & Policies
- Create a Pro-Family Environment
- Nurture a Pro-Family Mindset
- Support Vulnerable Families
- Embark on Whole-of-Society Effort
(I) Emphasizing Role of Family
- Laws & Policies

Extended Family Support

Family Formation

Legislation

Housing

Financial Support

Social Assistance
(I) Emphasizing Role of Family - Laws & Policies

**Legislations**
- E.g. Maintenance of Parents Act

**Housing Policies**
- Additional grant for children who stay near parents
- New design to promote intergeneration living

**Central Provident Fund**
- Incentives to top-up family members' accounts
- Ability to use account pay for family members’ healthcare

**Social Assistance Policies**
- Assessment by household, rather than individual, income.
(II) Creating a Pro Family Environment
- Typical Marriage & Parenthood Benefits

**BENEFITS FOR A FAMILY WITH TWO CHILDREN**

A middle-income Singaporean household with two children can enjoy:

- **$24,000** in Baby Bonus cash and co-savings
- **$6,000** in Medisave grants for newborns
- **$53,000** in infant care and childcare subsidies
- **$16,000** in tax savings

**4 months** of paid maternity leave per child of which **1 week** can be shared by the father

**1 week** of paid paternity leave per child

**6 days** of paid childcare leave per year per parent until both children turn seven (two days per year for ages seven to 12)

The equivalent of about **$166,000** until both children turn 13

*This excludes housing subsidies and the equivalent of $12,000 in additional tax savings under the Marriage & Parenthood Package which is typically utilised beyond the children's first 13 years.*

Source: NATIONAL POPULATION AND TALENT DIVISION
(II) Creating a Pro Family Environment
- Accessible & Affordable Caregiver Services

200 childcare centres planned over five years

Govt-run pre-schools to boost quality

New childcare subsidies will slash costs for families

Demand for home-care services on the rise

More health-care facilities planned ahead of need

Eldercare subsidies for more families
(II) Creating a Pro Family Environment
- Through Family Friendly Workplaces & Businesses

WorkPro
- Create work-life friendly workplaces
(III) Nurturing a Pro-Family Mindset

Family Life Education and Promotion at key transitions

- New couple
- Single young adult
- Family with first child
- Family with school-going child
- Family with adolescents
- 3G /Sandwiched Families

At different touch points:
- FAMILY matters @ work
- FAMILY matters @ school
- FAMILY matters @ home
- FAMILY matters @ business
- FAMILY matters @ community
(IV) Support for Vulnerable Families

Community Partners
- Social Service Offices
- Family Service Centres
- Specialist Agencies
- State (e.g. MSF)

Community Partners

Normal Functioning
- Early Intervention/Preventive
- Secondary Intervention

Emerging Risks
- Escalating Risks
- Higher Risks/Chronic/Acute Concerns
- State Intervention
(IV) Support for Vulnerable Families - Mitigating Impact of Family Breakdown …

Mandatory Marriage Preparation Courses for Minors Couples aged <21

Mandatory Mediation & Counselling for divorcing couples with young children

Child Centric Divorce Proceedings (to be introduced)
- Ensure that interest of children are better protected.
- Reduce adversarial conflicts and emotional burden.
- Increase access to family justice.
- Provide more support services.
(V) Embark on A Whole of Society Effort

- Champion and provide feedback on family issues
- Promote Marriages
- A Union pro-family effort
- Promote family life education
- Tripartite Committees (Union/Employer/Government)
- Foster Work-Life Harmony
- Celebrate families in Singapore
Demographic Realities

I  • Rising Singlehood

II  • Later Marriages

III  • Falling Fertility Rates

IV  • Ageing Population
Changing Family Structures

I • More Remarriages

II • More Local-foreigner Marriages

III • Stabilizing Divorce Rates
I. Emphasise Role of Family in Laws & Policies

II. Create a Pro-Family Environment

III. Nurture a Pro-Family Mindset

IV. Support Vulnerable Families

V. Embark on Whole-of-Society Effort
Thank you