

THE CHANGES

Dec 2025 / Vol. 06

蛻變 PROJECT
計劃 CHANGE

2025 is nearly at its end, and 2026 is just around the corner! We wish you peace and inner joy this Christmas and throughout the New Year.

Project Change aims to provide comprehensive support for arrested youths under the age of 25, with a particular focus on emotional support. Over the past five years, we have been fortunate to have Dr. Yuen Ka-wai, an experienced counselling psychologist, assist these young people and their loved ones, helping to relieve their emotional burdens and navigate their difficulties. Now, let's hear Dr. Yuen share her thoughts.

Dr. Rhoda Yuen: Reconnection with the Youths

One day in 2020, Dr. Rhoda Yuen received a call from her former colleague, Dr. Pauline Sung, who had not been in contact for a while. Pauline introduced Rhoda to Project Change, a newly established organisation that aims to provide supports for young people under 25 who were arrested in 2019 and their families. She extended an invitation to Rhoda, asking for her professional assistance in counselling. "This project is very meaningful. I agreed to help without a second thought upon receiving the invitation," Rhoda said.



Time flies, and she has now been serving for five years.

Rhoda initially studied literature at university in the United States but later realised her passion for understanding people and helping those in need. She ultimately switched her major to psychology. After obtaining her doctorate in the U.S., she returned to Hong Kong to teach at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and worked at a hospital under the Hospital Authority. She is now a practicing counselling psychologist.

"People are complex individuals, and their personalities and behaviours are greatly influenced by their environments," Rhoda noted. Specialising in counselling psychology, she explained, "I primarily assist clients in understanding themselves through their experiences, helping them realise the value and meaning of their lives."

"Every person faces different challenges and difficulties at each stage of their growth. If someone around them—especially professionals—can lend a hand and remind them how to face adversity and continue moving forward, it is incredibly helpful."



Regarding the arrested youths, she acknowledged, "Their most difficult moments are those of waiting—waiting to be officially charged, waiting for bail, waiting for a verdict. At every stage, they encounter a great deal of uncertainty and numerous challenges."

"They find it hard to share their experiences with others because the situation is very sensitive. Even with their parents, they often refrain from discussing it too much. Most of the time, they endure feelings of confusion and helplessness during this waiting period alone. In my lifetime, I have rarely encountered such a challenge."

"If we extend a helping hand at the right moment and offer them support, I believe it will help reduce the long-term effects of the pressures they face."

Rhoda provides these young people with a psychologically safe environment, free from judgment, allowing them to express their feelings and reflect.

"I help them revisit their experiences, which significantly impact their emotions. I listen to what causes them the most distress and confusion—issues that have become recurring nightmares for them."

"They often choose to escape these feelings and avoid confronting them. So, I guide them and teach them how to face reality and relax. If they are constantly troubled by past experiences, life becomes extremely difficult, as if they are stuck on pause, unable to move forward. Therefore, I assist them in untangling their emotional knots, helping them manage and adjust their feelings. Gradually, step by step, they can emerge from their difficulties."

"These young individuals, who are not yet fully mature, face significant challenges. They may feel guilty, angry, extremely lonely, and lost, unsure of how to move forward. Often, they experience a heavy, wandering feeling, with past fragments replaying in their minds."

They frequently find themselves trapped in this situation. Therefore, I aim to guide them to uncover positive experiences in their lives, shifting their focus from painful memories to the positive aspects around them or things they can feel grateful for, preventing them from being mired in despair."



"I believe the most important thing is to help them learn and grow from these experiences. While we can lend them a hand, the key is for them to accept the consequences of their actions while affirming their integrity and recognising their self-worth."

Parental Support and Accompaniment

Project Change understands that the entire family experiences significant emotional distress when one person is arrested. Therefore, in addition to assisting arrested young people, Rhoda also provides counselling services for their families and loved ones.

"When I meet with parents and family members, I offer them a channel to express their emotions and discuss the difficulties they face, such as their sadness over not knowing how to communicate the situation to relatives and friends. Some parents have expressed feeling embarrassed and distressed when neighbours mentioned that they saw their child arrested in the news!"

"I help families remain calm and find ways to support their children. Everyone makes mistakes, and we don't want others to label us because of our faults. It's important not to focus solely on differences but rather on the relationships within the family and the love for one another. That is what truly matters."

"Many young people can accept that those around them may not understand them, but they hope that their closest loved ones can set aside their differences and accept them. Their beliefs and behaviours can differ greatly, but in the parent-child relationship, agreement on everything is not necessary. They can still maintain an emotional connection."

Rhoda says, "Young people can feel their parents' care and love. As long as they are willing to set aside their prejudices, they will be able to recognise their parents' concern. Parents always care for their children; in fact, they may simply not know how to communicate effectively with them."

Rhoda and Alan, one of our beneficiaries, shared their selected songs on 'Share My Songs,' a program by CRHK. Rhoda chose four songs to express her feelings about the past few years of helping young people and their families through music.

- Danny Chan, ***"Wait"*** (等)
- Whitney Houston, ***"The Greatest Love of All"***
- Andrea & Matteo Bocelli, ***"Fall on Me"***
- John Lennon, ***"Imagine"***

Alan selected four songs that capture his reflections on the experiences he has gone through in the past few years.

- Charmaine Fong, ***"If the World Isn't What You Expected"*** (假使世界原來不像你預期)

Alan was arrested in 2019. Two years later, at the end of 2021, he suddenly received notice from the police that he would be charged. Eventually, he lost his freedom. At the time, what he worried about most was being unable to complete his degree at university. But he chose not to give up. With support from the Project Change and many caring people, he passed the university disciplinary hearing after returning to society and was allowed to complete his degree. This experience reminded him that even when life doesn't go the way we expect, we must not give up when facing adversity.

- Miriam Yeung, ***"Goodbye Nichō"*** (再見二丁目)

Alan recalls that during the period when he lost his freedom, his family sent him books. Reading brought him joy and taught him that happiness can in fact be very simple.

- Song Dongye, ***"Empty port"*** (空港曲)

After re-entering society, Alan began looking for work. Sometimes he needed to explain his past experiences, the detailed questions from interviewers made him uncomfortable and reminded him of the lyric from this song: "Wanting to speak yet falling to silent; falling to silent yet wanting to speak." (「欲辯忘言 忘言欲辯」)

- Jay Fung, ***"Right Before My Eyes"*** (遠在眼前)

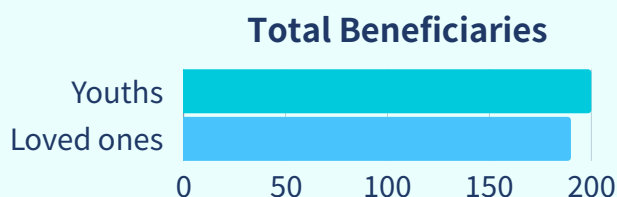
Alan also shared the experience of a friend, saying that separation is not something to fear. As long as you know someone still supports you and waits for you, there is hope — and you must bravely get through every difficult moment.

Link to the program: <https://www.881903.com/highlight/2590991>

Our Work

Number of Cases

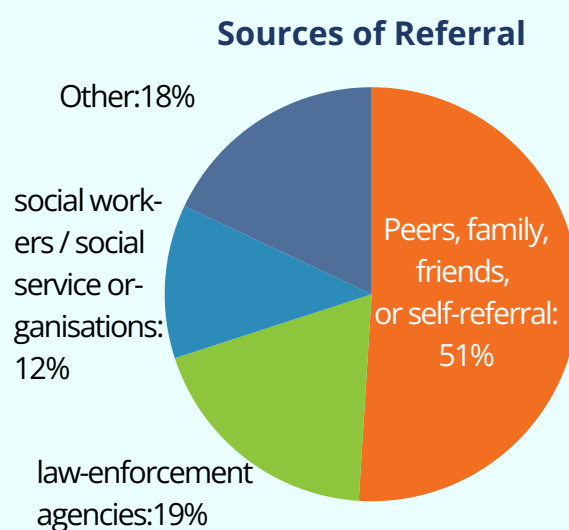
To date, we have supported 390 young people and their family members or loved ones. Among the young beneficiaries, around 120 have received counselling services, and approximately 130 have participated in our “Reintegration Program.” Some of them have received both types of services.



Sources of Referral

Most of the young people we serve come to us through referrals from peers, friends, or family members, accounting for 51% of all cases.

About 19% are referred by law-enforcement agencies, and 12% come through social workers or social service organisations. The remaining 18% are referred by other channels.



Thank You for Coming Together

Many thanks to the Hong Kong Club Foundation (HKCF) for inviting Project Change to the Charity Showcase on 2nd October 2025, allowing us to introduce our work to the members of the Club and other charity foundations.

We also express our gratitude to Mr. John R. Budge (right) and Mr. Robert C. L. Footman (left) the Chairman and Director of the HKCF, for their tremendous support over the past few years. In the middle of the picture is our Associate Director, Mr. Yau Shing Mu.

