



SINGLE PARENTS WITH MENTAL ISSUES:

BACKGROUND

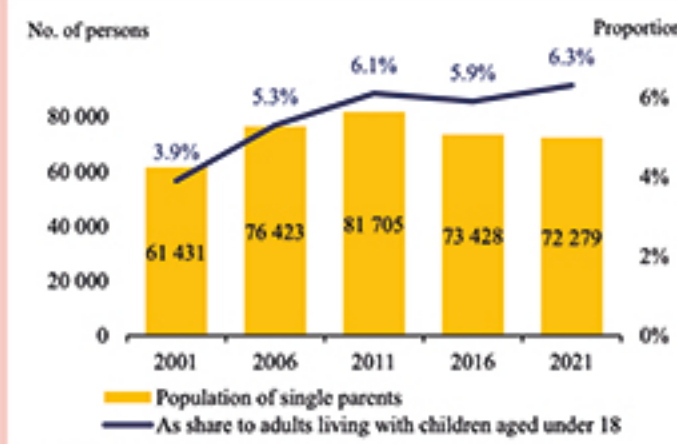
306939 citizens divorced or separated in 2016

(Census and Statistics Department, 2022)

↑ 18% in no. of local single parents in 2 decades

→ **growing trend**

(Research Office of the Legislative Council Secretariat, 2024)



A **cross-cultural** study reported that in general single parents demonstrate a much **higher risk** in developing **mood disorder** and **anxiety disorder** compared to partnered parents

(Kareem et al., 2024)

→ aligns with observation from ChickenSoup

Challenges faced by single parents: **poor physical** and **mental health** **social alienation** **stress**
from juggling **care** and **work** difficulty accessing services

(Kim, Lee & Kim, 2023)

VISION VS REALITY: SUPPORT PROVIDED TO SINGLE PARENTS

Government's Support:

- Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme
- Working Family Allowance Scheme
- Subvention to NGOs to operate 5 Specialised Co-parenting Support Centres
- Single parent tax allowance & child allowance
- Integrated Family Service Centres
- Conditional Tenancy Scheme under Compassionate Rehousing

→ focuses mainly in alleviating Challenge , providing **child care** and **financial support**

(Research Office of the Legislative Council Secretariat, 2023, p. 2)

Observation from ChickenSoup:

- Clients (single parents) expressed that a lot of their needs remain unmet
 - Mostly **child-focused** support (e.g. parenting)
 - **Emotional needs of parents** are **overlooked**
 - **Complicated application process** (e.g. CR)










→ Challenge , , and remain significant → explains unimproved mental health of parents

Poor mental health of parents → **poor mental health of the child** and **parent-child relationship**

(Wickersham et al., 2020)

Is there a way for us to reduce the disparity and cater more for the emotional needs of single parents?

2-STEP SUPPORT MODEL (FROM INTERNAL TO EXTERNAL)

STEP 1	<p>1. Low-Intensity Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy (Individual)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote self-help Achieve great therapeutic outcomes in a short period Flexible arrangement (online or f2f) <p>2. Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (Group)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase self-awareness through mindfulness practices Aware of the automatic thoughts and schema Promote self-acceptance 	<p>Experiences & Reflections from New Life:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ willing to seek help → busy schedule Significant improvements after MBCT sessions: <table> <tr> <th>Qualitative Evaluation</th><th>Quantitative Evaluation</th></tr> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> shared that mindfulness is an effective coping strategy towards negative emotions developed different ways to help themselves </td><td> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  mindfulness and self-awareness  severity in depression and stress and anxiety </td></tr> </table> 	Qualitative Evaluation	Quantitative Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shared that mindfulness is an effective coping strategy towards negative emotions developed different ways to help themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  mindfulness and self-awareness  severity in depression and stress and anxiety
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STEP 2	<p>1. Mindfulness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> wellness classes (e.g. yoga, singing bowl) <p>2. Self-Empowerment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> hard skills class (e.g. english, computer) to enhance clients' skills and help jobless individuals reenter the job market <p>3. Cycle of Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> regular gatherings, parties and activities (e.g. hiking) hiring of clients with a stable mental state to help them reconnect with the society and improve financially 	<p>Experiences & Reflections from ChickenSoup:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mental health of clients improve through participating in classes that help maintain their mental well-being Clients are found to have a higher self-esteem through learning and witnessing their own growth Clients are empowered through understanding their ability to social and inspire other single parents with similar backgrounds <p>→ improved mental, physical and social health</p> 				

KEY MESSAGES

Importance of Client's **attitude**:

Client's attitude is the **KEY** to successful treatment.



Importance of role of Society:

Society has a role in advocating for **increased access to mental health resources and programs** tailored to the needs of single parents, **recognizing the unique challenges** they face.

Impact of parents' mental health on **family**:

Supporting single parents in their mental health journey benefits **not just the individual** but also the **next generation**, helping to **break cycles of adversity** and promote **healthier family dynamics**.

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