

Samuel

Male, 25 years-old

Streetwise Programme (SWP)

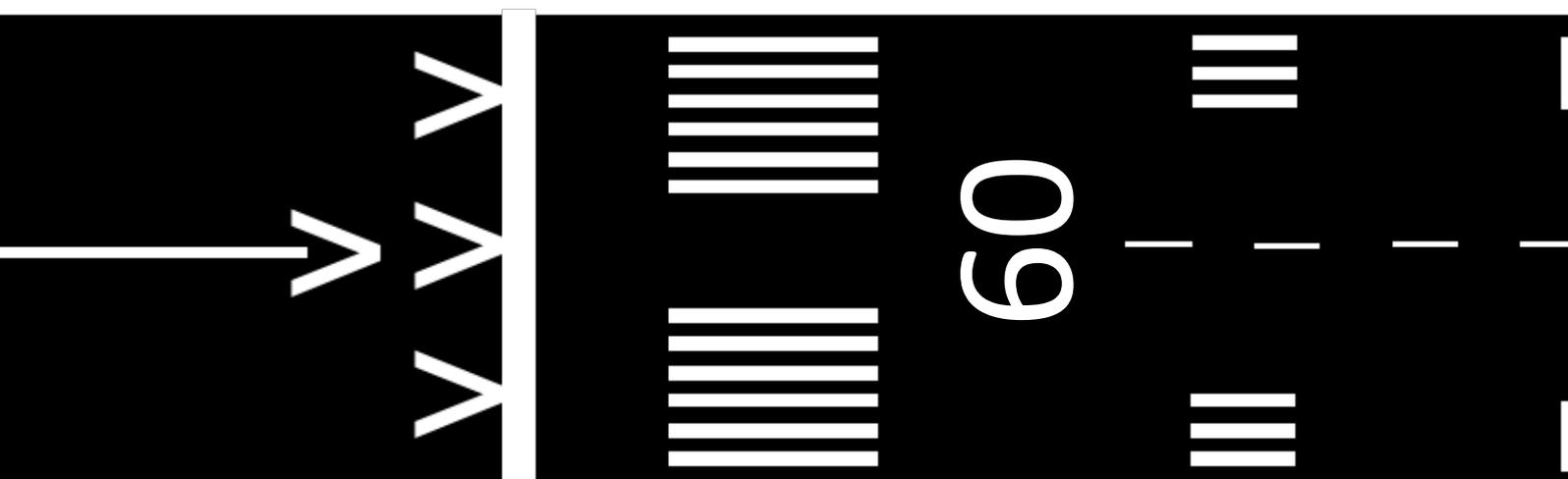
When Samuel was at a tender age of 11, his parents separated due to his dad's abusive tendencies. Although the separation gave Samuel more peace and comfort, he also felt a great sense of loss. Since then, Samuel started hanging out at the neighbourhood basketball courts to cope with his loneliness.

"A YGOS staff approached me one day as he spotted me loitering around aimlessly at the courts. He reached out to me and invited me to their centre to play and participate in their youth activities such as sports, video games, and pool. Over time, I started to enjoy hanging out at their fun-loving centre instead of the basketball courts."

However, Samuel also befriended some older guys in his neighbourhood whom later introduced him to their gang. Out of curiosity and boredom, Samuel joined the gang, hoping to get a sense of belonging and power. During this period, Samuel often stayed out late at night. That made his mother really worried.

"Usually, she wouldn't be able to find me. Sometimes, my gang and I would even tell her off and chase her away when she did find me."

Over time, their growing influence began to take root in Samuel's life and he stopped coming to YGOS soon after. Gradually, he became angry and bitter. In fact, there was once when Samuel almost injured his brother severely. He started getting into fights at school, which landed him in a police case. Samuel was assessed and later referred to attend Streetwise Programme (SWP) at YGOS.



“They were always there to spread positivity and develop me. In comparison, my gang brothers would lead me towards the wrong path.”

In Samuel’s journey, he saw himself truly inspired and transformed. Samuel is now a Youth Worker at YGOS.

“I really made my own family members disappointed in me, especially my Mom who was very worried. However, in retrospect, I feel very blessed to be referred to YGOS then as I knew the people and how it was like there. Regardless, I was still tempted to leave because, in YGOS, I had to be responsible and accountable for my actions. But in the gang, I could act freely, so it was very hard for me to adjust at the start.”

“Even my Mom noted the significant changes in me and I had never seen her so happy and proud of me before. Now, I am determined to focus on my responsibilities; to pursue further education, and to be a good Youth Worker and role model for my youths at YGOS. I find great joy and purpose in choosing to use my freedom to serve others.”

Nevertheless, the genuine concern from the staff at YGOS gave Samuel the resolve to change. Eventually, he realised that the peers and staff at YGOS made better friends.

