

# Little Steps

She is skinny, short haired and has a brown complexion. Every day, she roams around the community, looking for stuff to sell in the junkshop, untiringly, to make both ends meet for the family.

Mary Ann Mangohig, 41, a mother of six (6) children is a simple woman and dreams of a simple yet abundant life for her children. Despite uncertainties, at an early age of 18, she entered family life which, according to her is a bittersweet experience. She experienced eating only once a day, being beaten by her husband especially when they had arguments.

Mary Ann engaged in gambling with the hope that it will help in the financial insufficiency of the family. For quite a long time, playing tong-its had been part of her daily routine. Her children stay outside their house most of the time; often hungry and poorly clothed. Until one time, the City Link assigned visited her at home and counseled her. She promised to stop gambling. From then on, Mary Ann could no longer be seen gambling.

She was recommended to undergo massage therapy training for her to gain employable skills and for her to engage and focus in more productive activity thus, avoiding gambling. The skills training ran for three months. She said, there were times that she doesn't like to go home anymore for she is more relaxed in the resort where she had her OJT rather than at home.

On April 28, 2015, Mary Ann finished the training and marched on stage for the graduation along with other trainees. With the knowledge on massage therapy and a kit, she offered her services to her neighbors and earned Php100 per person that she served. She also do home service and earns Php200 per person. Propelled to do her best to provide a good future for

her children, she plans to take skills training on dressmaking and apply for a more decent job for her family.

Also, Mary Ann said she is now more confident to relate with others. She even enjoys sharing her thoughts and views to her co-members during Family Development Sessions. She observes proper hygiene and sees to it that she is in good shape for her to have clients. She also said that her gained knowledge in massage therapy is beneficial for her family not only that it is a source of income but it also gives relief to their tired bodies. ###