

Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth turns 37



Jomer Elamparo, former RRCY resident shares how life at the center has transformed him. He is now a graduate of Hotel and Restaurant Management and does a part-time job in one of the restaurants in Magalang, Pampanga.

“Everybody deserves a second chance,” Director Gemma B. Gabuya of the Department of Social Welfare and Development Field Office III stressed in today’s celebration of the 37th anniversary of the Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth (RRCY) in Magalang, Pampanga.

In addressing the 101 residents of the center, Gabuya said, “Our goal is for you to go home and join your families and become productive members of the society. Equipped with the knowledge and skills you acquired here, you are ready to face your respective families and communities. You can still be models of the youth.”

Our government has the accountability to ensure that all children enjoy their rights. As residents, you have the second chance to fulfill your dreams, to become good parents and future leaders of our country, Gabuya stressed.

She also urged the residents to continue their involvement in the regular activities within the center to be more productive and progressive individuals as soon as they are discharged and reintegrated to their respective families and communities. She stressed that they should learn the essence of imbibing positive values to become better citizens.

Gabuya added that the DSWD and the local social welfare and development offices (LSWDOs) will continue to advocate for the rights of children.

Mayor Ma. Lourdes Pecson of Magalang, the event's guest speaker stressed that the youth has an important role in nation building. With the event's theme "Kabataan, Pamantayan sa Pag-unlad ng Bayan," Mayor Pecson posed a challenge to the residents, "Maipapangako ba ninyong susunod sa batas at maging mabuting mamamayan paglabas ninyo dito sa RRCY?"

She also lauded the RRCY staff for their contribution in the development and transformation of the residents under their care. "I support your advocacy of fulfilling your mandate of providing social protection for the children in conflict with the law (CICL)," she said.

In addressing the community, she said, "Nasa kamay ninyo ang pag-ahon ng mga batang nakalabag sa batas".

Meanwhile, Jomer Elamparo, former RRCY resident who stayed at the center for more than four years, shared how life at the center has transformed him. He is now a graduate of Hotel and Restaurant Management and does a part-time job in one of the restaurants in Magalang, Pampanga.

Jomer recalled that he was only a second year high school student when he came to RRCY. He enrolled in Alternative Learning of the Department of Education (DepED) and accelerated to college. "Ang mga pagsubok di naging hadlang sa pag-abot ko ng aking pangarap. Proud ako na sabihing galing ako sa RRCY dahil dito ako nahubog. Di lahat ng may kaso ay masama," Jomer said.

We are the author of our fate, he added. Ginagabayan tayo ng Dios sa pamamagitan ng mga staff sa landas ng pagbabago ngunit ang pagbabago ay dapat magsimula sa atin.

He also encouraged the RRCY residents to forget the past and

live for today. “tulad ko, may pagkakataon pa kayong ituwid ang mga nagawa ninyo at sakaling paglabas ninyo ay maaari kayong maging modelo ng ibang kabataan,” he said.

RRCY is the regional facility of the DSWD Field Office III for children in conflict with the law (CICL). Manned by trained and competent workers, RRCY provides 24 hours rehabilitation services by trained interdisciplinary staff headed by Vilma Serrano, head social worker. ### (Evelyn T. Manalo)