

Mrs Yolanda Lee

In brief:

As foster parents, the couple feels that their role is to ensure that the children know that they are precious and loved for who they are. "We give them the assurance that they have a family and they have us to fall back on."

Mrs Lee also wants to impart her family value of treating others in the community as if they are their own family members. Through little actions such as sharing of food with the neighbours, Mrs Lee hopes that her daughter and the foster children will learn to treat others with love and respect



Mrs Yolanda Lee (far right) with her daughter, Catherine, and her husband, Mr David Lee. The girl looking down and sleeping child are foster children.



It Takes Two

Nobody ever said that being a foster parent is easy. However, a supportive and committed spouse can act as a pillar of strength during challenging times.

Take the Lee family for example. When Mrs Yolanda Lee first saw her first foster baby in the hospital, she was dismayed at how malnourished the two-week-old child was. "He looked so small. I was so scared to take care of the baby because he was so tiny and fragile."

However, her husband, Mr David Lee, gently encouraged his wife to fulfill her obligations as a foster parent.

The family has not looked back since. The foster child later grew to be a handsome and adorable baby well-loved by the family.

According to Mr Lee, the secret to fostering boils down to teamwork. The Lee family has chalked up nearly nine years of fostering experience, having looked after six children in total. They now care for two foster children, aged eight and three.

When asked how the family has changed as a result of being foster parents, Mrs Lee enthusiastically replies, "He (referring to her husband) comes home earlier and is not such a workaholic!"

Mr Lee agrees. As he is currently out-station in China for a work project, he now tries to spend quality time with his foster children whenever he is in Singapore so as to strengthen the bond of their relationship. "Even when I am on leave, I make sure that I send and fetch the children from school," he says, adding, "And you can tell how happy they are because of it."

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Memento

In 2009, Mr David Lee was working in China and unable to return home to celebrate Father's Day with his family. However, the distance did not deter foster child Sarah* from sending him a 'Father's Day' card.

"Sarah kept calling me to ask if I had received anything so I knew there was something in the post from her but I didn't know it was a card she has made herself."

Describing the gift as a surprise, Mr Lee said he was moved by her simple gesture, adding, "You can tell by the card how much love and effort she has put in to make the card."

* - name has been changed





Note:
This chicken soup recipe is a quick 20-minute Filipino dish that has been handed down through her family, says Mrs Yolanda Lee. A frequent mainstay in her family meals, Mrs Lee says the soup is nutritious and it absorbs the flavours of the chicken and chayote (a pale green wrinkled pear-shaped vegetable) in the process of boiling, resulting in a tasty meal.



Enolang Manok (Chicken Soup)

Ingredients:

- One whole chicken(1kg or slightly bigger) - cut into bite size
- 2 big onions (200g), chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 big ginger (200g), finely cut into strips
- 2 chayote squashes (a pale green wrinkled pear-shaped vegetable)* - cut into small 3-cm pieces
- 2 tablespoons cooking oil
- Salt (as required)
- Sugar (as required)
- 1 litre water



STEP

Heat up the pot and add in the oil.

01

STEP

Fry the ginger, garlic and onion until fragrant.

02

STEP

Add the chicken and stir fry until the chicken is half cooked.

03

STEP

Add in the water and bring to boil.

04

STEP

Simmer for 10 minutes.

05

STEP

Add in the cut chayote pieces, cover the pot and cook for another 5 minutes.

06

STEP

When the chayote is half cooked, turn off the fire and add in salt and sugar.

07

STEP

Serve with plain rice.

08

*May be replaced with young unripened papaya



Chayote

