

# Madam N Arasakumari

**In brief:**

For Madam N Arasakumari, the past nine years spent looking after her two foster children have been an enlightening experience for her.

Mdm Arasakumari credits the Tamil support group that she belongs to in MCYS as instrumental in helping her become a better foster mother. "I am always happy to go for the support group once a month and I learnt a lot from the other foster mothers in the group. I also learnt a lot from the training that MCYS organizes for foster parents," she adds.



Madam N Arasakumari and her daughter, Gowri





## No regrets caring for foster children

**T**aking care of children is not easy, especially caring for a child who is active and not able to focus on a given task. For Madam N Arasakumari, she says the past nine years spent looking after her two foster children have been an enlightening experience for her, albeit a stressful one as well.

The source of the stress is having to cope with one of the foster children, Ramesh\*, who has a very high energy level and has difficulty concentrating. Mdm Arasakumari says it is a challenge getting him to sit still even for a short period of time, which is an issue in school.

Ramesh can also be moody at times. For instance, Mdm Arasakumari's 20-year-old daughter, Gowri, says that there are times when he would say mean things to others. However, Ramesh's temperament has changed dramatically after professional services were given and they have learnt how to better manage his behaviour. Ramesh can also be an affectionate and caring boy, such as holding the other foster child's hand when walking across the road or exchanging a kind word.

Mdm Arasakumari says she has picked up useful skills to better cope with the care of children with different needs. In addition, she adds that her husband who was rather quick-tempered in the past, has mellowed after becoming a foster parent as well.

Despite the stresses, Mdm Arasakumari has no regrets becoming a foster mother. And if it wasn't for the foster children, Gowri adds, the home would be very quiet. In fact, Gowri says she loves the chatter and cheekiness of the two children. She also enjoys watching Ramesh dance, something that he does well in and enjoys doing.

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\* - name has been changed

## Memento

One of the children's favourite past-time is doing puzzles, says Madam N Arasakumari. Whether it is crosswords puzzles or jigsaw puzzles, the children love them all, she says.





**Note:**

Madam N Arasakumari says her version of mee goreng, or fried noodles in Malay, is often very spicy and not suitable for all palates. However, one big fan of this dish is her second foster child, Durga\*. "She likes spicy dishes and will always want me to cook mee goreng for her," adds Mdm Arasakumari.

In addition, she even has a vegetarian version which she will cook on days when the family only eats vegetarian meals. For this, she will substitute the meat with ingredients such as carrots, mushrooms, cabbage and tomatoes.

\* - name has been changed



## Mee Goreng

**Ingredients:**

- 1kg yellow noodles
- 100g bean sprouts
- ½ kg small prawns, shelled
- 2 big bean curds, cut into small pieces
- 10 fish balls, cut into halves
- 3 big fish cakes, thinly sliced
- 3 red chillies, cut into thin strips
- 3 green chillies, cut into thin strips
- 10 tablespoons chilli paste
- 1 big onion, sliced
- 5 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 tomatoes, cut into small pieces
- 6 tablespoons cooking oil

**STEP**

01 Heat the wok and pour in half the oil.

**STEP**

02 Add in the bean curds, prawns, fish balls and fish cake and fry till fragrant. Set aside.

**STEP**

03 Heat up the rest of the oil in the wok, add the chopped onion and garlic, and sauté till golden brown.

**STEP**

04 Then add the green and red chillies.

**STEP**

05 Add the chilli paste and sauté together.

**STEP**

06 Add the tomatoes and bean sprouts.

**STEP**

07 After 2 minutes, add the yellow noodles, stirring well.

**STEP**

08 Finally, add in the cooked prawns, fish cakes, bean curd, fish balls and fry together for 8-10 minutes.

**STEP**

09 Serve when hot.

