

Local firm helps needy families by donating furniture

V.Hive has donated over 350 household items since 2007

■ BY LESLIE KAY LIM

SINGAPORE furniture company V.Hive first started equipping the homes of underprivileged families five years ago.

Having given away more than 350 pieces of furniture – wardrobes, beds, desks, chairs, sofas, and more – since 2007, V.Hive has furnished many homes and witnessed the uplifting effect this has on the inhabitants.

It all began when director Michael Song was volunteering with a children's home in Serangoon in 2002. He met someone who needed bunk beds for a home for the mentally and physically handicapped.

V.Hive ended up donating close to 30 beds, and Mr Song realised that it was a great way to contribute because furniture "can't be spent on vices or be exchanged".

During the first few years of the programme, friends and neighbours were invited to nominate families to receive furniture.

Singaporean families need to have a monthly income of \$1,500 or less to be eligible.

Once their names are submitted, representatives from V.Hive, along with volunteers from City-Care, visit the families to assess suitability and need.

V.Hive donates and delivers the Danish wardrobes, which are not second-hand or cast-offs and cost roughly \$600.



Madam Haidah Kling and her daughter Nur Aisyah Roland Rosmadi, 16, with a bed and rack (right) recently contributed by V.Hive. ST PHOTO: LIM WUI LIANG

"Wardrobes help them organise their lives," said Mr Song, who remembers seeing families store clothes in trash bags.

From 2009 to last year, V.Hive worked with TV programme RenovAID, but it is now back to accepting individual nominations, which helps it to reach a wider audience.

Madam Haidah Kling is one recent recipient. The 42-year-old is a mother of five whose husband is in prison.

She works part-time doing odd jobs, such as house-to-house cleaning, and makes about \$150 to \$300 a month.

She gets by with additional help from the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore and community development councils.

A mentor of one of her three sons nominated the family for free furniture, and V.Hive recent-

ly contributed a rack, sofa bed, dining table, queen-size bed and several wardrobes.

"Before, I had nothing, just a single bed and a wardrobe," she said.

Although she was sad that their home was in the state it was in, she said she felt grateful for the donations.

She pointed out the sofa bed as her favourite piece of furniture, and explained: "At least my son can sleep on it, instead of the floor."

V.Hive, which has been in the business since the 1990s, has 100 wardrobes to give away this year to underprivileged families.

To nominate recipients, write to enquiry@vhive.com.sg with the family's name, telephone number and address.

Said Mr Song: "Furniture – it really builds a home."

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