

PathFinders Joins Hands with HK Rugby Superstar Russell Webb to Protect and Empower Migrant Moms and Their Children

21 November 2023 - PathFinders, the only HK charity dedicated to supporting the unique vulnerabilities of children born to migrant mothers, is delighted and privileged to join hands with professional rugby player Russell Webb who has become our first Child Ambassador earlier this year to help raise awareness of our work for the Migrant Domestic Workers (MDWs) communities.

"Children sit at the heart of everything we do at PathFinders. All children matter, including the children born to migrant mothers in HK. No child should be without an identity, food, shelter, access to education and healthcare," said Catherine Gurtin, CEO of PathFinders. "As we celebrate our 15th anniversary, we reaffirm our commitment to the protection and respect of children born to migrant mothers in Hong Kong."

"Russell is a superstar on and off the pitch. He is a key member of the HK7s rugby squad who took gold at the recent 2023 Asian Games. Off the pitch, Russell's extensive experience working with children and young people to encourage them to shine and reach their full potential made him the perfect choice to be our first Child Ambassador," said Catherine Gurtin.

Like many children growing up in Hong Kong, Russell's passion for our work is very much fuelled by his special relationship with his MDW Aunties Blandy and Charit; as well as his motivation to give back - especially to the next generation.

"It's still a bit surreal when I get invited to give back as a Child Ambassador," said Russell Webb. "As cliché as it sounds, I was once one of these 'kids'. I understand the importance of a role model, to have someone to look up to. If I can positively impact one child, I'll be very happy."

"The MDW community is special to me. I have a unique relationship with Blandy and Charit, who are motherly and sisterly figures moulded into one. Growing up, I went to them for advice. They took me to training, cooked for me, helped me with homework and school projects. I owe a lot of my upbringing - and sporting success - to them. They taught me work ethics and respect," said Russell.

In a recent visit to the PathFinders, Russell took the opportunity to meet and speak with some of the migrant moms and children we serve, to better understand the challenges they encountered and how PathFinders has supported them.



(1) This is Baby Jazleen who was staying in our shelter. We were helping her Mum to process all the documentation she needed to be able to fly back to the Philippines. Baby Jazleen and her Mum have recently returned to the Philippines to start a new chapter in life.



(2) This is Baby Hamizan whose Mum first approached PathFinders last October. As a recognizance paper holder his Mum wasn't eligible for public healthcare. So our healthcare team arranged pro bono healthcare assistance until Baby Hamizan was born. In July, facing homelessness, we provided shelter and encouraged Baby Hamizan's Mum to think about a more stable future for him. Deciding to return home, we are now supporting her to liaise with the Immigration Department and assisting with all home return arrangements.

"To be able to see firsthand the impact of what PathFinders does was eye-opening and heartfelt," said Russell. "These women are so strong and brave. It's such a difficult time for them. They feel so alone, as the fathers are usually nowhere to be seen. Some of them have also lost their jobs and even became homeless as they have either been fired or asked to leave. The babies are just adorable. Why shouldn't these babies get the opportunities and fair starts in life?"

About PathFinders

PathFinders believes every child deserves a fair start in life. PathFinders is the only Hong Kong charity dedicated to supporting the unique vulnerabilities of children born to migrant mothers. Since 2008, PathFinders has supported over 10,500 mothers and children to find a path to a brighter future. To find out more about PathFinders visit www.pathfinders.org.hk.

More photos:

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