

New Life Center

One ethnic community in New York City was especially affected by Sept. 11 — Chinatown. The Fujianese residents of Chinatown were particularly confused and unaware of services that were available to them, since translation services existed for many people, but not for the Fujian population. They needed assistance in assessing the services available to them.

In November 2002, Lutheran Family and Community Services established the New Life Center, with funding from LDRNY. It provides counseling and support for families who are experiencing difficulties as a direct or indirect result of Sept. 11.

It provides:

- Case management referral/advocacy system for Fujianese and any 9/11 victim. It partners with Safe Horizon in holding On-Going Recovery Program sessions
- Weekly immigration legal services
- Individual, family and group counseling
- Adult ESL
- Youth Leadership Program

Through the generous scholarships provided by LDRNY, New Life Center has been able to send 12 youths to Concordia College, a Lutheran College in Bronxville, N.Y., for an intensive four-week ESL Program, and partner with Health Plus to educate clients on important health issues.

New Life Center
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LDRNY MISSION STATEMENT

To respond directly and encourage and facilitate response from others to the needs of persons and their families affected both directly and indirectly by tragedy or disaster.

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A family feels the wave affects

This family moved to New York City in June 2001. Both parents worked in Chinatown and the son was a full-time student in high school. Father worked as a construction worker and mother in a restaurant. In August 2001, father was diagnosed with liver problems, hospitalized and unable to work. Mother became the last income resource. In late August, father's illness got worse, and he had to be re-admitted to the hospital. Father was released from the hospital on Sept. 10, 2001. Unfortunately, the next day was Sept. 11; after the tragedy occurred, mother lost her job. Mother then went all over Chinatown to look for employment because she needed to pay her bills.

Since his release from the hospital in September 2001, father hadn't gone to see any physician because the family could not afford to pay the bills, and they already had a lot of unpaid bills from the father's hospital stay. New Life staff helped the family resolve the hospital bill.

Mother qualified for the 9/11 On-Going Recovery Program (ORP), but she had never heard of such a program until we told her about it. Even after we told her about it, she thought that she didn't qualify because she was undocumented. However, we were able to help the mother sign up for an ORP session, and mother successfully received her ORP card. Mother finished her ESL class and vocational training.

Now the family is doing much better.