

# 寄人「愛」下 Love in Foster Home



「對待孩子，最緊要是有心。」訪問甫一開始，劉太便強調說。「只要用真心對待她們，她們亦會以真心回報。」為香港青少年服務處擔任寄養家長已足足有十二年的劉太一談到目前正照顧着的兩個女孩，便開始滔滔不絕，語氣與任何一位為子女而驕傲的母親別無二致。

“It is absolutely essential to love and care for children with all your heart. They will also return their love to us.” This was what Mrs. Lau firstly stressed at the very beginning of our interview. She had been working as a foster parent at the Hong Kong Children and Youth Services for twelve years. When our conversations involving the girls of whom she was taking care, the ice between us broke subsequently, and Mrs. Lau began to talk passionately. Her tone was no different from a mum who was proud of her daughters.



## 耐心陪伴左右 打開孩子心扉

「我還能很清楚地記起翠兒剛到我們家的情景，那是八月的最後一天，剛把她接到家中的時候，翠兒很害怕，不敢跟着我，只跟着我最小的女兒。她沒有帶來任何衫褲、鞋襪，所以我們要帶她出去買。她那時候兩歲半，不肯坐上BB車，只是死命地抓住我的小女兒。」劉太徐徐道來，將回憶的畫卷在我們面前打開。「到第二天小女兒開學時，翠兒緊抓着換好校服的小女兒，不肯讓她走。我們家的門口很窄，她便橫躺在門口，哭得很淒涼，一直到睡着了為止。」

劉太說，她花了整整三個星期，才讓翠兒對她放下戒心，願意安心與她相處。「她剛來到的時候還未『戒片』，我跟她說：『你已經哭了很久，我幫你換片吧。』一開始她死死抓住穿着的尿片，不願意跟我去洗澡。過了幾天她開始沒那麼害怕了，主動來讓我幫她洗澡。」劉太回想過去時聲音帶着感慨：「頭幾天，翠兒每天晚上都哭到凌晨三、四點。每一次我都會去哄她，直到她睡着。到第三個星期左右，她終於願意和我親近，會和我聊天了。」

## 循循善誘 真心相待

距離第一天將翠兒迎進家門的光景已有七年多，劉太對此卻仍是歷歷在目。而另一位小朋友，慧玲初來時亦是差不多的情況。「一開始時，她甚麼都不懂，只會不停地叫『姨姨』、『姨姨』。我跟她說：『有甚麼事就和姨姨直接說』，她也只是照樣叫個不停。」

劉太提到慧玲的性格相對固執，會時不時「搞對抗」，在相處中亦有陷入僵局的時候。劉太說：「遇到這種情況時我不會和她硬碰硬，因為只會令事情變得更壞。最重要的是耐心和忍讓，給她一點時間。慢慢教導、講道理，比一味的責罵有用得多。」她舉例說，慧玲剛來時，翠兒倒是因多了玩伴而開心，但慧玲還少不更事，總喜歡扯着姐姐的長髮玩。劉太只好一次次解釋：「這樣姐姐會痛。」

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## Accompanying the Child Patiently Opening her Heart

“I can recall clearly that when Tsui-yi arrived at our home. It was the last day of August. We picked her up to our home. She was too scared to follow me, but she stayed with my youngest daughter. Not a piece of clothing did she bring with her, so we had to go shopping with her. At that time, she was two and a half years old and refused to be carried by a pram. She just grabbed my youngest daughter hard.” Mrs. Lau said gently, reviving her memories. “The next day, my daughter had to go to school. Tsui-yi clutched at my daughter, who had already put on her school uniform. Tsui-yi did not let her go. She just laid down on the floor near our home’s entrance where was very narrow. She cried miserably until she had fallen asleep.”

Mrs. Lau said she spent precisely three weeks to make Tsui-yi feel less wary of them and comfortable to stay with her family. “She still needed to use diapers when she just arrived. I told her, ‘You have already cried for a long time. Now, let me change your diaper.’ At first, Tsui-yi held her diaper tightly. She was not willing to let me bathe with her. After a few days, she was less scared and even took the initiative to let me wash her.” Mrs. Lau sighed as she recalled, “On the first few days, Tsui-yi cried until three to four o’clock every night. Every time I comforted her until she went back to bed. It was around the third day that she was eventually willing to get close to me and started chatting with me then.”

## Guiding Children Patiently Treating them with All her Heart

It has been seven years since Tsui-yi first entered into Mrs. Lau’s home. Yet, Mrs. Lau’s memory was still vivid. Another child called Wai-ling was similar to Tsui-yi when she first arrived at Mrs. Lau’s home. “She knew nothing at first. She could only yell ‘Auntie, Auntie.’ I told her, ‘You can just speak to Auntie whenever you need.’ However, she just yelled as before.”

Wai-Ling is relatively stubborn, as told by Mrs. Lau. She would occasionally provoke confrontations. Sometimes their relationship would reach deadlock. “In that case, I would not be pushing her hard, for it could only make things worse. The most important thing is patience and tolerance. I would give her some time. It is far more effective to teach her gently and slowly and reason with her than scold her severely.” She cited an example, Tsui-yi was happy about Wai-ling’s arrival as she now had a new playmate, but Wai-ling was just too young and not mature. Wai-ling always made fun of her sister by pulling her sister’s hair hard. Mrs. Lau could only explain to her again and again, “That hurts your sister.”

到了現在，兩個小朋友已經相處得親如姐妹；翠兒就像所有的姐姐一樣，會禮讓，更會教慧玲一些道理：「如果你不做功課的話，老師會罵你的。」「自己弄出來的垃圾要自己清理乾淨，不然姨姨會很辛苦的。」

這些年來，這對小姊妹證明了劉太一直堅信的理念：「只要用真心對待她們，她們亦會以真心回報。」劉太欣慰地回憶起生活中一個個打動她的點滴：「翠兒在母親節的時候送了母親節卡給我，真的把我當成了她的媽媽。兩個孩子都很乖很懂事；翠兒會幫忙做家务，慧玲有次在我睡着後幫我蓋被子，怕我冷到。」

## 面對溝通難關 體諒孩子需要

雖然當中亦曾遇到種種的困難，但劉太在十二年的寄養服務中，翠兒和慧玲不是她曾面對的最大挑戰。於香港青少年服務處擔任寄養家長初期，劉太曾負責照顧一位輕度智障女孩。「她就好像剛到我們家時的慧玲一樣，甚麼都不懂。」

在七年的相處中，劉太遇到的最大難題莫過於兩人間的溝通問題。「我到哪裡去都會帶着美芬。有次帶她去飲宴，她說想多吃一隻紅雞蛋。我反覆跟她說了幾次紅雞蛋不能吃太多，不能再多給她一隻。後來我從洗手間回來，美芬說她的紅雞蛋不見了，想再要一隻。過了幾天，從她的房間裏傳出臭味，我才發現她把雞蛋捏碎了藏在了外套裏。」

與其他小朋友不同，照顧美芬令劉太時感沮喪。「在照顧翠兒和慧玲時，能見證她們一步步成長。」從初來報到時的不安、驚恐到現在的懂事和願意親近人，無論是性格上或者是生活上，她們的轉變亦是有目共睹的。但美芬的情況，卻不能以同樣的標準衡量。「其實見到美芬玩得高興，我已經很滿足了。見到她開心我都開心。」劉太坦言。



At present, these two children are like sisters. Tsui-yi is just like every elder sister. She will give way to her sister and reason with her, like “If you do not do your homework, your teacher will scold you.” and “Clear your rubbish. Otherwise, Auntie will become very exhausted.”

Throughout these years, this pair of little sisters have been confirming Mrs Lau’s long-held belief. “If you love and care them with all your heart, their sincerity will be returned.” Mrs. Lau recalled warmly the moments touching her, “Tsui-yi gave me a card on Mother’s Day. She really treated me as her mum. Both of them are very obedient and sensible. They would help me with the housework. Once, Wai-ling covered me with a blanket when I fell asleep as she was afraid that I would catch a cold.”

## Facing the Difficulties in Communication Understanding Children’s Needs

Despite all kinds of difficulties she had encountered, Mrs. Lau said Tsui-yi and Wai-ling were not the biggest challenges she had ever faced in her twelve-year foster family service. She was responsible for taking care of a girl with mild intellectual disability when she started to be a foster parent at the Hong Kong Children and Youth Services. “She was just like Wai-ling when she first came to our home and she knew nothing.”

Being with Mei-fun for seven years, the biggest problem was the communication between her and Mei-fun. “I brought Mei-fun everywhere I went. Once I brought her to a banquet, she said she would like to eat one more ‘red egg’. I told her repeatedly that red eggs cannot be eaten too much, so I would not give her one more. After I had returned from the washroom, Mei-fun said she could not find her red egg and she wanted one more. After a few days, some foul smell coming from her room, I then realised that the red egg was in the pocket of her jacket and she had crushed it.”

Taking care of Mei-fun made Mrs. Lau feel depressed. “When I was taking care of Tsui-yi and Wai-ling, I could witness they were growing up gradually.” They appeared uneasy and scared upon their arrival and now they have become sensible, thoughtful and approachable. We found that there has been changes regarding their personalities and lives. However, we could not judge Mei-fun’s case by the same standard. “I will be satisfied when I see Mei-fun playing merrily. I will be happy if I see her happy.” Mrs. Lau said frankly.

## 親如家人 陪伴成長

從香港青少年服務處新增寄養服務時便加入的劉太，可謂是「開荒元老」，十二年來已照顧多達六、七個小朋友。「我很喜歡小朋友，想跟她們分享開心和煩惱。」這個單純的念頭，是劉太多年來一直為小朋友付出真心、悉心照料的原因。她亦感謝家人一直十分支持她，將每一個小朋友當成自己的親人來看待。

「有件令我印象很深刻的一件事，是翠兒二年級的時候，我和她一起去學校旅行。她說，『姨姨，我很開心。因為你陪着我，好像有個媽媽陪着我一樣。』慧玲也曾經和我說過：『姨姨，我想你永遠照顧我。』」劉太堅定地說：「只要我有能力，我會一直照顧她們下去。」



## Treating them as Family Members Accompanying them to Grow

Mrs. Lau joined the foster service at the time when the Hong Kong Children and Youth Services started launching the service. Mrs. Lau could be called as a pioneer. She took care of six to seven students in these twelve years. “I like children very much. I like to share my ups and downs with them.” It is because of this simple thought that drove Mrs. Lau to devote herself to the children throughout these years. She also thanked her family who has been supporting her and she has treated every child like her family member.

“An experience that I found most impressive was when Tsui-yi was in Primary Two. I went to a school picnic with her. She said, ‘I am happy, Auntie. Because you are here with me, I feel like a mother accompanying me.’” Wai-ling also said, ‘Auntie, I want you to take care of me forever.’” Mrs. Lau said firmly, “As long as I have the ability, I will keep on taking care of them.”