

(1) From Preliminary Preparation To Formation

In mid-1970's, the Australian Federal Government started to implement multiculturalism policies. It encouraged and assisted ethnic communities to form organisations to provide community services with the belief that through these ethnic community service organisations, the policies and information of governments could be more effectively disseminated to people of non-English speaking backgrounds. Under this climate, some ethnic communities began to form organisations aimed at providing social services. Some had set up child care centres, such as the Greek and Italian communities. At that time, there were not many Chinese migrants, and it was very difficult to find areas with high number of Chinese residents apart from the Chinatown area in Sydney. Settlement services for the Chinese community, funded by the Government, had just started, and there were no child care services for Chinese migrants.

In 1979, child care places in Australia were generally scarce. It was even harder for young migrant parents from non-English speaking background to find culturally appropriate child care services. In view of these difficulties, some enthusiastic people in the Chinese communities, as advocated by Mr. Wee Teck Teo, the Principal of the Sydney Chinese School, brewed to establish a child care centre for the Chinese community.

12 January 1980

Preparation Committee was established with an aim to set up a child care centre in Surry Hills and Chinatown areas catering the Chinese community. Mr Henry Pan was elected as the Convenor of the Preparation Committee.

June to August 1980

- Carried out telephone surveys to collect data regarding the need for child care services of the Chinese community.
- Carried out door-to-door surveys on Chinese residents in the Surry Hills area.
- Carried out surveys on female workers in clothing factories in the Surry Hills area.

Some of the above work was carried out with the assistance of Ms Nazli Munir of the Ethnic Child Care Development Unit.

August to November 1980

Analysed the collected data and prepared a submission to the Governments in order to apply for funding to establish a child care centre. Dr Vivienne Teoh was responsible for writing the submission.

December 1980

The report was submitted to both the Federal and the State Government, requesting for funding to set up a child care centre.

8 March 1981

The Society was formally established and was known as the "Sydney Chinese Child Care and Community Co-operative Society Ltd". The Formation Meeting was held at the Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre, approximately 70 people attended. Mr. Henry Pan was elected as the Chairman, with Mr. Ching Tan as the Secretary. Other members of the First Board included Dr Leng Tan, Dr Cecilia Fong, Ms Patricia Wong, Dr Vivienne Teoh, Mrs. Susie Chu, Mrs. Hilda Lee and Mr. Steven Sim.