



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Mother's Choice HOPE ANCHORS Charity Challenge: Gary Leung Beijing-Hong Kong Charity Run Kicks Off**

*Visually-impaired ultra-runner, Gary Leung Siu-Wai  
to run his longest distance ever to raise awareness and funds*

February 21, 2019 (Hong Kong) – Mother's Choice is excited to announce that visually-impaired ultra-runner and marathon champion, Gary Siu-wai Leung will be running 2,500 km, his longest distance ever, from Beijing to Hong Kong to raise awareness of their work serving vulnerable children and youth in Hong Kong.

From March 25 to April 28, 2019, Gary and his team of more than 35 guide runners, starting in Beijing, will run through seven provinces spanning over a 35-day period. His homecoming will be welcomed at the closing ceremony at the Hong Kong Cyberport. His goal for this charity run is to encourage and empower individuals and families to rise up to life's many challenges. It is possible to overcome and achieve incredible things when you have hope.

#### ***Hope Anchors***

Mother's Choice sees lives transformed through the power of hope. Hope is an anchor that provides the courage to grow and heal through the storms of life's trials and adversity. This is why Gary is running for Mother's Choice because it was hope, through running, that brought him out of depression after becoming blind in 2009.

"During my darkest moments when I first became blind, I was fortunate and blessed to have someone reach out to me from the community. With their encouragement and care, they came around me and gave me hope that I can also overcome my limitations and live life at my fullest," shared Gary, who took on running as a journey to recovery. "I am thrilled to have this wonderful opportunity to collaborate with Mother's Choice and to help them continue their important work in our city. This challenging route is more than double my record distance and I sincerely hope the Hong Kong community will join in by making a donation or by participating with their own personal challenge," commented Gary who has stepped up his practices since the beginning of the year to equip himself to run an average of 60-80 km within six to eight hours each day.



### ***Building Stronger Families***

Mother's Choice is a local charity that opened its doors in 1987 to serve vulnerable girls and children; their vision is to see "every child in a loving family. Despite Hong Kong's reputation for wealth and business, the needs of our city today are overwhelming. One in five children in Hong Kong live in poverty, almost four thousand live in residential care and thousands more are at risk due to family breakdown, neglect, abuse, and abandonment.

"The work that we do has never been straightforward, and we cannot provide a "quick fix" to problems," said Phyllis Marwah, co-founder of Mother's Choice. "We work in the midst of crisis, stepping into the darkest moment of someone's story, and we give them hope. Only then, can we walk with them to a place where their life story is totally changed, never to return to that crisis".

"I am thrilled and grateful that Gary's has chosen to use this challenge to raise awareness of the work that we do in building stronger families and inspiring more to join. Everyone deserves a second chance and every young girl and child deserves to have a safe, loving and permanent family", shared Phyllis Marwah, co-founder of Mother's Choice.

### ***It Takes A Village to Raise a Child***

Everyone has a role to play in caring for children and at Mother's Choice, volunteers play a special role as they make up 80% of the work force with more than 500 active volunteers each month. One long-serving volunteer is Cass Phang who is also Mother's Choice celebrity ambassador.

"When I first started volunteering at Mother's Choice, I worked with the special needs children and have come to learn that each child is unique and no matter what their disability, they each deserve to be in a family," said Cass. "It really does take a village of professional staff and dedicated volunteers who work closely with each child to help them reach their fullest potential. "

Cass shared some of her many reflections from interactions she had with the children, "Mother's Choice believes that there is a family for every child. It has truly been a privilege to watch children, even those with serious disabilities, join forever families. These children are the ones that give me hope as I see them thrive with all the loving care and personalized development plan that each receive while at Mother's Choice."

Continuing on this journey of giving love and hope, Cass announced that she will run with Gary on the last leg in Hong Kong on April 28. "I wanted to challenge myself, even though I'm not a strong runner. Seeing Gary run inspires me to do it for a great cause!" as Cass shared her response to the HOPE ANCHORS charity challenge.

The Mother's Choice HOPE ANCHORS Charity Challenge aims to raise a total of HK\$ 2 million. It is our greatest hope that everyone will be able to join us by setting their personal challenge, by starting to create their personalized HOPE GIVER page at

[www.simplygiving.com/nonprofit/motherschoice](http://www.simplygiving.com/nonprofit/motherschoice)



**Join In and be a Hope Giver**

**How to join in Mother's Choice HOPE ANCHORS Charity Challenge...**

Gary's goal is to encourage and empower individuals and families to rise up to life's many challenges. Like Gary, you too can achieve incredible things, with three simple steps:

Step 1: Set your charity challenge.

The challenge can be fun, physical, silly or test personal limits. They can also be done as an individual, group or family.

Step 2: Set the duration of your challenge.

Gary's run from Beijing to Hong Kong will take 35 days. How long will yours be?

Step 3: Set a fundraising target!

This is entirely up to you and once it's set, be sure to tell all your family and friends about it!!

Become a hope-giver by setting up a personal challenge for yourself!

Hope Giver: Gary Leung Sui-Wai

Charity Challenge: To run from Beijing to Hong Kong (2,500 km)

Duration of Challenge: 35 days, from March 25 to April 28, 2019

Hope Giver: Cass Phang

Charity Challenge: To run with Gary upon his return to HK

Duration of Challenge: For 35 days, from March 25 to April 28, Cass will train to run with Gary

Sign in at [www.simplygiving.com/nonprofit/motherschoice](http://www.simplygiving.com/nonprofit/motherschoice)

Visit [www.motherschoice.org](http://www.motherschoice.org) for more details.

**About Mother's Choice**

*Mother's Choice was founded in 1987 by a small group of people concerned with the plight of Hong Kong's single teenagers and their family members coping with crisis pregnancy. Today, Mother's Choice continues to impact the lives of thousands in our community through our three core services – Children, Youth and Family. At Mother's Choice, we are joining hands with our community to transform lives and give hope to young girls, babies, special needs children and families. Our vision is to seeing every child in a loving family. Visit [motherchoice.org](http://motherchoice.org) for more.*

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