

### ***Go's story***

*From Building HIV Competent Churches: Called to Prophecy, Reconcile and Heal, Christian Conference of Asia, 2010. Go was 16 years old when sharing this story.*

When I was a baby I lived together with my mother and father, but when I was just two years old my father became very unwell, and died. My mother and I were very sad, and we moved to live with my grandparents.

Just before my father died, he had begun to be sick often, and needed to stay in hospital. We knew then that he was HIV positive. My mother decided to have herself and me tested for the virus too, and we were both positive too. I was still very young, so my mother chose not to explain what this result meant, although from an early age I knew that I had something called HIV inside me because I had to visit the doctor at the hospital very often, and take special medicine since I was four years old. I heard the nurses and doctors at the hospital talk about HIV, and use my name at the same time.

I understood that I too was HIV positive, just like my father, but my mother thought I was too young to understand. She told me when I was about ten years old, although I had known it for several years already. When I was eight years old my mother also began to become sick, and I and my grandparents tried to help look after her. I did not go to school at the time when she was unwell because I helped look after her and there was no one to send me to school.

Our home was very near the home of one of the staff members of Church of Christ in Thailand AIDS Ministry (CAM), and Phii Oom started to visit my mother when she was ill. She helped us all as a family, by encouraging us, helping my mother access medicines to help her, and just being our friend at a time when we needed love and support. After my mother started taking medicines, her health started to improve, and she was able to look after herself again. I returned to school, and we live happily together as a family.

Through CAM I have had many opportunities to take part in activities that help me understand how to live with HIV better, and how to have a good quality of life. We also have, many times through CAM, special times together as a family, alongside other families who also are living with HIV. At CAM, we learned to tell our story.

Last year, I joined in a special programme, with twenty other young people to learn ways to tell our story, through the written word, verbally and through a photographic album of our lives via scrapbooking. I feel this helps me to express myself better, and understand my feelings better, as well as help keep my good relationship with my mother. In the future I would like to stay healthy and strong, able to complete my studies, and be able to work well when I finish school.