

March 2026

NEWSLETTER



After nearly 30 years with the same visual identity, we are proud to unveil our new logo!

(For more details, please see page 5.)

TAKING A STEP BACK TO UNFOLD ACAY'S VISION

In the hills of Tagaytay, during the final days of the cool season—just as the Philippine summer begins to make its presence felt, our management team gathered with one of our Board Members, a consultant in strategy and human resources. This setting offered a valuable opportunity to step back, reflect, and gain perspective: like an eagle in flight, allowing us to envision ACAY's future with greater clarity and purpose.

This strategic session was dedicated to finalizing the key directions for ACAY Philippines in the years ahead. From these discussions, three major priorities emerged, each reflecting the core of our mission:

- To be a voice for young people aged 16–21, who remain at the heart of ACAY's work. Beyond addressing the specific challenges faced by this age group, we aim to form and empower their voices so they may become witnesses and ambassadors of hope, carrying forward ACAY's mission among their peers. As highlighted in this newsletter, our youth in the Philippines are already making their voices heard—engaging with representatives of the United Nations, in New Zealand, and in Marseille through parenting programs.
- To position ACAY as an incubator of social innovation and a resource hub for psycho-social support, through the development of an "Innovation Hub." This initiative will build on the rich knowledge and experience accumulated over the years, enabling us to formalize our innovative practices so they are ready for replication and scaling. In doing so, we aim to contribute more effectively to the broader ecosystem that shapes the lives of young people. As our teams continue to grow through ongoing formation, this space will also open opportunities for wider learning and collaboration.
- To develop sustainable mechanisms for financing social innovation, ensuring the long-term continuity and impact of our initiatives.

Looking ahead to 2026 in Marseille, the voices of our young ambassadors will continue to resonate through a range of initiatives, including the performance "Rassemble," the release of a rap album, podcast productions, and contributions to parenting programs within the judicial system. In parallel, a pilot project is being launched with young people supported by Child Welfare Services (ASE), with the aim of inspiring not only the youth themselves but also the ecosystems around them—offering meaningful alternatives to delinquency and affirming that a different path is possible.

In this same spirit, we are pleased to share that the book "For You and for the Multitude" has now been completed in both French and English. We look forward with hope to the response of the publishing house currently reviewing this work, which presents the Metamorpho.sYs pathway and methodology.

This strategic plan has brought renewed energy and enthusiasm across our teams, while deepening our gratitude to all of you who journey with us. Together, may we continue to advance and inspire the mission and vision of ACAY.



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "St. Joseph de Jesus".



When ACAY Youth Make Their Voices Heard at the UN!

“Prove It Matters” Campaign

An inspiring day unfolded at the School of Life, where ACAY youth joyfully welcomed **Ms. Ariane Lignier, Special Representative of the United Nations for Children and Armed Conflict**. This visit was part of the “Prove It Matters” campaign, a UN initiative that gives young people a platform to speak directly to world leaders on behalf of those who cannot speak for themselves. Through this campaign, ACAY youth refined their messages to become a Voice that carries.

“Dear world leaders, we, children who have suffered, need centers and shelters that offer more than basic needs. We need SAFE places that bring emotional security and provide real educational programs to help us heal, grow, learn, and prepare to reintegrate into society.”

“Impunity and the slow enforcement of laws leave children suffering while perpetrators feel safe. We urge you, world leaders, to strictly enforce laws protecting children. Offenders must face strong consequences so that we can live without fear.”



“In the Philippines, children are treated like property, given to other families as if they had no value. Here, children suffer corporal violence within families, leaving deep and lasting trauma. ‘Prove It Matters’—prove to us that we matter. Defend our rights. Parents should not have the right to harm us.”

“Stop favoritism. Stop abandoning girls who are victims while sheltering sons.”

“Children and women are abused, raped, and exploited. Yet the pressure of family planning often falls solely on women. World leaders, create mandatory programs where young men learn sexual responsibility, respect, and equality so that abuse ends and everyone shares responsibility for a better future.”

“Young offenders are often mistreated from the moment of arrest, even when it is uncertain they committed an offense. We want equal rights and to see our dignity respected.”

Impressed by the depth of their reflections, Ms. Ariane remarked: “I have been to many centers, but I always heard the same things. This is the first time I hear young people not only identify problems but also propose concrete solutions.” She committed to transmit their messages and highlight them, along with the origami doves they prepared as symbols of peace.

-Sr. Laetitia Gorczyca,
Finance Head





A Partnership Returns!

After three long years of waiting, hope, and patience, ACAY was finally able to return to one of the juvenile detention centers to resume a partnership of two decades interrupted by the pandemic. The relaunch of administrative procedures took time, with signatures passing between offices and stacks of files. For our team, returning to this place felt like coming home.



The local teams marked the occasion with great significance: present were the Quezon City Youth Commissioner, social workers, the Center Director, and our long-standing partners, the Rotary Club of Belmonte. ACAY Ambassadors—former youth beneficiaries—opened the event by sharing their testimonies: second chances that became victories over the past.

Listening to the stories of Arjay, Louie, and Rainier—moving from gangs to peaceful family life and entrepreneurship, from lack of direction to professional purpose—one could sense the detained youth projecting themselves into the future, imagining that one day it would be their turn to share their own story.

“ACAY was a turning point in my life.”

“For the first time, I was accompanied in discovering myself, my strengths and weaknesses. I was impulsive and angry. Today, I know how to master myself and take responsibility in my work.”

“My challenge was facing my past. ACAY supported me in resolving painful situations, and today my life has direction.”

Their journeys of transformation were raw, demanding, sincere, and profoundly inspiring. As they spoke, it was palpable to see the dawn of new hope in the captivated eyes of the detained youth—the hope slowly appearing in their smiles, and the silent realization that change is truly possible.

The Youth Commissioner approached Sr. Edith and whispered: “Listening to your presentation and the testimonies of the youth, I think we have taken the wrong approach. We offered trainings but forgot your pedagogical approach: Change begins from within.”

Rooted in two decades of collaboration, this return to the center rekindles the certainty that every young person—even behind bars—carries within them a light capable of transforming their story.

It’s on again!

— Luke Furman,
SCP, Rehabilitative Subprograms
Officer





When the Justice System, National Education, and Civil Society Come Together

ACAY France Youth at the Heart of Parenting Programs

We all know that schooling is compulsory until the age of 16, **but what happens when a child stops attending school?**

A specific measure has been introduced by the justice system: parenting responsibility workshops, offered as an alternative to fines for parents whose children accumulate excessive school absences.


“The parenting responsibility workshop aims to remind parents of the legal, economic, social, and moral obligations involved in raising a child. This workshop is part of a collective dynamic.”
(Source: Citoyens & Justice)

In France, 76,000 young people leave the school system each year (INSEE, 2023).

In January, Ines and Ange (a young person supported by ACAY and now a Business BTS student) took part in one of these workshops. This marked ACAY’s third intervention, and the organization is now systematically involved in each session. This ongoing presence allows ACAY to bring a concrete perspective, closely connected to the lived realities of school dropouts and their families.

The session began with a collective meeting at the Juvenile Court of Marseille, bringing together several key stakeholders: the justice system, National Education, the Youth Judicial Protection service, social services—and ACAY.

“The Justice system, National Education, ADDAP13, and ACAY are working together at the same table with a shared objective. There is a real alliance—these are major institutions that do not always work together, and yet here they are, all united for the same purpose. It is powerful.”



-Ines, Head of Programs, ACAY France

First, the deputy prosecutor delivered a legal reminder: what the law states, what risks parents may face, and why schooling is essential for a child’s development. A short video was then shown, carrying a simple yet powerful message: **“If your child is not at school, where are they? What are they doing? And who are they with?”**

The deputy prosecutor then expanded on this reminder by highlighting concrete realities: drug trafficking, social media risks, prostitution, and the dangers faced by a child left without supervision.

It was then ACAY’s turn to speak, through the testimony of Ange. He shared his difficult school journey, as well as what helped him get back on track: “School saved me.”

After the group session, each family is received individually to discuss their situation and set concrete goals for the parents.

We believe in this: sometimes, it only takes a testimony, a single sentence, or a moment of realization to change the course of a life.



Ange, ACAY Ambassador

“I felt a great sense of pride and joy in sharing my testimony in front of such a large audience, which I am not used to. I believe I am a good example in terms of schooling, because I experienced absenteeism in my own journey. I think my testimony truly served a purpose and had an impact on everyone, including the parents.”

Citoyens & Justice. “Parenting Responsibility Workshop.” <https://www.citoyens-justice.fr/pre-sententiel/mesures-collectives-stages/stage-de-responsabilite-parentale.html>. Accessed 17 February 2026.

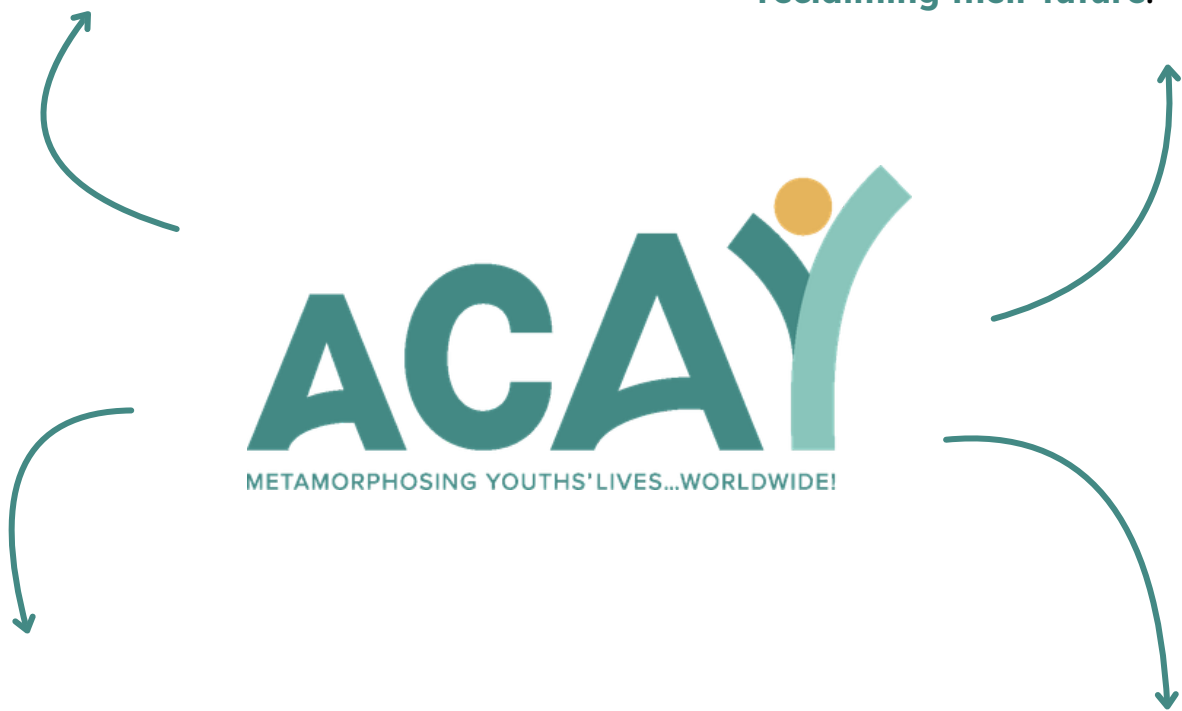
OUR NEW VISUAL IDENTITY

More modern and refined, our new logo reflects what has always driven us: supporting the transformation of young people around the world.

But a logo is more than just an image...
It carries our vision and embodies a powerful symbolism

The **bold typography** reflects a strong and steady foundation: one that creates a **safe and supportive space** for young people to grow.

The **rising “Y”** forms a human figure in motion, symbolizing a young person **standing up, moving forward, and reclaiming their future.**



Our **colors** bring this vision to life: **Green** (growth and brighter future) with mixture of **blue** (confidence and support), with a touch of **yellow** representing energy and potential!

The **growing letters** symbolize the **growth and progressive metamorphosis** of the youth

ACAY Philippines in New Zealand!



For more than a decade, our ACAY graduates have been sent across Europe to share their testimonies of transformation, becoming ambassadors of a new hope. For the first time this January, as we end the 25th anniversary celebration of the School of Life, Angelane, newly graduated from the School of Life, joined Sr Rachel in New Zealand for a two-week mission.

The first wonder experienced was New Zealand's peaceful landscapes. In the vastness of New Zealand, the young Filipina found the chance to breathe deeply - to fill her lungs with fresh air and to discover life from a broader, more expansive perspective, in all its fullness.

We met hundreds of people — known and unknown, young and older — and everywhere, our testimonies of ACAY Philippines' mission moved hearts.

“Sister Rachel spoke first, explaining the mission — not only accompanying girls who have lived through trauma but also helping young offenders rebuild their lives. I was struck by the depth of that commitment.

TESTIMONY OF ANGELANE

“I never imagined that at my age I would travel to another country, and I felt deeply grateful for the chance to see the world from a wider perspective. Speaking at youth gatherings became one of the highlights of the mission. Sharing my testimony and seeing how it inspired others filled me with joy, and the friendships that grew from those moments continue even now. Meeting sponsors and benefactors was equally meaningful, as I saw firsthand how their generosity becomes part of transforming young lives. Traveling across both the North and South Islands, I met countless kind and welcoming people and discovered new places that broadened my outlook. This journey changed me. It showed me how far our mission can reach and reminded me once again that what we do carries hope — wherever it is shared. One encounter I will never forget was a woman who approached me in tears, telling me how deeply she was moved by our testimonies, and how few organizations dedicate themselves to this kind of work. Her words reminded me why sharing my story matters.”

Then Angelane stood up. Despite her youth, she spoke with a calm strength that immediately drew everyone in. As she shared her story, I felt the whole church grow still. Her honesty, her courage, and her journey toward forgiveness moved many of us to tears. The emotion in the room was unmistakable. I walked away deeply touched. Hearing her testimony led me to realise how powerful ACAY's mission is, and it left me wanting to support it through my prayers and in whatever ways I can”. -Testimony of Soizic Cutforth

This immersion in the Kiwi world was the first, but definitely not the last!



-Sr. Rachel Myriam Luxford, SOL Program Manager

Walking together with institutions for the transformation of youth!



Thanks to the steadfast support of the husband of the Ambassador of Hungary and the Ambassador of the Czech Republic, ACAY Missions Philippines had the honor, on January 12, 2026, of meeting the **Mayor of Quezon City, Ms. Joy Belmonte**. This encounter marked a decisive step in our shared commitment to empower young people and to build bridges of collaboration between institutions and NGOs.

During the exchange, ACAY presented to Mayor Belmonte our mission, our programs, and the advocacy born of 28 years of accompanying youth. Listening with genuine interest, she immediately asked her team to respond to ACAY's current operational concerns. Her spontaneous responsiveness deeply touched us, reflecting her openness to support initiatives that uplift vulnerable youth.

Networking alongside diplomats and institutions opens unexpected doors and creates partnerships rich in meaning. We look forward to soon welcoming Mayor Belmonte among us so that she may meet the young people we accompany and discover more about their journeys of transformation.

— Yvonne D. Gutierrez, Deputy Executive Director

