

# AKTIVITI ACS

For Private Circulation Only

January 2001

## **Introducing New Centre – ACS STEP CENTRE**

The ACS Adult Training Programme had a refreshing start in a new premise in Complex Sri Relau this January 2001. (This expansion is made possible with a kind gratis provision of a shplot for a duration of 15 years!!)

After 2 months' of hectic preparation i.e. renovating and equipping the premise, interviewing and assessing new intake, STEP CENTRE began operations on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2001 with 10 trainees with intellectual disabilities.

The acronym for STEP is Skills Training Employment Preparation and as the name suggests, the centre offers a one year full-time programme which covers pre-vocational skills training, vocational assessment as well as trial job placements.

We are looking for job placement opportunities for these trainees as well as packaging and assembly type assignments. Please let us know if your company can offer such assistance.

For those of you who want to visit or help out as volunteers, the training centre is situated at No. 1-3-9 Komplek Sri Relau, Persiaran Bukit Jambul 1, 11900 Penang. Tel : 04 – 6462804.

## **Highlight – ACS Stepping Stone Centre, Balik Pulau**

Let me have the pleasure to share with you a little of what transpires at this workplace. There are currently 7 members in 4 work sections:

Cake Section – The members display amazing teamwork and independence in the entire process of cake baking i.e. preparation of ingredients, mixing, molding, oven baking and packaging. These cakes are supplied on a weekly basis to 8 school canteens in the area. In December, the members tried out new recipes for cookies, which was successfully sold for Hari Raya.

Weaving Section – The members can produce an average of 18 pieces of hand woven cloths of 4 meters a month. They have started to dye their own yarn, and more recently with the usage of natural dyes. They also help out in the preparation of products to be sewn.

Candle Section – Besides being involved in the preparation of wicks and molds, members create different candles such as cube candles, layered candles, tapered candles, ice candles etc.. The first two types being the most popular and marketable.

Soap Section – Dish wash soap is the most laborious section as they are all individually hand stirred and a maturation period of up to 10 days is required before the soap can be used. Nevertheless, the product is well worth the effort. The past few months, we have started to look into recycling used oil into soap. And for this we are grateful to a vegetarian restaurant for the supply of used oil.

Members – With their hard earned salary, they have been able to open a bank account, buy personal things like shirts, sneakers, trousers etc.. and in October, all 7 members made a weekend trip down to Kuala Lumpur to participate in a walkathon. The pride of being a wage earner!!

### **Highlight – ACS First Step Centre, Minden Heights**

First eye contact, first response, first steps, first words – these are all the events that we joyfully witness here at First Step Centre.

Graduation Day - 6 of our six year olds officially graduated from the programme on November 18<sup>th</sup>. This ‘splashing’ celebration was held at Bukit Merah Laketown Resort and was attended by over 100 people.

We started the year 2001 with a total of 38 children. It is encouraging to note that referrals for babies are on the increase. As early intervention is the whole crux of the programme, we are planning towards the creation of a babies’ stimulation room.

This year, as a further outreach to the rural community, we are also contemplating the start of a Mobile Toy Library.

### **Staff Matters**

Overseas Placement - 2 of our staff had the opportunity to go over to Japan for placement observations in July and October 2000. These trips were made possible with sponsorships from Yutaka Group and Palette International.

Staffing – our staff team has increased over the years and right now we have a total of 10 full-time staff and 4 full-time volunteers, covering the 3 centres. We are grateful for their dedication and service, for without their partnership, ACS would not be able to carry out its mission.

### **Other Activities**

Riding for the Disabled – in the second half of 2000, together with members of the Penang Polo Club, we held a 8 week horse back riding session for children

from different centres in Penang. This year, we will continue the riding sessions on a weekly basis.

Just the sheer fact that these tiny tots can sit and trot so confidently makes the programme so worthwhile. Horse back riding not only exercises the muscles and helps with coordination & balancing, it also helps with the building up of self-control and self-esteem. The programme is held on alternate Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Penang Polo Club. Please come and be a volunteer.

Training Workshops – we have been able to organise a few workshops with topics ranging from Inclusive Education, Transition from Youth to Adulthood, Hand Weaving etc.. ACS also coordinated a one-month staff exchange placement for 2 child care workers from Japan in October.

ACS Charity Fair – which took place at the end of October turned out to be a mammoth event held at the Penang International Sports Arena. Under the apt chairmanship of Ms Gillian Teh, we managed to raise RM 128,000. The amount was designated for the setting up costs and one year running expenditure of Step Centre.

We are grateful for the participation of so many volunteers, contributors and supporters. And it is indeed this group of sacrificial people who have given their time and money to support a worthwhile cause that has made our activities possible.

The United Nations has proclaimed the year 2001 to be the “**International Year of Volunteers (IYV)**” in recognition of contributions and achievements of volunteers worldwide. To all ACS supporters, donors and volunteers, may I have the honour to pay you this tribute.

Warm Regards,  
*Khor Ai-Na*  
Director

***VOLUNTEERING involves you sharing your knowledge and skills with those in need with no expectation of reward. When you volunteer, the community you work with benefits from the assistance or the knowledge you have given. You in turn, benefit from the experience of sharing and learning from the community you have worked with. Volunteering is different from charity work. Charity involves one party giving and the other party receiving. Volunteering, however, is a partnership arrangement that benefits both parties.***

***A Non-Profit Organisation Providing Services To People With Special Needs, In Particular Reference To Those With Disabilities.***

## RESPONSE SLIP

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- I would like to be a regular volunteer in :
  - First Step Intervention Centre, Minden Heights
  - Step Training Centre, Relau
  - Stepping Stone Work Centre, Balik Pulau
  - administration
  - fund-raising
  - swimming / horse riding
  - others \_\_\_\_\_
- I would like to be put on your mailing list
- I would like to make a donation of RM \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Order/Cheque No : \_\_\_\_\_ Date : \_\_\_\_\_

*(Please make all cheques payable to Asia Community Service)*

Signature : \_\_\_\_\_

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel No : \_\_\_\_\_ (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (O)



### ASIA COMMUNITY SERVICE

C0-23-UP Kompleks Masyarakat Penyayang, Jalan Utama, 10450 Penang

Email : [acspen@po.jaring.my](mailto:acspen@po.jaring.my)

First Step: 33 Changkat Minden Jalan 3, Gelugor, 11700 Penang

Phone : 04 – 6585396 Fax: 04 - 6597852

Step Centre: 1-3-9 Kompleks Sri Relau, Pesisiran Bukit Jambul 1, 11900 Pg

Phone : 04 – 6462804 Fax: 04 - 6597852

Stepping Stone: 11 Tingkat Seri Genting 2, Balik Pulau, 11000 Penang

Phone / Fax : 04 - 8665349