

AKTIVITI ACS

For Private Circulation Only

January 2002

LIFE IS SHORT

The incident on September 11 last year made me realised how fragile life can be. I still shudder at the thought of the number of people killed for nothing, as well as the number of lives made disabled, either physically or emotionally.

Following that, the war in Afghanistan further provokes this insanity that our world is in. And at the end of last year in December, I attended the UN-ESCAP Campaign 2001, which was held in Hanoi, Vietnam, a country full of land mines.

To this day, I am unable to comprehend why people in their right minds would want to intentionally cause disability. And here we are trying so desperately to prevent and cope with disability matters.

I challenge you all to consider the fragility of our lives on this earth. Life is short. While many of us are battling to be the best, the fastest and the richest, let us for a moment think of many others who are battling just to survive.

Each one of us has only one life here on this earth. Let us live it to its fullest. Let us make it more meaningful by giving to the needy; be amongst the poor and to advocate for the rights of the disadvantaged.

I have included 2 short stories in this Newsletter for your perusal.

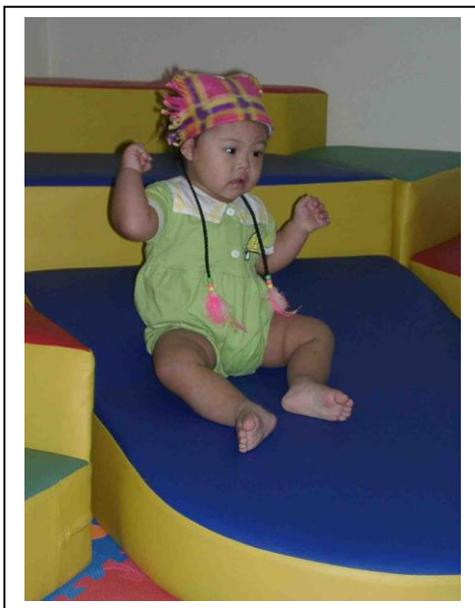
FIRST STEP CENTRE

Six kids left us at the end of last year upon their graduation. We wish them well as they start their formal schooling at the start of this year.

We now have a total of 47 pre-school kids on our First Step enrolment, with a sizeable number of 17 babies & toddlers!

The Babies' Stimulation Room, with a small grant from the Association of British Women in Malaysia (ABWM), is our latest pride of the Centre. Our only complaint is that we do not have enough space!!

Thanks also to the Rotary Club of Bayan Baru who raised funds for us to purchase another Touch Window Screen as well as other computer peripherals for the children.



Number of Staff: 4
(Lee Soo Hoon, Ch'ng Sim Oon, M. Sakun, Maria Anthony)
Number of Children: 47 children
Estimated Budget: RM 7,000 per month
Material Needs: More toys, VCD Player

“JOM!” MOBILE TOY LIBRARY

The “Jom!” Toy Library, which currently goes out on a bi-weekly basis to 4 locations i.e. Juru, Butterworth, Kepala Batas and Balik Pulau has a current membership of 27 children.

We are thankful that many people have given toys and their time to help out with this project. Much to our delight, Mattel (Malaysia) donated a vanload of Fisher Price toys to us in July 2001.

In November, we were encouraged by the visit of a team from the Japanese National Council of Toy Libraries, who has perpetually given us their support in many ways.

In order to expand the project, we are on a look out for corporate sponsorship to help us defray the costs incurred e.g. petrol, toll, staff salary, etc..



Number of Staff: 1 (Joanne Tan)
Number of Members: 27 children
Estimated Budget: RM 3,000 per month
Needs: More toys, volunteers, computer

STEP TRAINING CENTRE

This training programme for the young adults with intellectual disabilities is running very well with the exception of two major supports that have been identified as lacking, i.e. housing options and transportation.

Many of these young adults lead a very sheltered and protected life within their own family. They are often not given a chance to play a useful part in the family or the community. Hence the more sheltered they are, the more dependent they will be and that will lead to them being more disabled in the eyes of society.

As our goal is towards independent living, we feel the need to supplement the programme by offering a short-term home away from home. So we are on a watch-out for homes that could be made available for us to use for this purpose. Is there anyone out there who has a small apartment in Relau / Bukit Jambul area or any area within the public transport route?



Number of Staff: 3 (Loh Siew Har, V. Kalavathy, Kang Hooi Keng)

Number of Trainees: 10 young adults

Estimated Budget: RM 5,000 per month

Needs: Job placement opportunities, a van, a small apartment, volunteers, A3 size laminating machine

STEPPING STONE CENTRE

We are glad that Shahrman, a 37 year old member with Down Syndrome, who suffered a stroke in October, is making marvellous recovery and has now returned to work.

In November, 4 of our members participated in the International Culture & Arts Festival held at PWTC in Kuala Lumpur. They demonstrated in candle making and cloth weaving. And they won 2 prizes in their submission of products for the handicraft competition!!

This workplace produces lovely hand-made candles; home-baked cup cakes and cookies. In another room, the members hand weave cloths which are churned into woven products such as coin purses, pencil cases, spectacle holder, vests etc.. One smaller section recycle used vegetarian oil into dish wash soap.

If you think you can help us market these products, please contact us for more information.

Otherwise, feel free to pop in for a visit.



Number of Staff: 3 (Hasra Othman, Jamilah Ismail, Crystal Tan)

Number of Members: 9 adults

Estimated Budget: RM 7,000 per month

Needs: T.V., Video Player, Electric Sewing Machine, Digital Weighing Machine, Heavy Duty Cake Mixer

OTHER UPDATES

Building Project in Balik Pulau – After overcoming the difficulty in the land conversion etc., we are relieved to announce that we are in the final process of submission of the building plans. We must express our appreciation for the kind assistance and professional support given by BYG Architecture and his team.

Stepping Stone Workplace will be relocated to this new venue upon the completion of the building. We are still short of RM 100,000 to equip the building.

Staff Exchange Programme – Jasmine and Charissa, 2 child care workers from KL were selected to participate in the one month Exchange Programme in Japan sponsored by Foundation for Children's Future in October. And 2 of our ACS staff, Ch'ng and Jamilah also had the privilege to spent 2 weeks in October observing work places and independent living facilities in Japan.

Flying Wheelchairs Project – our latest involvement is to coordinate this project, which aims to bring over re-furbished wheelchairs from Japan. So far, 2 motorised wheelchairs have been brought in and donated to individuals here in Penang.

One of the commendable features of this project is that the wheelchairs are re-furbished as part of a technical high school project.

Home of Acorns – with permission from the producer, ACS is distributing an animated movie, which portrays the plight of a family with a child with special needs. This 95-minute movie, based on a true story in Japan, is available in VCD format with a contribution of RM 15.00 per piece.

We encourage you to buy at least 2 pieces - one for yourself and one for your neighbour. Help us to widen the circulation. Proceeds raised will be put towards the building fund of First Step EIP Centre.

OUR APPEAL

With all these above activities, our monthly expenses have gone up to almost RM 25,000 per month. Besides rental of premises, the bulk of the expenditure is the investment of 13 full-time dedicated staff, all who have consciously chosen this vocation in order to have a part in making a difference to the lives of people with special needs.

Once again, we want to appeal for your involvement and financial support in order to carry on the work that has been started. You might perhaps like to consider us your beneficiary of a fund raising event.

Your contribution, however big or small, in kind or in cash, will certainly be greatly appreciated and will be an encouragement to our work.

Thank You and Have a Good Year Ahead.

Warm Regards,

Khor Ai-Na

Director

**People, regardless of their disabilities,
should live in the community where they want,
with whom they want, for as long as they want,
with whatever supports they need
to make that happen.**

- Ferguson, Leinen and Schaff -

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

RESPONSE SLIP

- I would like more information / to be a regular volunteer in:
 - First Step Intervention Centre, Minden Heights
 - Step Training Centre, Relau
 - Stepping Stone Work Centre, Balik Pulau
 - "JOM!" Mobile Toy Library
 - Horse Riding / Swimming / Special Olympics
 - Administration/Fund Raising
- I would like to be put on your mailing list
- I would like to make a general donation of RM _____ .
- I would like to donate RM _____ towards the building fund.

Postal Order/Cheque No : _____ Date : _____
(Please make all cheques payable to Asia Community Service)

Signature : _____

Name : _____

Address: _____

Tel No : _____ (H) _____ (O)

ASIA COMMUNITY SERVICE

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Phone: 04 – 6585396 Fax: 04 – 6597852

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

Phone / Fax: 04 – 6462804

Stepping Stone: 3 Tingkat Seri Genting 2, Balik Pulau, 11000 Penang.

Phone / Fax: 04 – 8665349

"Jom!" Mobile Toy Library: Mobile Phone 016-4487006

