

AKTIVITI ACS

For Private Circulation Only

January 2004

Your Worth

A well known speaker started off his seminar by holding up a \$20 bill. In the room of 200, he asked, "Who would like this \$20 bill?" Hands started going up. He said, "I am going to give this \$20 to one of you but first, let me do this."

He proceeded to crumple the dollar bill up. He then asked, "Who still wants it?" Still the hands were up in the air. "Well," he replied, "What if I do this?" And he dropped it on the ground and started to grind it into the floor with his shoe. He picked it up, now all crumpled and dirty.

"Now who still wants it?" Still the hands went into the air. "My friends, you have all learned a very valuable lesson. No matter what I did to the money, you still wanted it because it did not decrease in value. It was still worth \$20".

"Many times in our lives, we are dropped, crumpled, and ground into the dirt by the decisions we make and the circumstances that come our way. We feel as though we are worthless. But no matter what has happened or what will happen, you will never lose your value...."

"Dirty or clean, crumpled or finely creased, you are still priceless to those who DO love you. The worth of our lives comes not in what we do or who we know, but by WHO WE ARE. You are special - Don't EVER forget it."

Probably for you and I, we can easily relate to the above narrative. But how easy is it for a person with disability? If we concur that disabled people have the same worth, then we are disrespecting them by hiding them away, making decisions for them, denying them their rights etc..

People with disability are not born with lower self-esteem, but have developed them by the way our society treats them. Our society has limited their ability and worthlessness to fully participate in the life activities one takes for granted each day.

Can you imagine a child being turned away from kindergarten enrolment because of his or her developmental delays? With an early start of being rejected, what will become of this child?

Can you imagine, the criteria for entering special class in a public school is that the child has to be trainable and independent? The criteria are so subjective that can you imagine the stress families go through in “fighting the system”?

Can you imagine how it is for a person who is born slow to be always compared with his siblings by parents, scolded by teachers, stared by the public and teased at the workplace??

Can you imagine a woman with intellectual disability bathing with the bathroom door ajar just so that the family members can “keep an eye” on her?

Why have we subjected people with disabilities and their families to become beggars for (health, educational, training, employment, transport etc..) services?

If everyone is indeed of equal worth, then people with disabilities should be accorded adequate support, equal privileges and opportunities to ensure their worth and their rights as a fellow human being in our society.

PROPOSED PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Much has been depended on the charity of our neighbours, goodwill of the society and occasional policies from the government when it comes to solving the problems faced by people with disabilities.

However, it remains a deep concern that people with disabilities and their carers are still being discriminated in all aspects of life due to the absence of a legislation to protect their basic rights in Malaysia.

As a coalition member of Societies of and for People with Disabilities and NGOs in Penang, Asia Community Service is actively involved in a signature campaign to support and expedite the proposed Persons with Disabilities Act to be passed at the next Parliament sitting in 2004.

The details of the proposed PWD Act is available on the website (www.dsapenang.org/signaturecampaign). Please log-on to support us in this campaign.



Tan Sri Lee Lam
Thye launching the
Signature Campaign
in Bukit Jambul
Complex

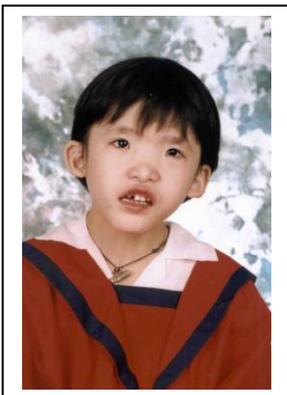
FIRST STEP CENTRE

Meet our four graduates for this year – Kailyn, Mursyid, Hooi Chin and Michael. They have been our greatest challenge.

Michael had encephalitis and Hooi Chin has epilepsy. Kailyn and Mursyid who have Down Syndrome, are also hearing impaired.

One thing they have in common is they all have a set of concerned parents who need much support and encouragement as the four of them venture out to “school” in 2004.

At this point of writing, 2 of them are able to indicate toileting needs, while the other two are still learning. We hope that the teachers and schools will accept them for who they are and be able to see their difficulties as challenges.



Top Row
Michael, Kailyn, Mursyid

Left Picture
Hooi Chin

NEW SUPPORT CENTRE FOR COMMUNITY LIVING

“Exciting” is a good word to summarise the past few months at Pulau Betong. We received a grant from the Lions Club International Foundation in July through the cooperative effort of the Lions Club of Nagoya Minato and the Lions Club of Georgetown Penang. And thirteen new and old members of ACS Stepping Stone Work Centre started to occupy the new building in August.



Three months of orientation to the new place and I can say that they are slowly but surely settling into their work routine. The 4 work sections are

1. Kitchen – baking cookies, cakes and catering of lunch.
2. Weaving Room – weaving, warping, spinning and dyeing of yarn.
3. Craft Room – candle making, batik painting, and soap making.
4. Pottery Room – *activity to be introduced soon.*

We are awed at the steady stream of visitors from the local community popping by almost daily. The visitors in return, are awed at the products churned out by our members. All these add up to the excitement of positive awareness being created.

CAMP & BUNGALOW STAY

In mid-December, 21 adults with intellectual disabilities from ACS Step Training Centre and ACS Stepping Stone Work Centre came together in a joint 3 days 2 nights camp and bungalow stay at the new site in Pulau Betong.

Supported by volunteers, they pitched tents, enjoyed beach games and BBQ; walking in the rain, playing football, riding bicycles; and singing and dancing each evening. If only all of us could be as youthful and energetic!



CHARITY FUND-RAISING EFFORTS

The past few months, our spirits have been lifted up with several fund-raising efforts where ACS has been a beneficiary.

Our grateful thanks to Dreamz Foundation for organising the “British-Colonial Evening”; the Organising Committee of “Caring Moments, Touching Lives” Dinner Show; CGL Ex-Pupils Association for organising the Food Carnival; and the Shono Mayo Charity Concert Organising Committee in K.L. It is difficult to name each and everyone who have patronised those events in supporting us but thank you anyway.

Similar thanks to Intel, Dari Penang Ladies, The Learning Garden, Promedia, International Women’s Association, Friends in Scotland and many individuals who have encouraged us greatly with their donations in the past few months.

With Best Wishes for the New Year,

Khor Ai-Na

Director

**If you believe that all human beings
should be equal, this greatly simplifies life.
People may not be equal due to their stations in
life, or gender, or wealth or even race,
but if you believe that despite all that,
they should be, then your perspective on life
becomes easy.**

- Marina Mahathir -

*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
 - 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: 53 Jalan Baru, Pulau Betong, Balik Pulau, 11000 Penang.

Phone / Fax: 04 – 8665349

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



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