

AKTIVITI ACS

For Private Circulation Only

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UN Convention

There is an estimated population of 650 million people with disabilities worldwide, a number that can no longer remain insignificant. In August 2006, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (PWD).

"Too often, those living with disabilities have been seen as objects of embarrassment, and at best, of condescending pity and charity. On paper they have enjoyed the same rights as others. In real life, they have often been relegated to the margins and denied the opportunities that others take for granted", said UN Deputy Secretary-General Mark Malloch Brown.

The convention sets out in detail the rights of PWDs. It covers civil and political rights, accessibility, participation and inclusion, education, health, employment and social protection. The treaty also recognises that attitudes need to change if people with disabilities are to achieve equality.

The treaty will enter into force once it has been ratified by each of the 192 member states of the UN. Countries that adopt the treaty will have to put it into practice by getting rid of laws, customs and practices that discriminate against PWDs. They will have to introduce laws to ensure that PWDs are treated fairly.

We hope Malaysia will be amongst one of the earliest countries to sign the ratification in March 2007.

NECIC 2006

The 1st National Early Childhood Intervention Conference (NECIC 2006) which was held in mid-November in Penang, was jointly organized by a nation-wide coalition of 21 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in collaboration with UNICEF Malaysia, Department of Welfare (Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development), the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health.

The three day conference attracted a total of 358 delegates including 30 local speakers and 9 from Australia, U.K. and Singapore. Paper presenters range from parents sharing their experiences, to scientific papers from academicians and policy discussion by government agencies.

Plenary sessions covered topics such as models and approaches of early childhood intervention; screening, early detection and management; meeting educational needs and how parents can take the lead.

The Conference Theme "*Parents, Practitioners and Policy Makers in Positive Partnership*" was indeed appropriate as it has brought together all persons and agencies involved in the care, development and education of children with special needs.

A Memorandum on Early Childhood Intervention setting out objectives and future directions for early childhood intervention services in Malaysia was adopted by the delegates.

Children took the stage and presented a recital of the "kiddies' version" of the memorandum at the closing ceremony.



We are honoured to have Datin Paduka Seri Rosmah Mansor, wife of our Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia as our guest of honour as well as Puan Sri Chui Kah Peng, wife of the Chief Minister of Penang to grace the event.

TALKS AND TRAINING WORKSHOPS

Hillary Epton, a visiting professional from the Centre for Inclusive Schooling in Perth shared with us on “Supporting the Learning of Students with Special Needs in Mainstream Classes” on August 9th.

Anne Squire, an educational consultant from the Downs Syndrome Society of South Australia ran a one-day workshop on “Developing Early Fine Motor and Literacy Skills” for 90 people on November 21st as part of the NECIC 2006 Post Conference Workshop.

Robert Deller, a clinical psychologist, conducted an intensive 5 day training on the use of the Autism Diagnostic Interview (ADI-R) for selected key personnel from the various welfare NGOs following the NECIC 2006.

On November 25th, several of our team members attended an inspiring talk on Self-Advocacy by Dan Goodley in Kuala Lumpur. We are glad that two of the Mutiara Voice Club members were also able to attend.

On December 2nd, Hajjah Juairiah Johari and her team of parents came up to Penang and shared with us about her work in SMK Bandar Sunway. She motivated all of us with her enthusiasm. We hope that many who were in attendance will be challenged to do the tasks laid forth before us.

WORLD SIGHT DAY

Working in collaboration with Penang Adventist Hospital and Lions Club of Georgetown, a medical health screening, glaucoma and cataract eye testing for the community in Balik Pulau was held at the ACS Stepping Stone Centre on October 1st 2006. A total of 15 needy people were identified for cataract operation which will be sponsored by PAH and the Lions Club.

Consultant Ophthalmologist and Eye Surgeon, Dr Raymond Tah conducting the eye test.



DINNER & DANCE 2006

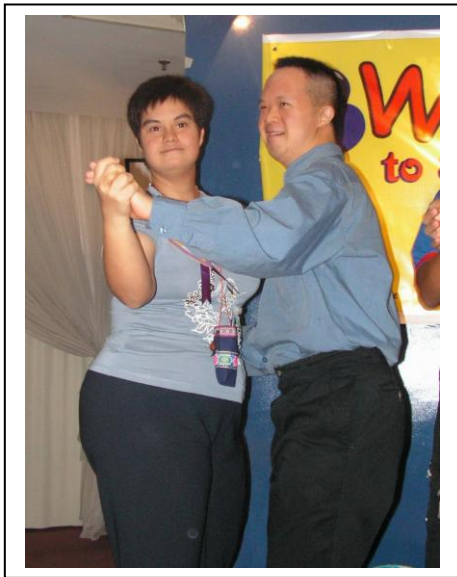
“A night of rock & roll” was the theme for the Social Dinner & Dance jointly organised by members from Mutiara Voice Club, a self advocacy group of people with intellectual disabilities in Penang, together with ACS.

Over 130 people were in attendance that evening of December 15th. Some came dressed in leather jackets, tight jeans and groovy sunglasses from that era.

We were also honoured with the presence of our many guests from United Voice (Selangor), Friendship Club (Kuala Lumpur), Dragon Club (Kajang) and their supporting friends.

Best dancer awards, best dressed costume according to theme awards and lucky draws were among the highlights of the evening.

We are thankful to everybody who made this event possible.



Enjoying a slow number.



Our own Elvis Presley in action.

MEMBERS' FORUM

In conjunction with the visiting self-advocacy groups from Klang Valley, a forum was held on Dec 16th 2006. The forum featured several individuals sharing about their experiences in open employment and other work place settings. The four self advocacy groups i.e. United Voice, Friendship Club, Dragon Cub and Mutiara Voice Club made such interesting and impressive presentations about their various activities.

Discussion groups were held to allow the members to express their feelings about their life, their work, their interests etc..

Sariha sharing on the activities of Mutiara Voice Club.



It was a great experience for all of us. We are encouraged to learn that our visitors enjoyed their trip to Penang; just as much as we enjoyed hosting them.



UPDATES OF ACTIVITIES

Burglary

During the recent long festive break, the ACS First Step Centre was broken into – again for the fourth time. In the past, the burglars did not take much except for our donation boxes. This time however, they took two units of computers and laser printers. It is a real loss as the computer touch screen monitors were specially ordered for the children's usage at the centre. The entire loss is estimated at approximately RM 10,000.00.

We want to make an appeal for funds to purchase the items as soon as possible, especially the touch screen monitors so that the children's programme will not be further disrupted.

First Step Graduation

Six-year old children from First Step's Class of 2006 graduated with much fanfare and pride on November 26th 2006 with a party organised by the parents at the Penang Sports' Club.

The 9 graduating children put up a performance. Their siblings took part with violin recital, dances and songs.



Placement of Students & Staff

In October, we hosted 2 social welfare officers from Foundation for Children's Future, Japan for 3 weeks. They were placed in children's homes for observational learning experiences.

Two final year special education students from USM were placed at our ACS centres for 3 months. It was a learning experience for both parties. They ran an intensive short term programme for some of our children on our waiting list at First Step Centre.

In November, two third year students (in social work and remedial education) from Gent, Belgium started their 3½ months placement with us.

Two weeks before the year ended, we are glad to learn that we have won an award of RM 10,000 from the Ford Environmental and Conservation Grant 2006.

Thank you also to many individuals and groups who have continuously supported us in our work. Asia Community Service is indebted to all our supporters and contributors as we entered into our 10th year

With best wishes for the Year 2007,

Khor Ai-Na
Director

One manager let employees know how valuable they are with the following memo:

"You Arx A Kxy Pxrsn"

Xvxn though my typxwritxr is an old modxl, it works vxry wxll - xxxcpt for onx kxy. You would think that with all thx othxer kxys functioning propxrlly, onx kxy not working would hardly bx noticxd; but just onx kxy out of whack sxxms to ruin thx wholx xffort.

You may say to yoursxlf -- Wxll, I'm only onx pxrsn. No onx will noticx if I don't do my bxst. But it doxs makx a diffxrxncx, bxcausx an xffxctivx organization nxxds activx participation by vxxy onx to thx bxst of his or hxr ability.

So, thx nxxt timx you think you arx not important, rxmxmbxr my old typxwritxr. You arx a kxy pxrsn.

-- Pasadena Weekly Journal Of Business --

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 about ACS and its' activities.
- I would like more information about Mutiara Voice Club.
- I would like to be put on your mailing list.
- I would like to make a general donation of RM _____ towards the activities and running expenses of ACS.
- I would like to purchase a copy of the publication "Exploring the Issues of PwIDs in Adulthood" at RM 36.00 per copy (inclusive of local postage).
- I would like to contribute towards the purchase of 2 units of Computer Touch Screen Monitors.

Postal Order/Cheque No: _____ Date: _____

(Please make all cheques payable to Asia Community Service. All cash donations are tax-exempted).

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel No: _____ (H) _____ (O)



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Phone / Fax: 04 – 8665349

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