

AKTIVITI ACS

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QUALITY OF LIFE

How fortunate are children nowadays with the availability and wide selection of pre-school services. One can even “shop around” for the type of school you want your child to go to - based on its medium of instruction; type of curriculum; locality; convenience; cost etc...

However, such opportunities barely exist for a child with special needs. There is simply not enough services and support for children and adults with disabilities and their families. Imagine there is not one public school in Malaysia that is accessible to children on wheelchairs.

In addition to limited options in education, children with disabilities are often denied simple choices, such as, what to eat or what clothes to wear; what activities would they like to do and with whom. Unfortunately, these are often perpetuated even in adulthood.

We ‘conveniently’ forget that people with disabilities have preferences. We forget they also deserve dignity and respect – to be asked what they do or don’t like. Dignity boosts self-worth and self-esteem; self-esteem boosts confidence; and confidence enhances their ability to lead a more independent life. This is not just their fundamental right, but surely this is what life is all about – not just merely existing, but enjoying greater control of one’s own life.

We are all part of the human race. People with disabilities are no different. Then let us do all we can to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities, remembering this guiding principle – *“Do unto others as you would have others do unto you”*.

In other words - it is a matter of an attitude change!!

FIRST STEP INTERVENTION CENTRE

Working towards independence starts even at the infant stage. I am sure you would agree that children as young as babies, have preferences. Some prefer milk, others Ribena. A typically developing child will be able to speak, ask or demand. A child with disabilities with the same emotions, needs and wants, will do likewise, except he may not be understood. Whose fault is that?

While it is important to provide good models for children to learn, it is even better if we sometimes, follow the child's lead in the activity. Learning is enhanced when the child is interested and having fun. He is then more eager and ready to learn new words related to what he's doing. Isn't this less frustrating then forcing learning on a child?

First Step Centre aims to adopt this model of approach in our programme for the 54 babies and kids.



Story Telling during Group Session

Needs: Placement of Children in Mainstream Kindergarten
Sponsorship Required: RM 1,500 for the Graduation Party in November; Staff Salaries; Rental of Premise etc...

“JOM!” MOBILE TOY LIBRARY

A leisure library for young adults?

Yes!! The idea was stimulated when Joanne, our Toy Library Coordinator and I had the privilege of attending the 9th International Toy Library Conference in Lisbon in May. Besides pondering over research papers on the value of play, we were further inspired while visiting toy libraries, play centres and other facilities in the U.K. and Portugal.

We came back with a renewed vision and are currently looking at promoting choices for young adults with intellectual disabilities locally. It is a simple philosophy really, creating something that is pleasurable i.e., leisure in the form of hobbies and games; and recreation in the form of sports etc.



The more affluent families of a child with disabilities emphasise therapeutic and educational values. At the other end of the spectrum is the less affluent families, for whom the idea of play and toys is almost non-existent. Let us not forget that these simple pleasures of life are the rights of the child or the adult with disabilities.

Alif finds this gadget simply fascinating and amusing!!

Needs: Computer, House in Perai for Model Toy Library
Sponsorship Required: Computer; Running costs i.e. Staff Salaries, Petrol, Toll Charges etc..

STEP TRAINING CENTRE

The monthly overnight stay programme is an opportunity for the trainees to be with their friends and have a break from their families.

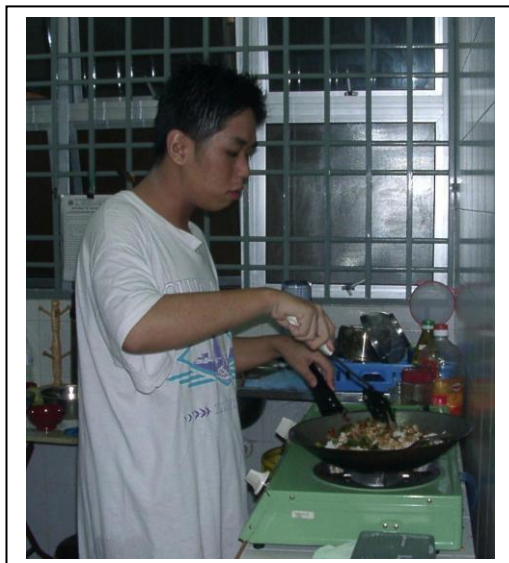
They have an option of activities to do in the evening; and a choice of what to do for meals, i.e. cooking or eating out. We are not advocating for a mini-institution; but would like to promote equal opportunities for them to have a place where they can enjoy freedom; be with their own friends in a cosy atmosphere.

Given the opportunity, adequate support, and encouragement, we believe people with intellectual disabilities will also enjoy independent living.

Besides the training programme, we are looking at starting a small workshop whereby trainees could graduate to a work environment.

There is the availability of the shoplot next door, but we will need to seek donations to renovate, furnish and equip the place.

Kelvyn cooking his own meal during an overnight stay.



Needs: a Van / Vehicle, a Small Apartment, Contract Work
Sponsorship Required: Renovation Costs of RM 15,000 for extension of programme

STEPPING STONE WORK CENTRE

30 year-old Rosy, dreams of earning more money so she could buy a house, get married and have 2 children.

But dreams of independence for her are shattered, as her guardian does not even allow her to take the public transport, let alone have a boyfriend. Why? Is it because she is slower; or because the bus driver drives dangerously; or is it fear that she might be harmed??

We do not deny the guardian's concern but keeping her in the house is not the solution either. Life is meant to be exciting – *'nothing ventured nothing gained'*. We should teach Rosy how to fend for herself. Taking a risk in life is what you and I do all the time – living and surviving are learning experiences.

As Oscar Wilde said, "*Experience is the name that everyone gives to their mistakes.*" We will try harder if we fail the first time; and what satisfaction it will be when we overcome the difficulty.

So why shouldn't Rosy and her friends be allowed to pursue their dreams just like everyone else?

We should instead learn to see their ability, rather than their disability.

Norami preparing for cake making in the Bakery section at Stepping Stone.



Marketing Needs: Sales of Woven Product, Candles, Cakes etc..
Sponsorship Required: RM 100,000 for New Building Project

OTHER NEWS

ACS Sports' Day

We held our very first Fun & Games Day on June 1st.

It was well attended by many children, adults and their families from our 4 centres / services.



Riding for the Disabled

We finally found new homes for the horses and ponies at the District Veterinary compound.

With the enthusiasm of Eva and Jessica, two very dedicated volunteers, we managed to resume the weekly sessions in May.

Besides committed volunteers, we are also looking for regular supply of sawdust for the stables, cooking oil and carrots as horse feed supplement.



One Stop Registration Drive – We held this campaign on June 4th with the cooperation of the Welfare Department, Education Department and Penang General Hospital, whereby a total of 28 kids were registered in one day. This procedure, which normally takes months, cuts down on the hassle that the family has to go through in order to get their child registered with the authorities.

OUR APPEAL

We will commence the project in Balik Pulau very soon once the building plans are approved. The project will have 2 buildings i.e. workplace and independent living training home. We are still short of RM 100,000 and would like to make an appeal for your financial support.

We are hoping that this project will give a chance for people with intellectual disabilities to experience supported independent living in their community.

Once again, we wish to thank all our donors and supporters. However, our monthly donations do fall short of our expenses, which have risen to RM 25,000 per month. We pray that you will continue to be our regular supporter.

Thank You.

Warm Regards,

Khor Ai-Na

Director

**We make a living by what we get;
We make a life by what we give.**

- Winston Churchill -

The Meaning of Life is to Give Life Meaning.

- Ken Hudgins -

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