

Just 2 hours a week!

by Lee Soo Kwan

Here's a first-hand account from a CITY volunteer giving us her view of volunteering at East Coast Primary School's (ECPS) Befrienders Club (BC). ECPS BC was started on 19 May 2010.



Pat and her Team started Befrienders Club at East Coast Primary School just before the June holidays. I joined them on the first Wednesday of the new school term on 30 June.

When we arrived at the School after the month's holiday, we found our befrienders – the students from the School – waiting eagerly outside the classroom designated by the School for Befrienders Club.

We spend two hours each week with these children. We help them with their school lessons. Often their small faces light up after we helped them find answers in their homework. We have fun and games with them and in between, there is snack time. Sometimes we get to listen to their little problems which are 'big' to them. We will have a 'little chat' and soon their world becomes right again! They cheer up and carry on with whatever they are doing happily. These experiences have given me such indescribable joy! I would also like to believe that these children have found meaning in being with Befrienders Club. Most of them would otherwise be on their own after school.

It is wonderful to be with these children - they are smart, precocious, mischievous and

sometimes naughty. This attachment has been a most enriching experience for me. I give the children only two hours of my time every week but they give me so much more in return. I do look forward to my Wednesdays!

Eunos Primary School

CITY started a new Befrienders Club at Eunos Primary School in September 2010. Currently, we have about 15 students from P1 to P6. For each 2-hour session, we help them with homework and revision. In-between, we have snack time followed by outdoor or indoor games.

Currently, CITY has 15 Befrienders Clubs in 15 schools.



Certified Tchoukball Coaches from CITY

By Phillip Quek

Ever heard of Tchoukball, the fastest handball sport, combining the pace and excitement of handball and volleyball? Well, it is the latest sport offering in our stable of school sports programmes which we offer through CITY to all our Befriender Schools.



Currently, seven of our CITY staff are certified coaches with the International Tchoukball Federation (FITB) 'C' licence. This means that these CITY staff are registered coaches authorised to conduct sports workshop for schools via Tchoukball. The objective is not as much about imparting sports skills as it is about learning the basic values in life through Tchoukball in a fun and interactive way.

For enquiries on the programme, contact CITY staff, Mr Phillip Quek at 9831 9097 or email info@citycomm.org.sg.

CITY Conducts Conflict Management Workshop

Learning how to manage conflict as part of their daily lives was what 55 students from Xishan Primary School did during one of their leadership camps held in school. CITY conducted a conflict management workshop on 22 May 2010.



At this fun and interactive workshop, the students were taught why conflicts arose and to identify the problem/s. Some initial steps were also proposed in managing conflict. Later, in small groups, they discussed the given scenarios and decide on possible solutions bearing in mind the possible consequences with each specific solution.

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Children's Day in Batam

By Chan Wing Mun

CITY staff took time out from Befrienders Club to spend Children's Day, 1 October 2010, with some 180 children in Batam. This was part of our community outreach beyond our shores.



We went to two places. First, we organised a Children's Party in a kindergarten. The party with 90 children started with an ice-breaker which involved the children dancing to the tune "Chicken Little". Though some were shy at first, most of them really enjoyed themselves and even the teachers were dancing along! After that, we taught them some simple action songs and told exciting stories. At the end of the party, the children were given goodie bags and sets of stationery.

Then, we made our way to Bengkong, a slum village that was situated on a steep and rocky slope, across a river. The van, carrying 14 of us, stalled and we had to walk to the village. When we got there, about 90 children from the ages of toddlers to teenagers, came to greet us! It was an amazing sight because it was more children than we had expected!



We conducted the same programme. Although we could not communicate with the children in their language but we were happy just to hold their hands, sing and dance with them as they enjoyed our company. We distributed goodie bags and candies and taught some of them balloon sculpting at the end.

We were happy to bring so many smiles to the faces of these children. Although it was a short time with them, these children were an inspiration to us.



Editor's Note

We are coming very quickly to the end of the year 2010. When we look back, we see how much has been done and how far we have come, we are grateful to all our volunteers and our partners in the work such as the principals, teachers and school counsellors who have supported us so fully in our work. Thank you for your support!

CITY's work is fully supported by St Andrew's Cathedral and donations. If not for these partners in the work, we would not have been able to do as much as what we have done so far. Each year, we are challenged with new ideas and activities for Befrienders children. If you would like to help, please make your cheques in favour of 'CITY Community Services' and write your name, NRIC and address on the back of the cheque. Donations are tax deductible.

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The Amazing Urban Food Trail!

By Lee Jia Yun

Non-stop running around, completing tasks, and EATING, EATING and more EATING!

That's what 19 children from CITY Community Services' Befrienders Clubs did on 12 June 2010 when St Andrew's Cathedral Mandarin Congregation (2nd Service) organised an Urban Food Trail centred around three main shopping malls – Raffles City Shopping Centre, Marina Square and Suntec City.

The children were split into groups of five and given a set of tasks to complete, whereby each successfully fulfilled task led them to the next. The tasks include taking photos with people who meet a prescribed set of conditions, solving riddles, tongue twisters and many more.

Because the shopping malls were quite large, a lot of time was spent walking from one place to another. But it turned out to be a blessing in disguise because it gave us a lot of time to interact with the children personally and help to build, we hope, lasting friendships.

Towards the end of the food trail, I found myself saying "hey guys, wait for me... not so fast" instead of "come on, let's walk faster", which was what I repeatedly said earlier on in the trail. I realised the children were genuinely enjoying themselves and were eager to finish. I enjoyed myself very much interacting with the children and hope to have many more outings with them.



A Pastamania Outing

by Kenneth Ernest

About 40 children from both White Sands Primary School and Xishan Primary School visited the Pastamania Kitchen on 2 June 2010 to learn more about the food and beverage industry.

They were given a hands-on experience in the Pastamania kitchen: they touched and identified the types of pastas, and they were taught the various culinary equipment, the oven being the hot favourite! Finally, the highlight of the experience: everyone got a chance to make and create their very own pizzas from scratch!



Each of them was given a palm-sized dough that was to be carefully kneaded and shaped with the plate as its border. Once done, they were given ingredients such as mushrooms, tomato paste, chicken pieces and cheddar cheese as toppings for the pizza. The students were very excited about making their very own pizzas. After that, all took turns to slot their pizzas into the oven. The final product did not taste as bad as some of us initially thought! Still, it made for a very filling meal!

The children took home some fun facts about pasta and its origins, Pastamania gifts of a calendar and a notebook and lots of fun. Most of all, all of them thought it was an invaluable experience and exposure! Thank you, Pastamania, for sponsoring this outing!

"The Slide" @ Changi Airport Terminal 3

by Tony Tan

Twenty children from Gan Eng Seng Primary Befrienders Club got to be the first ones to slide down a 3-storey high "tube" at Changi Airport.

They were invited to the grand opening of "The Slide", a new facility at Terminal 3 on 27 May 2010. A few of the children were afraid at first but after the first try, many of them went for many rounds after that! They were later shown the airport artefacts by various Singapore artists and engineers. After their tour, they were treated to a sumptuous tea by the airport staff.

We want to thank Changi Airport Group for partnering with us to bring fun and love to our children at Befrienders Clubs.



Being Part of the Youth Olympic Games

by Isabel Lin

In support of the Youth Olympic Games (YOG), 20 students from White Sands Primary School Befrienders Club participated in games and activities organized by Changi Airport on 3 August 2010. This was in conjunction with welcoming the youth Olympians who were arriving in Singapore for the YOG.

The games and activities consisted of three main stations: football, boxing station and the bungee-trampoline stations. The students found them exciting. In fact, some of them actually won medals and other prizes for exceeding the challenges set!

The YOG mascots, Lyo and Merly, appeared at the airport, creating much buzz and excitement.

Free tokens were given out to students for the 12-metre tall jumbo twister slide. It stands as Singapore's tallest slide. It was great fun!

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We Are Family at North View Primary

By Callie Wong

"Create an amazing experience!" - That was the goal given to us as we prepared for "U" Family Day 2010. And that was what we did with face painting and Giant Jenga, as tall as a child and traditional games like Bola Tins and Marbles. Surprisingly, many of the "Wii Generation" enjoyed the games.

Hitting the Pinata, a Mexican game, was a 'hot' favourite as the children hit the suspended Pinata with a pole to break it for little treasures of snacks to spill out. Zovbing was another must-do activity for children who enjoyed spinning around in an enormous clear plastic, air-cushioned ball.

"U" Family Day, initiated by uniform groups (Boys' Brigade, Girls' Brigade and Scouts) of North View Primary School and CITY Community Services, was started in 2009 in North View Primary School to encourage bonding among families through fun activities.

This year, it was held in conjunction with North View Primary Open House on 10 July 2010, for families of potential and current students in the neighbourhood.

