

Project Beyond (07-05)

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Single Year

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Section 1: Overview

A. Area of Concern

Our area of concern revolves around the concept of crimes among the youths. A Straits Times article 2 years ago brought up an announcement from Minister of Social and Family Development about the Government's stand to intervene in juvenile crimes. The Singapore Government has acknowledged the importance of providing the youths of disadvantaged families with an outlet to a better life, and is willing to invest \$2 million into a nationwide initiative to assess the problems faced by these youths. This issue was brought under the spotlight after the publication of a statistical report made by the Home Team, revealing that the crime among youths have increased by 2.1%¹.

Moreover, a research project conducted by the Christchurch School of Medicine theorised that there was a correlation between a youth's family background and his likelihood of resorting to crime. The family backgrounds at the bottom of the social spectrum include those with poorer living conditions or with an incomplete family, which can come as a negative influence. This project was conducted over 21 years, tracking the growth of 1,265 children, noting that the landscape provided in a disadvantaged family contributed to the criminal mindset of a child, which is linked to our underlying problem².

B. Challenges Identified

Problems that the children and organisation face

1. **Insufficient funding**, as Beyond Social Service is a Voluntary Welfare Organisation that does not gain much profits, while spending an immense sum of money annually.
 - a. We have organised a fundraising activity to bridge this gap.
2. **Lack of role model**, due to their parents being occupied with work mostly.
 - a. We befriend them to inculcate values like community spirit.
3. **Long period of exposure to negative influence** from family members, friends ect.
 - a. Hence, we organise activities that develop their interests in arts.
4. **Insufficient time** for volunteers to change the children's view of the society as a more spiritualistic world than a materialistic one.
5. **Insufficient manpower** which results in low efficiency (only one volunteer before we started helping in the sessions) whilst the organisation of such programmes gain a substantial amount of popularity.
6. **Rundown location** for carrying out activities, resulting in a less conducive environment

¹ The Singapore Government's initiative to keep high risk youth away from crime
<https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/2m-initiative-to-steer-at-risk-youth-away-from-crime>

² Research conducted by Christchurch School of Medicine linking family backgrounds and youth crime
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15225338>

where the kids can study and play

C. Underlying Problem

Given that underprivileged families are common in Singapore, contrasting the lack of knowledge concerning the struggles of these families, there is lack of positive role model for children from low-income families and children may be unable to reject negative influences within their family and community, how might we inculcate values of community spirit and respect in them, starting from the local children at Beyond's Centre, to help them blossom into individuals with positive mindsets, not delinquency, in Singapore?

D. Plan of Action

From our time of volunteering at Beyond, we understand that the children, while enjoying learning, are energetic and prefer fun. Hence, when we devise our plan, we ensure that the events are educational but engaging.

| Date | Action | Objective |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| March to September (Ongoing) | <u>Weekly visits</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Visit the RC at Henderson Road every Monday to assist Beyond in running/personally run the Make 'n Play sessions 2. Children are either given an Art & Craft assignment or provided with a platform to play games 3. The sessions were run by our group and 1-3 other volunteers from Beyond | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inculcate a love for learning and exploring in the children through the variety of activities that we planned for them by making use of their cognitive skills and creativity. |
| May (Completed) | <u>Fundraising</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fundraising by selling chocolate marshmallows and blackcurrant fizzy drinks 2. Funds are for the day camp, and we intend to use the remaining money for the weekly Make 'n Play session/party | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raise the general awareness of students on the less privileged children in Singapore - Raise money for future activities |
| June (Completed) | <u>Camp</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We plan to hold a 3 day-camp lasting from 1pm - 4pm, with activities such as crafting sessions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To let the kids explore their potential and creativity - Learning teamwork |

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| | and game sessions | through activities requiring collaboration with others |
| | <u>Outing</u> 1. Together with volunteers from Beyond Social Services, we plan to hold an outing to the Science Centre for the children in the Henderson area | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enable the kids to explore the world of science to make them curious of the nature - Give children a chance to work their ability to resolve conflicts |
| August (Completed) | <u>Mini Party</u> 1. Singapore trivia with prizes and flag making activity 2. Mini party to be held where children can enjoy food and drinks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote sense of community in the children which is necessary to care for other members of the community - Remind some children that the Make ‘n Play sessions is also to have fun |

We hope to impact local groups of children we have been servicing for the past 5 months by providing a platform to positively influence them, minimising their exposure to negative influence, working towards a juvenile crime-free society.

Section 2: Implementation of Action Plan

A. Actions and outcomes to date

- Met with the personals in charge of organising activities for the children we intend to help and came up with suitable timings for us to help out in their centre. Also discussed about future activities that we intend to organise by ourselves for the children.
- Started going for weekly sessions to help educate and accompany the kids in the Jalan Klinik Beyond center together with the help of other volunteers. Through this experience we noticed that the kids started developing interests in learning new things they never encountered before. Although rowdy and stubborn at first, they slowly learnt to trust us and heed our advices during activities. They grew more patient and willing to hear what we had to say. We feel that such is a big improvement for both parties.
- Organised a fundraising activity to gather funds for our activities. We sold marshmallows for \$1 a bowl and blackcurrant juice for \$1 a cup and earned \$87.10, which was enough to cover up for the expenses of the camp and other activities. This allowed us to spread our cause and reasons for such to be initiated throughout the school, raising awareness for the disadvantaged children we aim to aid and gaining support in the process.

Section 3: Project Outcomes

A. Accomplishments

We managed to raised a total \$87.10 from fundraising. We have organised 14 Make ‘n’ Play sessions, with each of them at least 2 hours. In addition, we also organised a camp that lasted 6 hours over a span of 3 days during the June holidays, and one field trip to the Science Centre and lastly one party with the theme being National Day.

B. Reflection

Many do not see from the perspective of others. However, as our group delved deeper into our project, we discovered many issues that can be difficult to solve. Through our project, we aim to acknowledge and raise awareness of these difficulties faced by these underprivileged group. Our original concept of “Helping the disadvantaged” was to inculcate positive values in them. We soon realised that what these children need is not just academic assistance from us or financial support. They need guidance from seniors who have the experiences and virtues in life to lead them on the right path. Born in disadvantaged families, these children are often neglected by their parents for various reasons. Owing to a lack of a role model, they tend to succumb to peer pressure easily and become negatively influenced.

C. Scope of Impact

Community impact: Members the public could learn about Beyond-Social-Services, as well as the conditions surrounding families that reside in rental flats in Singapore, through our project’s social media account. We hope that the public would have a better understanding of the prevalence of low-income families in Singapore, and that they will make an effort to ameliorate this situation by contributing whatever they can.

Community involvement: Social media platforms where we raise trending debates on pertinent issues concerning disadvantaged families for our followers to discuss and share their ideas.

Resolution of AoC/UP: Given that we identified that there is a lack of role models in the children's’ families, we have have organised 14 Make ‘n Play sessions to provide a platform for us to impart proper values to the children, such as the basic courtesy of saying “Thank you” when assistance is provided. Substantial change has been observed in the children, as they have become less rowdy during sessions, making it easier for us to take control. This is aligned with our objectives as every small change made to alter their mindsets at a tender age aids in the steady progression of the child into a responsible and mature adult.

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