



## **Project Iridescent (7-26)**

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A Single-Year Service Learning Project

## **Section 1: Overview**

### **1. Area of Concern**

Based on a research done by the Make-A-Wish Foundation (MAW), Brain tumours, Leukemia, Heart Disease, and Cerebral Palsy are amongst the most common life-threatening illnesses that children contract. About 90 to 100 cases of children with cancer pop up every year. These life-threatening illnesses disrupt their daily lives, requiring them to spend long periods of time in the hospital and receive medical treatment, sealing them off from the outside world. This "isolation" often affects their mental health and development, especially since they have the worry of not being able to see tomorrow. It may even affect and strain relationships at home. If these children are not provided with the support and hope needed, this will affect their mental health and confidence, which in turn affects their ability to recover and their willingness to continue seeking treatment. Especially since these conditions are life-threatening, it is of utmost importance that we give these children what they need as soon as possible.

The Make-A-Wish Foundation has services that grant life-changing wishes for children between the age of 2.5-18 years in order to have a positive impact on their mental health. The awareness of what can be done to help these children in Singapore is not prominent. According to MAW, 89% of healthcare professionals surveyed believe that the wish experience can influence the physical health of the child and 96% of parents said that the wish had strengthened their families.

### **2. Challenges Identified**

The Make-A-Wish Foundation is a non-profit, independent body that runs on public donations alone, and they spend an immense amount of money yearly during the process of granting wishes. For the wishes granted to the children, it can either cost nothing like meeting a celebrity of his/her dreams, but it could also amount up to \$2000 and more if it is for something like a personalised wheelchair. In 2017, \$539,489 was spent on awareness events and outreach movements, and \$198,844 was spent on charitable activities and the generation of funds.

### **3. Underlying Problem**

Given that there is a lack of awareness and understanding amongst Singaporean teens about the struggles that children with life-threatening illnesses face and a lack of exposure and platforms to help them, how can we implement initiatives to create greater awareness, platforms for volunteering, and seek wider public support for this community to bring positivity into their lives in the year 2018 and beyond.

### **4. Plan of Action**

We started with a needs analysis to identify the issues faced by MAW by having an interview with a MAW representative which allowed us to get to know the objectives and methodologies of the organisation better. Our first aim was to raise funds for the association, as they gave feedback that fundraising was the most important aspect we should focus on. They then suggested that we supplement the fundraising efforts by raising awareness for MAW and the illnesses of wish kids. We started by preparing for our bake sales by preparing bakes, followed by finding food and AV sponsors for our movie screening. We then began sourcing for items to sell during the street sales, as well as the recruitment of volunteers from various schools, which was another aim of MAW. We also helped MAW raise awareness through educating the public during our various events like our Fort Canning Booth and their Spinning Event. Interaction was achieved with a card making event where we gifted cards filled with positive messages from members of the public to the children. The implementation of our action plan is detailed in the table below which also indicates the date of completion of each action.

## Section II: Implementation of Action Plan

### 1. Actions and outcomes to date

Date	Action	Objective(s)
January - February	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Liaising and communication with Make-A-Wish Foundation</li> <li>2. Recruitment of Organizing Team members and setting up of committees</li> <li>3. Planning for events</li> </ol>	
March	<u>Bake sales</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 200 Bakes sold in 3 different schools</li> <li>2. \$250 Raised</li> </ol>	Raise Funds
April	<u>Frisbee Competition</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Held on 21st April at Woodlands Mega Park from 8.30am to 7.00pm, 200+ participants</li> <li>2. Made a total of \$3000</li> <li>3. Sponsored by Yikun Discs and CNP Cosmetics Singapore</li> </ol>	Raise Funds
May	<u>Movie Under The Stars</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Held on 18th May at Fort Canning Park from 6.00pm to 8.30pm</li> <li>2. Obtained license from Disney, Screened Disney Pixar's "Up"</li> <li>3. 50+ showed up, earned \$500</li> </ol>	Raise Funds and Awareness
June	<u>Street Sales</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 6 Locations Islandwide, 16 days with 2 sessions each (0900-1200, 1300-1600)</li> <li>2. 170+ volunteers, over 90+ tins filled up</li> <li>3. Handed out flyers to public regarding project and organisation</li> </ol>	Raise Funds, Awareness
July	<u>Spinning Event</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 28th July, Organised by MAW to reach out to the public</li> </ol>	Raise Awareness
August	<u>Fort Canning Booth</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 11th August</li> <li>2. Set up a booth at Fort Canning to raise awareness</li> <li>3. Reached out to 100+ members of the public</li> </ol> <u>Card Initiative</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 15th August, MAW helped to arrange a meeting with a wishkid</li> <li>2. Estimate of 50 cards were made with help of public and give to MAW to pass to other wishkids</li> </ol> <u>Concert</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 25th August at SMU School of Law Basement Hall, 7.00pm - 9.30pm</li> <li>2. Acts from schools around Singapore like RGS, ACSI, MGS, and SMU</li> <li>3. Target tickets sale: 500</li> </ol>	Raising Awareness & Interaction

## Section III: Project Outcomes

### 1. Accomplishments

We raised have raised **\$9758.40** for MAW through our street sales, bake sales, and merchandise sales, and excluding our concert.. **174 students volunteered** for our street sales, and learned of our cause and our beneficiary through taking part in it. Many invited their friends to take part as volunteers or participants in our events, helping us spread awareness. We have **1754 followers** on Instagram. We have also helped MAW gain **87 new volunteers**.

### 2. Reflections

Over the course of this project, we have learnt a lot about the plight of children with life threatening illnesses. Although our project managed to have a degree of interaction with the wish kids, there were many challenges faced due to us being not qualified to interact, or even give input during the wish granting journey. This definitely made catering to the children's need harder, but we still managed to have some interaction with a former wishkid and also give positive messages to them. We are heartened by the overwhelming support from the public, as well as the willingness of students from different schools in helping out our good cause. We are pleased to have completed our proposed plan of action and to have successfully met our target of raising funds and awareness, and the overall success of our initiatives is proof of the positive impact we have made on this often overlooked part of our community. All in all, this project has taught us that hope is able to change someone's life for the better.

### 3. Scope of Impact

**Community impact:** Members of public learned more about Make A Wish Singapore, as well as the challenges and severity of the conditions of wish kids. We hope that the public is more aware of the lack of attention and community support for the wellbeing of these children in Singapore, and that they can continue to support Make A Wish Singapore in granting the wishes of these children and helping them lead happier lives.

**Community involvement:** We managed to get **112 OT** members together with **174** volunteers from different secondary schools, who assisted us in our street sales. The OT members were essential in running the events and making them successful. We were also able to gather **87** new volunteers for MAW. Through participating in our events, they became more knowledgeable about our cause and we hope that these volunteers will continue to participate in our cause and positively impact the children.

**Resolution of AOC/UP:** Given that we have identified that there is a lack of societal awareness and support for MAW, we have raised an estimate of **\$10357.40** and reached out to an estimated of **967** members of public through our activities, thus we have managed to tackle the fundraising and awareness aspects of our project. By involving students from a diverse range of schools and education levels in in our initiatives, we have empowered them to make a difference by providing them with a platform and adequate chances to make a changed by contributing to a good cause. We hope that future batches will be able to take on the mantle and build on this foundation, furthering our project to truly bring a positive change to the lives of children with life threatening illnesses.