

Project Vision

Single Year

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Section 1: Project Overview

Area of Concern & Challenges Identified

4.7% of Singapore's population are visually impaired and amounting to about 263,670 people. Our government is doing its best to ensure that public areas are visually handicapped friendly such as braille trails in public areas to enable the visually impaired to navigate themselves.

In the article, "Bid to change rules at association for blind fails", Mr Cheok Cheng Ann who is blind said "we are worried that sighted members may not understand our needs as well as we do and may implement policies that are detrimental to us.". We also conducted a survey amongst 200 students ranging in the age group of 10 - 17 on the problems faced by the blind to gauge how aware the youth are about the challenges faced by the visually handicapped, about 52% of the surveyees were completely unaware of the hurdles the visually handicapped face in their everyday lives. It is evident that there is a psychological frontier that needs to be breached between the visually handicapped and the able-bodied. The Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped (SAVH), who assists the visually handicapped in our society, also has a limited amount of funding, hence a restriction on the activities they can organise to help the visually handicapped.

This is what sparked our interest in embarking on this project. We wish to help the visually handicapped to better integrate and interact with society and to help provide for their mental needs.

Underlying Problem

Given that the visually handicapped in Singapore's society face difficulties in their lives such as finding jobs and the social stigma that exists within our society, leading to a lack of awareness amongst the public about the visually handicapped, how might we raise awareness, raise funds, understand their situation and provide opportunities that would integrate the visually handicapped and the able-bodied together so that the visually handicapped will be better integrated into our society in the year 2018 and beyond?

Section 2: Plan of Action

<p>Phase 1 February - March 2018 (Completed)</p>	<p><u>Preliminary Research</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conducted preliminary research on areas of concern - Meet up with our beneficiary to discuss about the future events
<p>Phase 2 March - May 2018 (Completed)</p>	<p><u>Service Learning Summit</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set up a booth at SLS to share about the visually handicapped to the students in attendance - Introduced our project and conducted our awareness survey <p><u>High School Exhibition</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organised an exhibition at HCI with booths educating the students about the visually handicapped - E.g. goalball, braille trail, visual-impairment simulation goggles <p><u>Concert DreamCatcher</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organised a concert with a variety of performers - Ms Fauziah, from SAVH, attended our concert as our Guest-of-Honour and gave a speech about the visually handicapped in Singapore
<p>Phase 3 April - August 2018 (Ongoing)</p>	<p><u>Establishing partnership</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Youth Council endorsed our project under the YCM program - Rulang Primary School to hold our talks and exhibition
<p>Phase 4 April - August 2018 (Ongoing)</p>	<p><u>Volunteering sessions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plan and organised activities at SAVH with the visually handicapped - Members of our external OT takes turns to join the core team at the beneficiary
<p>Phase 5 June - July 2018 (Completed)</p>	<p><u>Streetsales</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Garner over 50 volunteers - Sold merchandise to raise funds - Shared about the visually handicapped with the general public <p><u>SAVH Flag Day</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recruited volunteers - Volunteers were paired with a visually handicapped person for the flag day - Facilitated interaction between the able-bodied and the visually handicapped

Phase 6 March - August 2018	<p><u>Measuring Project's Success</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct before and after interviews with attendees at our events - Support at our events - Instagram account: number of likes and followers
Phase 7 February - August 2018	<p><u>Promoting Sustainability</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outreach through social media: Instagram - Plan for future events e.g. trekking with the visually handicapped, primary school talks - Continue collaboration with SAVH to support their events

Team Organisation

<p><u>Administrative</u> Oversees the entire project, liaise with mentor, assign tasks, manage deadlines and collaborations with external parties</p>	<p><u>Logistics</u> Manage budgets, profits, expenditure, source for resources and logistics for our events</p>	<p><u>Events</u> Plan the structure of events, ensures the course of the events run smoothly</p>	<p><u>Publicity Outreach</u> Oversee publicity, plan and design aesthetic products e.g. addendum, posters, videos</p>
Leader: Leroy Wang	Treasurer: Ong Yi Jie	I/C: Abel Tan	I/C: Loh Tze Siang
Secretary: Benedict Yip			

Section 3: Project Outcomes

Progress to date

We are currently at phase 3, 4, 6 and 7. We have conducted awareness events with secondary school students, parents and teachers. We have partnered with external organisations, like Rulang Primary School, to achieve greater outreach for the visually handicapped. Fundraising and outreach programs have also been organised across Singapore, both for schools and for the public. Through our fundraising initiative, we managed to raise a total of \$8,500 for our beneficiary. We have managed to raise awareness about the visually handicapped amongst 5000++ individuals. We will be conducting more school talks and organise events to facilitate interaction between our volunteers and the visually handicapped in the month of August to September. We will also be continuing to collaborate with our beneficiary to provide assistance for their events.

Obstacles

There were many considerations to make when we begin our carrying out activities during our volunteering sessions. A lot of adjustments had to be made to the games to make it suitable for the visually handicapped after gathering feedbacks from our beneficiary. There were many instances when our activities were unable to interest the visually handicapped, and we had to rework our activities to appeal to them more.

One of the most prominent issue we faced was when we planned for a painting session for the visually handicapped. Our original plan to have them paint their own painting was affected when the visually handicapped showed no interest due to their lack of vision we then modified the painting session into an origami session that was more hands-on for the visually handicapped. We revised our painting activity and decided to try textile paint instead. As the visually handicapped were able to feel the change in texture on their paper, they enjoyed touching and were happy with their final artwork.

Furthermore, while undertaking this project, we have encountered numerous ups and down. One of our “downs” includes the performance we held in April. Our project confirmed our concert location by the mid of March. However by April, we were still barely able to garner enough performances to last the show. Our concert was supposed to last for 3 hours but we were nowhere close to filling that timing. Thus, The core 5 sat together to brainstorm for a way out of the problem. We sourced for various local music artists that have performed at Charity events. After coming up with an entire list, we split the contacts and began contacting their agents. After much discussion and sourcing, we were able to invite local music artists to perform at our concert and successfully lasted the concert for the entire duration of 3 hours. The lesson that

parted with us through this memorable experience was that as a group, as long as we persevere, and commit our hearts to it, there is always an alternative solution to anything. So long as we are willing to try out new solutions and find new ways to combat the issue at hand, nothing is impossible.

Many of our organising team had little to no interaction with the visually handicapped, thus when the organising team volunteered at our sessions, there were instances when the organising team were unable to communicate with the visually handicapped. However, the organising team did not lose hope, and were willing to step out of their comfort zones to fully interact and understand the visually handicapped.

Reflections

As we worked closely with SAVH and the visually handicapped, we observed that there were many jobs that will continue to be unavailable to the visually handicapped due to their disability. As our society today is moving towards a technological future and many of the jobs are reliant on the usage of these gadgets. It is apparent that the visually handicapped are at a disadvantage as they are unable to see how to operate the gadgets, rendering them not suitable for most jobs involving technology. This gap is a problem that our team have discovered after working with the visually handicapped for the past 6 months. This problem will continue to exist and we can only do our best to reduce the gap as much as possible.

On a more personal note, this project has benefited us as a team in multiple facets. Given that all 5 of us are in sport CCAs, even fixing up dates for whatever meetings and events posed a huge challenge. Despite that, we learnt to compromise and work around barriers in order to overcome these scheduling issues. Through this process, we naturally developed an understanding of each others' strengths and weaknesses. We learnt how to make use of that knowledge in order to increase our efficiency when handling multiple different tasks. This did not come without conflict or clashing heads, but it was through such confrontation where we developed a rapport and true understanding of each other.