

Project Ignite (7-09)

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Section 1: Project overview.

1. Area of concern

Cerebral Palsy is the most common motor disability in childhood that is also incurable, with 4 occurrences in every 1000 births. Cerebral Palsy patients can be both physically and mentally handicapped, and they have to rely on caretakers for basic everyday tasks as a result. Due to their disability, Cerebral Palsy patients are often outcasted from society as the general public finds it difficult to accept them. Our surveys conducted have shown a severe lack of awareness about Cerebral Palsy and our beneficiary, Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore (hereinafter referred to as CPAS). Organisations like these lack manpower, funding, and public awareness to help these patients on a large scale, thus depriving them from necessary support.

2. Challenges identified

The Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore (CPAS) is a non-profit organisation that runs on government funding alone. However, not all events are covered and CPAS has to rely on external fundraising due to expenses amounting to about **\$579000** annually. This problem becomes much easier to solve if there was a greater sense of awareness in the nation.

3. Underlying problem

Given the lack of public awareness of Cerebral Palsy and organisations such as Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore, which can help these patients, leading to Cerebral Palsy patients in Singapore not receiving necessary support and being outcasted, how might we, as students, complement CPAS' efforts to support these patients.

This leads to our main objective, which falls under three main aspects, namely to raise funds, raise awareness, and increase interactions, so as to make a positive change to the lives of these patients.

4. Plan of action

Date	Action	Objective(s)
January - April	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Liaising and communicating with CPAS 2. Recruitment of Organising Team members and volunteers 3. Set up social media outreach such as Instagram pages. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure effective communication and cooperation between CPAS and us 2. Increase manpower 3. Raise awareness
May	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Volunteering at CPAS 2. Social media outreach 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase interactions 2. Raise awareness
June	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Street sales: CPAS merchandise such as drawstring bags and postcards were sold at the street sales. 2. Street sales: Volunteers gave out flyers about Cerebral Palsy and CPAS to give the general public a better understanding of them. 3. Social media outreach 4. Carnival 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Raise funds 2. Raise awareness 3. Raise awareness 4. Raise awareness
July - August	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Volunteering at CPAS 2. Social media outreach 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase interaction 2. Raise awareness

Section 2: Implementation of the plan

Actions:

- Core team members took part in volunteering sessions every two weeks on Thursday afternoons, conducted mainly in May and July.
- Street sales were organised in the June holidays, with a total of 18 sessions in 9 days, conducted at 3 locations - Boon Lay, Bishan and Serangoon.
- Spread of publicity through the sharing of posters at different locations in Singapore and through the fortnightly posts on our social media accounts for the project.

- A carnival was held at the Star Vista on the 26th of June, with booths set up with fun activities and prizes. There were also boards and posters to raise more awareness for CP and CPAS.

Outcomes:

- There was a greater knowledge about Cerebral Palsy as a neurological disease in the general public as the carnival and posters were able to spread more information regarding our beneficiary and Cerebral Palsy patients as well as the issues that they face in daiy lives. This was also achieved through our posts on social media.
- Funds were raised for the Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore through the street sales and the donations received from the carnival, helping them to reduce the financial stress that they face through providing care for cerebral palsy patients
- Interaction was increased between patients and the core team members due to the volunteering sessions

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Section 3: Project outcomes

1. Accomplishments

We have gotten an outreach of about **550** members from the public through our street sales, posters and carnival publicity. The outreach is further increased by the **1,136** followers through our social media account which posted facts on Cerebral Palsy fortnightly and had quizzes for every 5 facts posted. Our organising team members, all **130** of them, were able to learn more about our cause through immersing themselves in educating the public on our beneficiary in the events that were organised. We have raised funds of approximately **S\$3200**.

2. Reflections:

The project has been a very eye-opening experience for all of us. We are only secondary 3 this year, and did not have much if any experience prior to this project in the whole process of planning and executing a project this large in scale. Thus, when we first started, the stress was overwhelming, and we were uncertain of what to expect. Now looking back, it definitely was a ride full of ups and downs. There were times when the whole process of planning and executing was almost flawless, but there were also times when we made severe mistakes while planning, which undoubtedly resulted in the execution not going smoothly. Nevertheless, we have all learnt a great deal from this project. Our first interaction with Cerebral Palsy patients definitely showed us a different

side of them that we rarely notice and are never exposed to, that being how they have to manage their day to day life. It definitely touched our hearts, and increased our empathy for the less fortunate. When we volunteered at CPAS, we were allocated to the high support class, meaning these patients had almost no control over their muscles, and were physically and mentally handicapped. None of them could articulate their thoughts. It was, admittedly, a little bit uncomfortable at the start, but soon we realised just how tough their lives were, being outcasted from society while not having any control over their body. As a result, we realised we should treat and respect them just like any other human being. We were all inspired, and during the different events we tried our best to do what we could for them. In hindsight, we could have done much better although we were fazed with challenging issues. Still, it was an experience that we will all hold close to our hearts, and we have definitely benefited greatly from it, both in terms of planning and executing events as well as increasing our empathy.

1. Scope of impact:

Community Impact: Members of the public could learn more about Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore as well as Cerebral Palsy, especially about the impacts that Cerebral Palsy has on the patients and the struggles that they face in their daily lives due to Cerebral Palsy. We hope that the public can gain more knowledge about Cerebral Palsy and support CPAS in their events so as to provide more support and assistance to the Cerebral Palsy patients.

Community involvement:

Our project included 5 Core members and 130 Organising team members from various secondary schools, junior colleges, and polytechnics, which assisted in our events such as the carnival and street sales. Through the briefings and meetings held, the Organising team members were able to learn more about our cause, and also learn how they could do their part to benefit these Cerebral Palsy patients, one way being contributing to our project.

Resolution of Area of concern/Underlying Problem:

Given that we identified the lack of societal awareness of Cerebral palsy, CPAS and the lack of support through funding received by CPAS, we have reached out to approximately more than 1730 people and raised funds of about S\$3200, tackling both issues identified. More importantly, we activated our Organising Team, which came from a diverse range of schools and education levels, to help with the planning and execution of the project. We hope that future groups that continue this project will be able to take on the mantle and continue building on this project to make it able to have

an even larger and more profound impact than the years before, and then truly result in a sustainable, long-term solution to the awareness of Cerebral Palsy as well as to ensure the continuous functioning of the Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore.

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