



## Project Euphoria 7-07

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Project Type: Multi-Year

## **Area of Concern**

### **I. Overview**

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

According to Club Rainbow Singapore, children with chronic illnesses are required to take frequent trips to the hospital, and are often discriminated against, stunting their emotional and social development during the critical childhood years. Through the media as well as various non-profit organisations, parents of children with chronic illnesses have highlighted the need for such provisions aiding in their child's development to be made. There is very little public awareness about chronic illnesses, which have often been termed "invisible illnesses". This leads to stigma against those with chronic illnesses, with the general public unable to understand their needs. An example would be Nicole Lim, who was featured in the Straits Times. She is a student diagnosed with autoimmune hepatitis, primary sclerosing cholangitis and ulcerative colitis is often scolded by passengers for taking an MRT seat, despite her several chronic illnesses.

#### **2. Challenges Identified**

Club Rainbow is an organisation that "takes on a holistic approach to conduct numerous events and programmes for our beneficiaries; ensuring psychosocial, financial, educational, informational and social support". However, the organisation is very dependent on volunteers to carry out activities and to raise awareness, having limited social media reach. Therefore, help is needed in order to increase manpower for interaction sessions as well as develop useful resources that will help to reduce stigmatisation of children with chronic illnesses.

#### **3. Underlying Problem**

Given that children with chronic illnesses frequently miss out on normal day-to-day activities owing to their conditions and/or healthcare, and are unable to experience what a normal child does, how might we provide them with meaningful holistic activities and raise awareness for their plight, such that they can still live a fun and enriching childhood despite their illnesses,

while reducing the social stigma surrounding them, ultimately integrating them into society?

## II. Implementation of Action Plan

Date	Action	Objective(s)
Jan - March	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Liaising and contact with Club Rainbow Singapore, as well as Bishan CC</li> <li>2. Recruitment of ExCo members, Organising Team members as well as volunteers</li> <li>3. Creation of Instagram page, as well as introduction of group and members</li> </ol>	
April - June	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organised interaction sessions and games with children with chronic illnesses during Circuit Breaker period</li> <li>2. Sharing of stories of children with chronic illnesses on Instagram page</li> </ol>	<p>Interaction</p> <p>Awareness</p>
July	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Interview with Jaydan and Mrs Ong, under the supervision of Club Rainbow staff</li> <li>2. Interview with Marc, a doctor with a chronic illness</li> <li>3. Sharing of common chronic illnesses on Instagram page</li> <li>4. Organised Walk for Rainbow, an online initiative challenging participants to clock 10,000 steps in a single day</li> </ol>	<p>Awareness</p>

August	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="451 212 1019 359">1. Creation of a Fun-At-Home activity book for beneficiaries (games, recipes, fun facts, origami)</li><li data-bbox="451 380 1019 527">2. Forum session on children with chronic illnesses (with a counsellor, a fitness trainer, and two professors)</li></ol>	Activities to do at home  Educating the public
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### **III. Project Outcomes**

#### **1. Accomplishments**

Throughout the project, we had around 50 students from different schools joining us in participating in our awareness session, and joining our organising team. On social media, we had more than 1000 followers, where we shared a plethora of resources pertaining to chronic illnesses such as stories of children with chronic illnesses and interviews with beneficiaries and experts in the field. Through this, we managed to share both professional knowledge as well as personal experiences by such children, increasing public awareness surrounding this issue.

We had multiple interaction sessions during the circuit breaker period to keep the children entertained, using games such as scavenger hunts, online hangman and pictionary. However, our beneficiary wished to reduce interaction sessions due to the confidentiality surrounding children with chronic illnesses. Hence, we created an activity booklet that the children could complete with their families during this time, allowing our project to empower these children and providing them with meaningful and fun activities despite the circumstances.

#### **2. Reflections**

We have come to understand the challenges faced by children with chronic illnesses through interaction and our awareness initiatives. Because of the pandemic, we were not able to fully capitalise on interaction opportunities with the children, and thus shifted our focus towards dispelling misconceptions of such children. This is something we hope to be able to make up for when the future group takes over us.

We have learnt to focus more on the happiness we bring into the children's lives rather than the intricacies of our events and we should remember that every activity should be children-centric and cater to their needs. Planning events that are suitable for all children with chronic illnesses to do was challenging as they had many different physical challenges, and this taught our group to

be more empathetic. We also had newfound respect for them as the children completed the activities with positivity despite their illnesses.

### **3. Scope of Impact**

#### Community Impact

Members of the public could learn more about Club Rainbow (Singapore), as well as the plight of the children of chronic illnesses in Singapore. They could show support for these children through donations and spreading awareness through our social media initiatives. We managed to organise meaningful activities and create creative resources that were not only fun and educational, but can also be used for future batches of children under the care of our beneficiary.

#### Community Involvement

We started off with 5 core team members and 50 volunteers who helped us spread awareness and plan our events. The volunteers were key in spreading our cause to other schools and were committed individuals who wanted to change the culture surrounding children with chronic illnesses.

#### Resolution of AOC/UP

Having interacted with the children over the circuit breaker period and creating the activity booklet, we have successfully provided meaningful and holistic activities to empower these children. In terms of awareness, we have conducted interviews with many stakeholders and created infographics on social media, raising public awareness. We hope that the future team leading this project will be able to build upon this, developing a sustainable way to interact with such children, allowing others to understand their needs and issues.

## **References**

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