

Project Change 2.0

7-25

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Section 1: Overview

1 AREA OF CONCERN

Our main area of concern is children aged six to 12 from low-income families. We are working with Beyond Social Services (BSS) for this project. We found that such children are often disadvantaged education-wise and psychologically, even in other areas of the world. For example, in America, it was observed that low-income students are five times more likely to drop out of high school than their peers from higher-income families (Taylor, 2019). This may affect their ability to apply for higher-income jobs in the future. Psychologically, children of lower social-economic status (SES) experience higher rates of parent-reported mental health problems and higher rates of unmet mental health needs (Hodgkinson, Godoy, Beers, & Lewin, 2017). Moreover, children who grow up poor seem to be more prone to antisocial and aggressive behavior, such as bullying (Dallas, 2017). These will certainly have an adverse impact on their growth and most possibly their adulthood.

2 CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED

Although an OECD report titled Excellence and Equity in Education had shown nearly 50% of Singaporean students from poorer families still perform well in their studies, it acknowledged that there remains a significant correlation between socio-economic disadvantage and low performance in all Pisa-participating economies (Teng, 2017), showing much work remains in mitigating educational inequity locally. Furthermore, due to the inability to afford educational resources, there stands a higher chance that children from lower SES cannot receive the adequate education one needs for their future as compared to other children (Ng, 2018), and hence may be unable to break free of the poverty cycle. Moreover, though there is proof that there is a presence of poverty in Singapore, many Singaporeans do not think that poverty exists in our nation (Ng, n.d.). Therefore, there is a need to spread awareness to the public about the existence of poverty locally and how they could play a part in mitigating its damaging effects.

3 UNDERLYING PROBLEM

Given the negative educational and psychological impacts that children from low-income families face and the lack of attention towards this issue, we want to raise awareness amongst the general public on the difficulties these children face in Singapore, so they can empathise and better understand them in the future.

4 PLAN OF ACTION

Due to COVID-19, we decided to focus more on initiatives which centre on raising awareness and educating the public about the difficulties children from low-income families face. All implementation of events were done after discussion with BSS. The timeline and initiatives planned, including those that were cancelled, are shown in the table below, with details of the activities included as well.

Section 2: Implementation of Action Plan

Date	Initiative / Action	Objectives	Remarks
Dec 19' - Feb 20'	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Taking over of Instagram page from last year's group❖ Recruiting of OT members		
March 20'	"Give a Book, Make a Change"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ To spread awareness for our project and our cause❖ To raise money for the low-income families	Cancelled due to COVID-19

May 20'	Learning Journey at Singapore Zoo / Sentosa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Allows the children to have fun while learning ❖ Gives the children the chance to learn beyond the classroom ❖ Allows us to interact with beneficiaries and learn more about/from them. 	Cancelled due to COVID-19
June 20'	Street Sales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Educate the public on the difficulties low-income families face in their daily lives ❖ Raise funds for Beyond Social Services 	Cancelled due to COVID-19
June 20'	<p>Crowdfunding via Giving.sg</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Created a video to explain our cause and posted it on Facebook, Instagram, and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Raise funds for Beyond Social Services through donations from the public ❖ Motivate the public 	

	<p>Giving.sg</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Carried out on giving.sg for easy transactions ❖ Raised about \$1700, surpassing our goal of \$1500 	<p>to donate generously to Beyond Social Services by sharing about Project Change's cause</p>	
July 20'	<p>The Pledge Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Created an Instagram Story Template for people to pledge against the discrimination of children from low-income backgrounds ❖ Encouraged them to tag their friends to produce a chain effect ❖ Outreach of more than 1000 people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ To raise public awareness on classism faced by children from low income families ❖ To encourage people to join us in striving to remove any discrimination and social stigmatization 	
August 20'	<p>Zoom Interview with Beyond's staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Interview Beyond staff via Zoom on Beyond's work and relationship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Allows the public to have a better awareness of Beyond's cause and be motivated to serve their 	<p>Cancelled due to privacy concerns</p>

	<p>with the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Understand the trials and difficulties they faced in communicating with their beneficiaries/ carrying out events 	<p>beneficiaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Reduce stigma while educating the public on the difficulties low-income families face in life 	
Throughout duration of project	<p>Social Media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Introduced our project's cause ❖ Produced 6 posts that provide insightful information about our AOC on our Instagram page ❖ Promoted our video for the crowdfunding initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Spread awareness for our project and our cause through posting pictures of our various events online ❖ Educate the public on the difficulties faced by our area of concern ❖ Motivate the public to lend a helping hand to the beneficiaries (donating, volunteering etc.) 	

Section 3 Project Outcomes

1 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We held 3 main initiatives: Social Media, Crowdfunding and the Pledge Board. Our Social Media platforms, including an Instagram Page, have reached out to over 1100

people. Through our social media page, we posted “titbits” about the challenges that children from low-income families face, averaging around 400 viewers per post. Moreover, we created a 3-min introductory video posted on our Instagram page and YouTube introducing ourselves, our ethos and introducing BSS to the public. Our Crowdfunding initiative was held on a giving.sg platform where we reached our goal of \$1500 in 48 hours and raised a total of \$1683. Furthermore, we prepared a pledge board and a testimony by a child from a low-income family on how he was ostracized in his childhood, hoping to touch the hearts of our audience. This pledge board initiative, which was carried out via Instagram, reached more than 1000 people; more than 70 reposted and signed the pledge. The people are of different age groups, ranging from primary school students to adults in their late 50s.

2 REFLECTIONS

Through the added challenges caused by COVID-19, important values like unity and teamwork were instilled in us as we steered this project forward. As we brainstormed new initiatives, we realised the importance of 21st century competencies such as creative and critical thinking especially in rapidly changing times. Mentally, we were reminded to remain calm and resilient when facing difficulties like differences in mindsets among group members. Nevertheless, though we realised the need for improvement in various areas, like being productive in planning events, we are proud that we could accomplish our goals. Personally, we overcame personal biases against our beneficiaries and understood the importance of empathy instead of judgement towards people, especially the less fortunate. Finally, we realised the significance of Service Learning: spreading compassion to our communities and applying the skills learnt to serve the people around us.

3 SCOPE OF IMPACT

Community Impact: Members of the public understand and learn more about the situation surrounding children from low income families in Singapore as well as how BSS impacts their lives. They are now more well-versed in how we can help and empathise with them.

Community Involvement: Although much effort to garner more volunteers for our project this year was put in, it was fruitless due to COVID-19. While we could not mobilize our 60 volunteers (from 10 different schools) to aid us in originally planned events, we were able to involve our volunteers and followers for the Pledge Board and Crowdfunding via our Instagram Page by encouraging them to spread our cause to their family and friends. This enabled us to reach out to more members of the public through the “snowball effect”.

4 RESOLUTION OF UP/AOC

Given that we have identified that there is a lack of awareness from the public with regards to the negative impacts that our beneficiaries face, we have changed to address the UP/AOC by having an estimated outreach of 2000 people, and having the opportunity to educate the members of the public about the challenges children from low income families face in their daily lives. In addition, our communications with BSS revealed that they would also need some help with funding. We also managed to address that by raising \$1683 through our online fundraiser. Therefore, our project has raised awareness of our area of concern and raise funds for BSS, accomplishing what was intended in our UP.

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