

PROJECT HALCYON

7-18

Project type: Single-Year

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Project Halcyon - Written Report

Section I: Overview

A. Areas of Concern

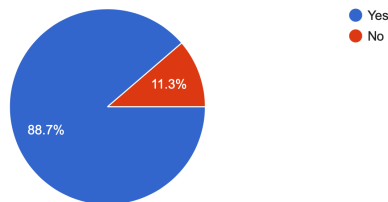
The lack of awareness and understanding of children with learning disabilities and difficulties is concerning. Learning disabilities and difficulties have often been termed “invisible disabilities”. This leads to stigma against those with learning difficulties and disabilities, with the general public unable to understand their needs. There are about **13,000** students in Singapore with learning difficulties. In 2019 there was an increase of about **4% to 78,600** in financial aid recipients for lower income families. The increase in financial aid and the number of individuals means there are **more** underprivileged families that require assistance and are unable to provide their children with the adequate learning opportunities/resources which other more privileged children might have. Our beneficiary **Care Corner Singapore Educational Therapy Service (ETS)** also pointed this out.

B. Challenges Identified

We have identified 4 problems which we aim to address

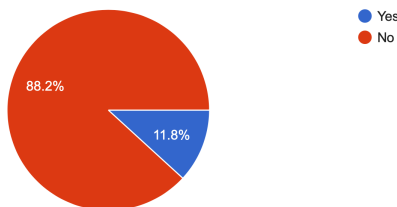
1. **Societal stigma** towards children with learning difficulties/disabilities.

In your opinion are there any prejudices that the public has against children/people with learning disabilities
186 responses

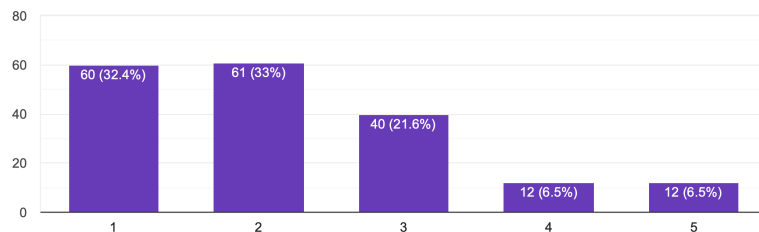


2. **Lack of awareness and support** from the public for these children and our beneficiary

Do you think enough is being done to raise awareness for children with learning disabilities?
186 responses



How much do you know about the problems children with learning disabilities face daily?
185 responses



3. The children at Care Corner Singapore ETS often spend their time after school at the centre completing their homework and assessments or attending various programmes to help them with their learning disabilities/difficulties, and **lack exposure to other aspects of holistic education**
4. Care Corner is a non profit organisation and **requires additional monetary resources** to fund this kind of exposure and more resources for the kids under their care

C. Underlying Problem

Given that disadvantaged children with learning disabilities and difficulties in Singapore aged 7-12 **face many hurdles** in their educational journey, **lacking adequate exposure to meaningful and educational experiences** and that there is a **lack of awareness** amongst the public about their “invisible disabilities”, how might we **alleviate the problem** by providing them with meaningful holistic activities that would **broaden their range of learning** and perspective, raising funds, while **reducing the social stigma** surrounding them and for the public to better emphasise with these children, ultimately enriching their educational journey in the year 2021 and beyond?

D. Plan of action

We formulated a suitable plan of action to provide these children at Care Corner ETS with a holistic education outside of the classroom, raise awareness and funds. Due to the COVID-19 situation, we decided to adopt a three-pronged approach when moving our activities online so as to ensure minimal disruption of our activities.

1. Shifting of our educational campaigns on social media
 - Through awareness campaigns, we aimed to raise awareness about the plight of these children and what are some challenges they face.
2. Organising and facilitating online engagement sessions via Zoom
 - Through online engagement sessions, we hoped to bring holistic education experiences to the children, help them cope with academic rigor of school by incorporating Mathematics and Science concepts
3. Crowdfunding
 - Through crowdfunding, we hoped to raise some funds which would go towards offsetting the costs of undergoing educational therapy and other programmes and funding resources for the children there.

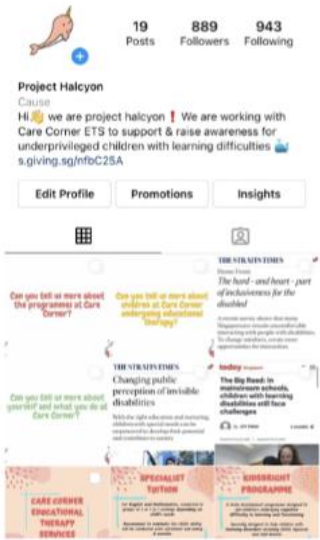
Section II: Implementation of Action Plan

A. Actions and outcomes to date

Legend: **RED** → Cancelled

BLACK → Successful

Date	Action	Objective(s)
2020		
December	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Formation of CORE 2. Research on Area of concern 	Foundation Setting
2021		
January - March	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Liaising with representatives from Care Corner and finalising partnership 2. Recruitment of volunteers 3. Conceptualisation of ideas and plans 4. Creation of Instagram page and introduction of CORE 	<p>Foundation Setting</p> <p>Awareness</p>
19 March - 18 August	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Biweekly online engagement sessions x10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students learn essential life skills such as teamwork, cooperation, creativity, communication and self-confidence - Carried out activities which included team bonding games, handicrafts and hands on experiments - Igniting passion for learning 2. Educational Zoo Journey (June) 3. Sports Day (June) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activities were replaced with coding sessions in collaboration 	<p>Interaction</p> <p>Cancelled due to COVID-19</p>

	coding sessions in collaboration with Project Digitalize	
Throughout the year	<p>1. Sharing of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Common learning disabilities and what we can do to help them [Did You Know?] Series b. Services offered by Care Corner ETS for children with learning disabilities c. Stories of children with learning disabilities and our personal takeaways <p>2. Interview with Educational Therapists (Ms Goh and Ms Wong) to share insights, meeting was recorded and shared on our social media page</p>  <p>3. Giving.sg page to raise funds, \$555 raised</p> <p>4. Bubble tea sales</p>	<p>Awareness and educating the public</p> <p>Total Outreach of 8500 individuals</p> <p>Crowdfunding</p>

Section III: Project Outcomes

A. Accomplishments

We have raised a total of **\$555** for Care Corner ETS through our crowdfunding initiative. We held **10 2hr online engagement sessions** involving **10 children per session** and 2 interviews with professionals to share their professional insights. We have a total outreach of **8500** individuals on Instagram through our myriad of infographics, which has over **900** followers who are aware of and support our cause. In a letter of recognition, our beneficiary commended us for exposing our children to numerous topics that are beyond their academic syllabi and related it to the children in simple yet engaging ways, such as through hands-on activities, Kahoot! quizzes, as well as relevant educational videos and did their best to engage our children meaningfully.

B. Reflections

We have come to understand the lives of and struggles children with learning difficulties face. Planning events that are suitable for all children with learning disabilities was challenging as they had varying abilities, this taught our group to be **more empathetic** as we had to ensure the sessions planned were suitable for them.

We are proud to have overcome the restrictions brought about by COVID-19, despite affecting our initial plans, we managed to **improvise, adapt, and overcome**. It served as a reminder for us that the most important aspect of service is the **meaningful and genuine impacts it has**.

We are certainly heartened by the overwhelming support from the public and we are pleased that we have accomplished our proposed plan of action and successfully met our project objectives. The **overall success in our initiatives is a testament to the substantial impact on the community**. We are grateful for the support and effort put in by our volunteers. All in all, we are fortunate to have contributed significantly in various aspects and offered our services to the children at Care Corner ETS.

C. Scope of impact

Community impact: We hope that the public are **more well-versed** on the prevalence of learning disabilities in Singapore, learn more about Care Corner ETS and common misconceptions about learning disabilities, how we can help and empathise and support our beneficiary through donations and assisting in spreading awareness for our cause. Of course, the children directly benefited from the range of **meaningful engagement sessions** we have planned, and they definitely **enjoyed** themselves whilst taking home **invaluable life lessons**.

Community involvement: From the original 5 core team members we gathered 20 volunteers from various schools. These volunteers played a pivotal role in spreading awareness to other schools and executing our engagement sessions. The volunteers helped provide diverse perspectives and opinions on various methods and initiatives, which was helpful in ensuring the project's success.

Resolution of AOC/UP: Having interacted with these children for the past 4 months, we were able to provide them with holistic educational opportunities to improve their self-esteem and social interactive skills and broaden their range of learning and perspective . We also reached out to the public through conducting interviews and the creation of many infographics on social media. Additionally, raising some funds for resources for the children and reducing the financial burden on parents. We hope that future batches will be able to take on the mantle and build on this foundation, to truly provide a sustainable solution to aid the underprivileged children with learning disabilities and allow others to understand their needs.

(1000 words)

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