

# Project Athena

07-29

Multi-year project

Members:

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## **Section 1: Project Overview**

### **A. Area of Concern**

From March 2020 to May 2020, DBS produced a report of 1.2 million retail customers. The report showed that **lower-income earners (S\$2,999 and below) made up about 49 per cent** of DBS customers who saw a **drop in salary**. Within this group, about **half saw their income fall by over 50 per cent**, and **4 in 10** had **less than a month's emergency funds**. The results indicate that financially disadvantaged families face greater financial strain as a result of the pandemic.

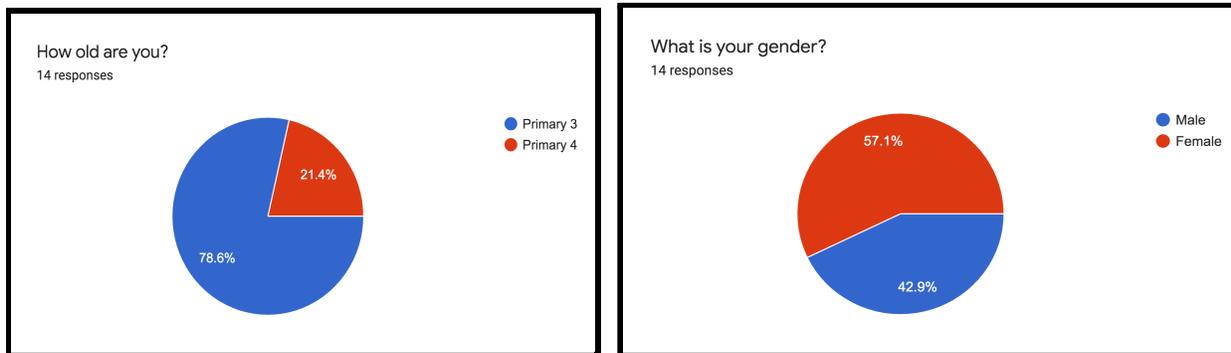
Due to lower financial ability, **these parents are less able to afford tuition and quality materials to facilitate their children's learning**, as basic needs such as keeping their jobs or providing food for the family may not be met (Davie S., 2020). This likely causes the children to fall behind more affluent peers in school.

In addition, **there is lack of ecosystem of support for financially disadvantaged children**. There have been cases where a child's parents were struggling to make ends meet, but inadequate support was provided from school, relatives and neighbours, causing the child to fall behind his/her peers (Ng C., 2018). In many cases, parents of such families find it difficult to be role models, as they must parent in a context where they know they are negatively judged (Teo Y.Y., 2018).

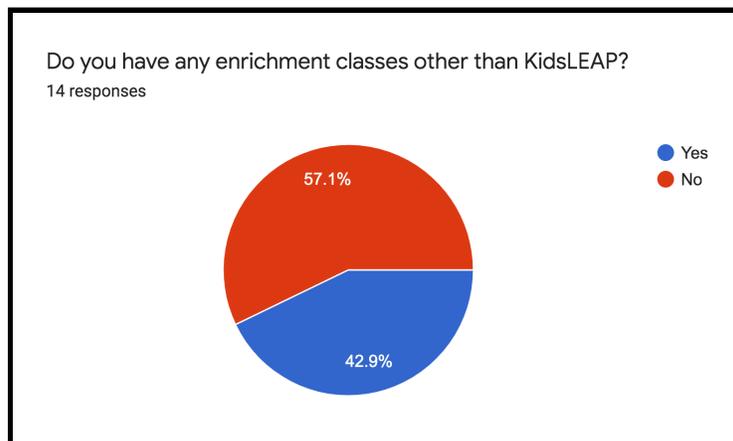
The Primary 3 and 4 children enrolled at KidsLEAP under FaithActs are from **low- to middle-income families** and require **assistance in English**. We have also found it necessary to provide **emotional support and guidance**.

## B. Challenges Identified

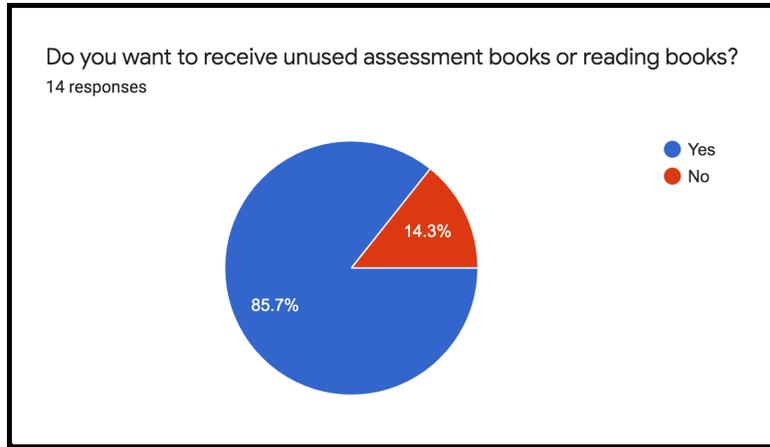
From our needs analysis of the 14 children, we have found that most children at KidsLEAP lack access to sufficient learning materials, as shown by 57.1% of them not having enrichment classes other than KidsLEAP (Annex 2) and 85.7% of them wanting more assessment or reading books (Annex 3). Most children are unlikely to seek emotional support from peers, as shown by only 7.1% of them being most likely to ask for help with studies from friends (Annex 4).



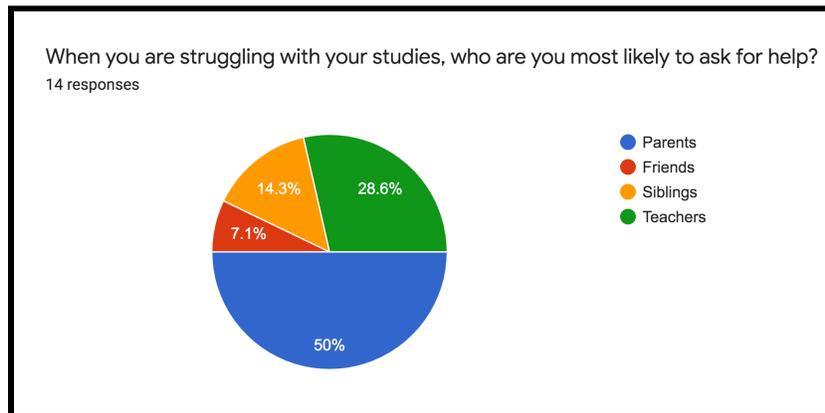
*Annex 1: Children's age and gender*



*Annex 2: Enrollment in enrichment classes*



*Annex 3: Access to learning materials*



*Annex 4: Who the children are most likely to turn to when struggling with studies*

## C. Underlying Problem

Given that the current situation shows that children from financially disadvantaged backgrounds at KidsLEAP **lack emotional support from peers and access to learning materials**, how might we **share our learning experiences with them and impart values to them** so that the children **can broaden their knowledge and develop social skills in managing relationships**, with the ultimate goal of **adapting to today's ever changing society** in the year 2021 and beyond?

## **D. Plan of Action**

In order to meet the concerns mentioned in our underlying purpose, we focused on two main aspects. Firstly, we will provide **academic assistance** and enhance their digital skills. Secondly, we will **impart vital skills and values** that will allow them to become more readily equipped for the future.

## Section 2: Implementation of the Plan

### A. Actions and Outcomes to Date

Date	Actions	Objectives
December 2020 - February 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Taking over of project</li> <li>● Partnered up with FaithActs Organisation</li> <li>● Visited FaithActs and finalised plan of action</li> </ul>	-
February 2021 - September 2021	<p><b>Activity 1 - English Tuition</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Weekly english tuition lessons</li> <li>● Covered a variety of components such as Oral, Language in context (Grammar, Synthesis etc), and Critical Reading</li> <li>● Incorporated mini activities such as crossword puzzles</li> <li>● A total of 28 sessions conducted</li> </ul>	<p><b>Objective 1</b> - To provide academic assistance focused on improving the children's English</p>
February 2021 - May 2021	<p><b>Activity 2 - Soft skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2 sessions on the importance of Friendship</li> <li>● 1 Art and Crafts session to express their gratitude towards their parents (mother's day)</li> <li>● 2 sessions on importance and development of Communication Skills</li> </ul>	<p><b>Objective 2a</b> - To inculcate important values in them to help in real world interactions</p>
April 2021 - July	<p><b>Activity 3 - Self-directed learning</b></p>	<p><b>Objective 2b</b> - To help <input type="checkbox"/></p>

2021	<p><b>sessions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2 sessions on Time Management</li> <li>● 1 session on Finding Your Passion</li> <li>● 1 session on how to Learn Efficiently and Effectively</li> </ul>	students better adapt to HBL by being able to motivate themselves to self-learn
July 2021	<p><b>Activity 4 - Digital Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 1 session on Typing</li> <li>● 1 session on Digital Skills, which includes how to avoid phishing and other online scams</li> </ul>	<p><b>Objective 1, 2b</b> - To provide academic assistance focused on improving the children's English</p> <p>To help students better adapt to HBL by being able to motivate themselves to self-learn</p>
23 June 2021	<p><b>Activity 5 - Virtual Learning Journey</b> An online tour of 2 of Singapore's tourist attractions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Marina Barrage and its green and environmentally friendly facilities</li> <li>● Botanic Gardens and its rich history and collection of botany</li> </ul>	<p><b>Objective 2a</b> - To inculcate important values in them to help in real world interactions</p> <p>To develop appreciation of Singapore's sustainable development plan and botany</p>
22 July 2021	<p><b>Activity 6 - Virtual Escape Room</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Mini puzzles, quizzes and questions on English and Mathematics the children have to solve to escape the "school".</li> </ul>	<p><b>Objective 2a</b> - To inculcate important values in them to help in real world interactions</p>

		To build teamwork between the children, and develop the skills of thinking on their toes to adapt and solve real world problems
5 Aug 2021	<b>Activity 7 - Virtual Sports Day</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taught the children on importance of exercise, followed by a 15 minute workout session with the children</li> </ul>	<b>Objective 2a</b> - To inculcate important values in them to help in real world interactions To develop awareness for the importance of a balanced lifestyle
12 Aug 2021	<b>Activity 8 - Practical Skills</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborated with project eco wildcare on a presentation about biodiversity in Singapore</li> </ul>	<b>Objective 2a</b> - To inculcate important values in them to help in real world interactions  To develop awareness for human activity on biodiversity
16 Aug - 17 Aug 2021	<b>Activity 9 - Donation Drive</b> Collection of new and used textbooks and study material to be donated to the children of KidsLEAP	<b>Objective 1</b> - To provide academic assistance focused on improving the children's English  To provide financial assistance in the form of textbooks to the children

**Ways of training communication**

**Think, Breathe then Speak**  
Practise thinking through the **main meaning you wish to convey** before speaking to keep it **short and sweet**

**Keep your audience in mind**  
Practise **putting yourself in your audience's position**, to better tailor your communication to their needs

**Practise active listening**  
Pay **attention**, show the speaker you're **interested**, **clarify** your understanding

**Develop empathy towards others**

1. Imagine yourself in someone else's position
2. Observe and seek to understand **how the person is feeling**
3. Keep **body language open** and **regulate tone of voice**

Participants: YIN JUNREN, RYA..., Issac Young, Cedric Lim, Lok Peng Yee, Betty Tan

*Annex 5: LifeSkills Workshop (Communication Skills)*

**2. Prevents us from **impulse spending****

**The kids who practised restraint and did not eat the marshmallow, got to enjoy another marshmallow in the end**

*Lesson for money management:*

*Not spending impulsively and practising restraint can allow us to save up our money, and buy even more valuable things in the future*

Participants: Lok Peng Yee, chuankai, Cedric, Rachel FA, Ryan Yin

*Annex 6: LifeSkills Workshop (Money Management)*

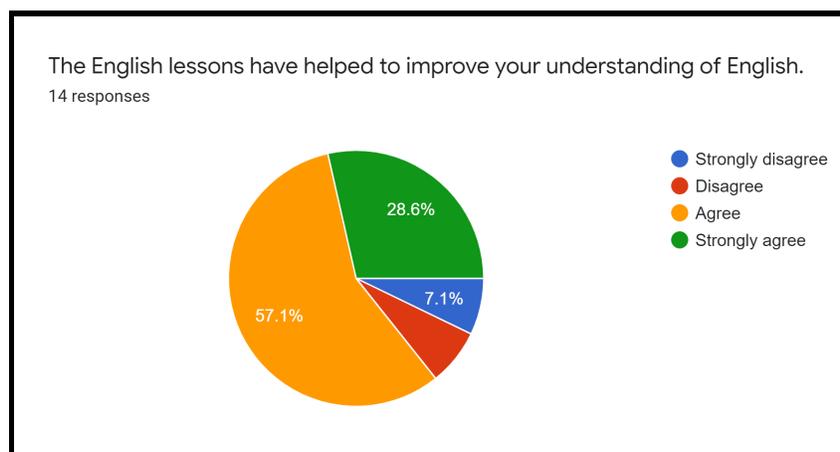
## Section 3: Project Outcomes

### A. Accomplishments

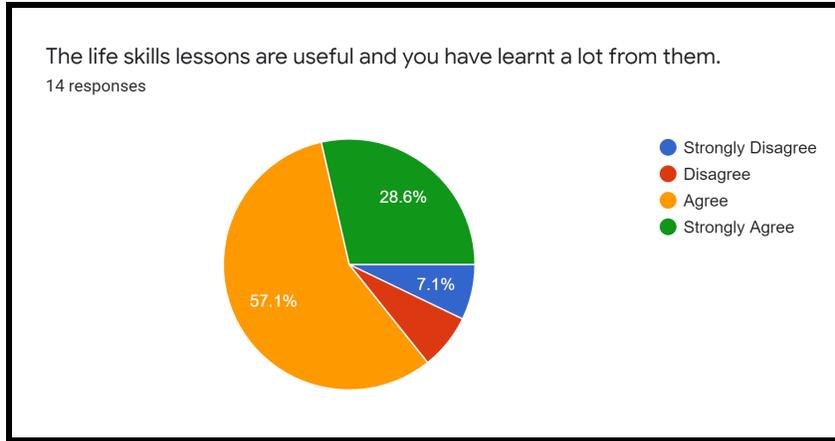
In total, we taught **14 P3 and P4 children**, over the span of **23 sessions**. Under the leadership of an ex-MOE teacher-volunteer, we covered **10 English topics** and taught **9 life skills topics**.

To assess the impact of the activities in resolving our underlying problem, the children whom we had taught were surveyed.

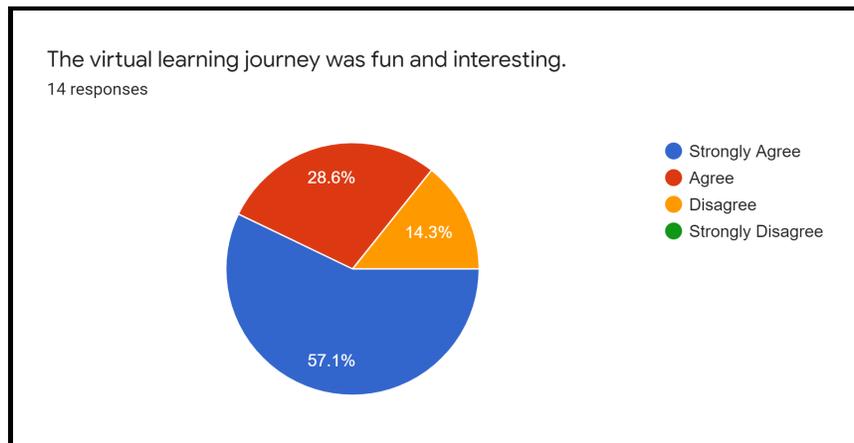
**Annex 7** shows that majority of children have a **better understanding** of English after weekly lessons. **Annex 8** shows that the children had **many takeaways** from life skills lessons. From **Annex 9,10,11**, it can be concluded that the **other virtual events** conducted were **useful and educational**, providing an **enjoyable** way for children to learn about the **importance of a balanced lifestyle, communication skills and teamwork**. **Annex 12** shows that we were able to act as a **role model** for them and **maintain good relationships** with them. Finally, **Annex 13** shows that our project was a **memorable experience** for them.



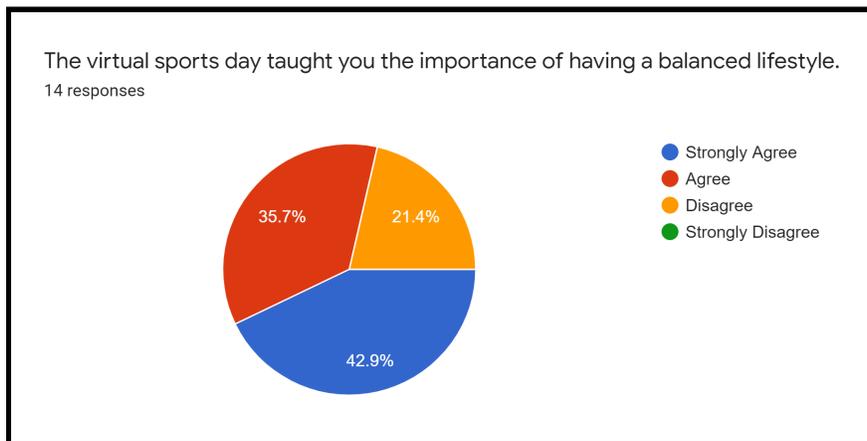
*Annex 7: Impact of English lessons on students*



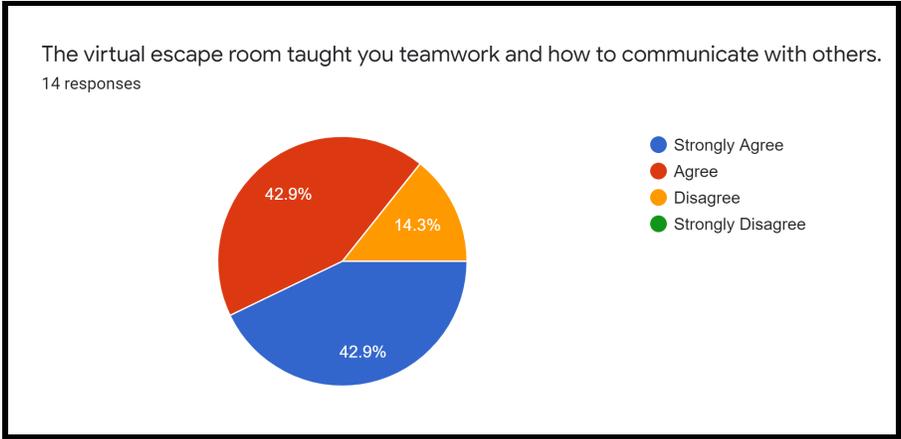
*Annex 8: Impact of life skills lessons on students*



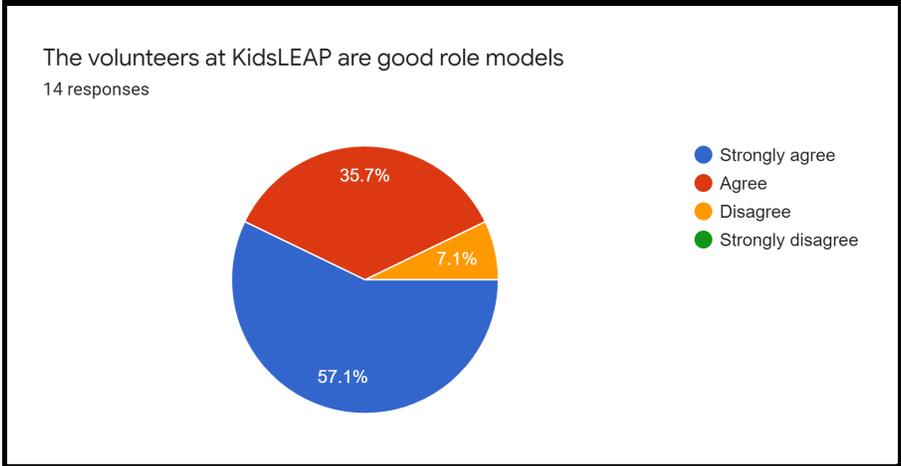
*Annex 9: Impact of virtual learning journey on students*



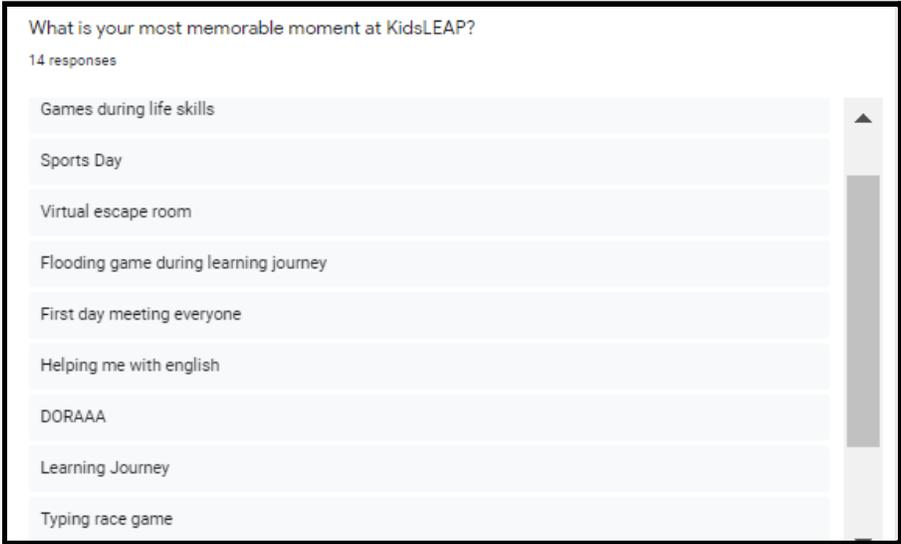
*Annex 10: Impact of virtual sports day on students*



*Annex 11: Impact of virtual escape room on students*



*Annex 12: Impact of volunteers on students*



*Annex 13: Students' most memorable KidsLEAP moment*

## **B. Reflection on Outcomes**

Prior to the project, we had **assumptions** that students who are not performing well are **unwilling to learn or unmotivated**. However, through conducting weekly sessions, we saw that many students were active during lessons and **inquisitive learners, enthusiastic** in understanding the knowledge we share. Instead the problem that they are facing is the **lack of opportunities** to learn, thus we put our **heart and soul** in every volunteering session to provide them with **meaningful learning experiences**.

Teaching and learning are not the only part of these sessions, more importantly, through one-to-one or one-to-two interactions, we were able to **forge strong bonds** with the children at KidsLEAP. We had implemented the **buddy system** where volunteers are paired up with the same group of children over the course of a few months. Previously, due to lack of familiarity between us and the children, we were pretty **awkward** and had problems starting and **keeping the conversation going** with them. Over time, we got to know one another better and the children were more **comfortable** with sharing their school and life experiences with us and had brought up problems they faced to seek our advice or opinion. We are encouraged that our **relationship** is able to go to the next level, our role is no longer tutors for the children but instead becoming a **role model** and a form of **social, emotional and mental support** for the children.

## **C. Scope of the Project**

### Community Impact:

The financially disadvantaged children we are helping will benefit, firstly from becoming more accustomed to using online platforms to attend lessons. They can learn more effectively during online classes which is necessary during this pandemic as well as for the future as technology advances and the use of technology becomes more prevalent. Secondly, we are able to support their families by giving them free education as well as learning materials such as assessment books and reading books.

### Resolution of UP:

As the children from financially disadvantaged backgrounds at KidsLEAP lack emotional support from peers and access to learning materials, we have conducted weekly English tutoring sessions and activities such as learning journeys to broaden their knowledge. In addition, we conducted life skills workshops weekly where we teach them different social and practical skills that they will need to learn, allowing us to share our learning experiences and impart values to them so that they can develop social skills in managing relationships.

### **Word Count (excluding headings, annexes, diagrams, charts):**

**990 words**

### **Section 4: References**

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