

## PASSAGE A

### Rainbow Project helps autistic children break out of their shells

The Rainbow Project was a beneficiary of last year's charity drive, and is on the list again so it can keep giving autistic children space to grow (*SCMP* By Alex Cheung 11 November, 2014)

- 1 A mother watches her child as he stacks Play-Doh tubes on top of each other. She grabs his arms before he is able to knock his newly constructed tower to the ground. This six-year-old boy was diagnosed with autism when he was taken to a psychologist at the age of two, due to his delayed speech.
- 2 For two years, the Rainbow Project, a non-profit group that provides special education for autistic children and subsidises therapy for low-income families, had been the best option for her son's speech therapy, allowing her to avoid the two-year queue for government aid. But the mother and her child were forced to look elsewhere when the Rainbow Project ended its programme in 2012 due to a lack of funding.
- 3 As a beneficiary of last year's Operation Santa Claus, the Rainbow Project is back with new facilities, new staff and returning families. For the last six months, the mother has been happily returning with her child for the therapy he urgently needs.
- 4 "He used to not speak at all, and was constantly throwing tantrums," she said. "Now [after the therapy], he gets less frustrated because he can express himself much more easily."
- 5 Keith Lee, the director of the Rainbow Project, believes that despite the progress there is still much to be done. Lee sees the group helping more children and becoming a well-established school for autistic kids. Ever since funding came through Operation Santa - the annual fundraiser organised by the *South China Morning Post* and RTHK - the Rainbow Project has seen a rise in enrolments.
- 6 "We have a great programme and a great service, and we want people to come here," Lee said. "We also want to provide transport subsidies to families who can't afford to visit us."
- 7 Lee said sharp drops in enrolment occurred in 2009 when the Rainbow Project's collaboration with the Hong Kong Academy ended. "When we were cooperating with the academy, the parents of our pupils could at least say their child went to a normal administrative school. Our numbers dropped from almost 30 to only five this year. We almost shut the school down in 2012." Lee attributed the sharp drop to an inconvenient location in Sai Ying Pun, and to prejudice.
- 8 "The social stigma is still very strong. [Parents] won't send their kids to a special school if they don't have to. However people are realising the need to help their kids if they suffer from developmental disorders."

## **PASSAGE B**

### **How the 20 charities will use your donations**

#### **CHILDREN & YOUTH**

##### **Rainbow Project**

Subsidise occupational and speech therapy for children with autism spectrum disorder who might otherwise miss the opportunity to attain the skills needed to live relatively independently. Beneficiaries: 30 families

##### **Project Space for Squatter Kids**

Mobilise volunteers to clean up and repair homes for needy people living in substandard housing, including container huts in squatter areas, subdivided flats and pigsty houses. Beneficiaries: 50 families

##### **Children's Medical Foundation**

Establishing a specialised neonatal care unit (NCU) with proper equipment and offering urgent financial help provided to families in underdeveloped areas of Yunnan province, where many families struggle to find or afford care for sick newborns. Beneficiaries: 600 newborns each year; 40 families

##### **Morning Tears Hong Kong**

Work to help children whose parents are in prison or have been executed on the mainland, who often suffer severe trauma, by publishing training materials for child protection, and equipping staff with the skills to train caregivers. Beneficiaries: 145 children

#### **ELDERLY PEOPLE**

##### **Charles K. Kao Foundation for Alzheimer's Disease**

Organise workshops for children, youths, caregivers and elderly people with dementia to interact through toys, as play can provide effective stimulation for dementia patients. Beneficiaries: 180 dementia patients, children and youths

#### **DISABILITY**

##### **Hands On Hong Kong**

Employ and train adults with intellectual disabilities to deliver fruit boxes to the office pantries of participating companies. The programme will also help promote interaction and communication between mentally disabled people and the public. Beneficiaries: 50-100 adults with intellectual disabilities

##### **Art in Hospital**

Help psychiatric patients express their feelings and create personal journals through photography and contemporary mixed media, such as creative writing, calligraphy, comics, painting and illustration. Artworks will be selected for an exhibition. Beneficiaries: 240 patients, caregivers and hospital staff

#### **COMMUNITY**

##### **Pathfinders**

Raise awareness of migrant workers' rights and educate them on employment rights, family planning, pregnancy and health. The programme aims to protect migrant workers from unlawful dismissal due to pregnancy and provide support.

Beneficiaries: 1,140 workshop attendees

## **MEDICAL**

### **Diabetes Hong Kong**

Educate and counsel people with diabetes, their caregivers and those at risk. A diabetes helpline, education programme and guidelines will be given to enable proper self-care and enhanced quality of life. Beneficiaries: 2,000 patients and their caregivers

### **Maggie's Cancer Caring Centre**

Maggie's Mind-Body Relaxation Programme helps cancer patients cope effectively through relaxation practices. Effective stress management is critical to improving their quality of life. Beneficiaries: 4,500 attendants

### **Hong Kong Arthritis & Rheumatism Foundation**

Provide self-management programmes for people with the symptoms of rheumatism, helping them get treatment and improve their quality of life. Hydrotherapy and physiotherapy will be provided. Beneficiaries: 1,688 patients and 288 family members

### **Centre for Community Cultural Development**

Offer music therapy for stroke survivors with aphasia to promote wellness, enhance self-confidence, improve speech abilities and encourage expression of feelings to improve quality of life. A stroke survivors' choir will be formed. Beneficiaries: 30 stroke survivors and 30 family members

### **Lions Kidney Education Centre & Research Foundation**

Provide a reverse osmosis central water treatment system to improve healthcare facilities at Chan Wong Sau Wah Memorial Renal Dialysis Centre in Sham Shui Po. Beneficiaries: 70-80 patients per year

## **HOW YOU CAN GIVE**

\*Donate online by credit card at [osc.scmp.com/donate](http://osc.scmp.com/donate)

\*Donate at an ATM or any branch of HSBC (account number 502-676299-001 for SCMP Charities Ltd - Operation Santa Claus)

\*You can donate with a cheque payable to "SCMP Charities Ltd - Operation Santa Claus" and mail it to: Operation Santa Claus, Morning Post Centre, 22 Dai Fat Street, Tai Po Industrial Estate, Tai Po, New Territories.

\*Donations of HK\$100 or more are tax-deductible. If you would like a tax receipt, please send the completed donation form and original bank receipt to the address above.

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