



HAND-MADE WITH LOVE

Little ones, big dreams

'Little socialpreneurs' from St James' Church Kindergarten raise funds for kids from distressed families

SINGAPORE – Aged between five and six, 29 students from St James' Church Kindergarten (Harding) knitted beads, put together fondue skewers and repackaged candies to raise funds for a worthy cause.

Within seven weeks, the Kindergarten 2 class — called Starlight 2 — raised S\$1,045.60 for the OCBC-TODAY Children's Fund, which benefits the Singapore Children's Society (SCS).

The kindergarten's initiative was part of Start Small Dream Big, a President's Challenge project by the Early Childhood Development Agency. Each class chose a charity to adopt and set about raising funds in various ways.

Calling themselves "little socialpreneurs", the children of Starlight 2 decided to set up a handicraft business to support the OCBC-TODAY Children's Fund.

AN ORGANISED ENTERPRISE

The children worked in teams to create and sell their products.

Dr Jacqueline Chung, senior principal at St James' Church Kindergarten, recalled how a group of students approached her to sell chocolate fondue.

"One child carried the money pouch, another made the sales pitch, while the other children put together the fondue," she said. "I was impressed that they were able to articulate very clearly what they were doing, why they were doing it and how they were going to do it."

The fondues and repackaged candies were displayed at temporary booths at the school. Patrons included parents waiting to pick up their children, as well as the staff at the kindergarten.

The children also created order forms for bead accessories such as bracelets and necklaces, which the children distributed to friends and family. After collecting the forms, the children would produce the goods in class.

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

In the early stages, the items were priced at the whims of each child, said Starlight 2's Chinese teacher Christina Toh. "Some of them were selling bracelets at S\$1. We were making losses," she said.



Children from the class of Starlight 2 at St James' Church Kindergarten showing off their wares. PHOTOS: KOH MUI FONG



Little socialpreneurs.



Handcrafted accessories.



A total of S\$1,045.60 was raised.

A parent familiar with marketing came to class one day to teach the children about the four Ps: Product, promotion, price and placement. These were written on large sheets of paper and pasted on a classroom wall.

The children gradually acquired a sense of profit and loss, and set the price of bracelets at around S\$10 to S\$20.

A MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCE

Reflecting on the project, the mother of Starlight 2's Caden Fangiono, Ms Serene Lim, said: "The children's awareness was raised that there are children less fortunate than them."

Ms Lee Wai Ling has a daughter in Starlight 2, Sammi Tee. The 39-year-old finance executive, who volunteers regularly at SCS with her company, said: "I hope

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Mr Alfred Tan
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, SINGAPORE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

Sammi learnt that we should always think about others."

Dr Chung said she was surprised that the children could raise that much money through pure sales. But she highlighted that what matters is not the amount raised, but the values being taught to the children. She hopes that through the project, the children will come to perceive that money is not something to be spent only on yourself, but a means to help others.

SCS chief executive officer Alfred Tan

LEND A HELPING HAND

The OCBC-TODAY Children's Fund focuses on the emotional needs of children from distressed homes. Donations will be capped at S\$1.5 million each year — S\$1 million from public contributions and S\$500,000 from OCBC's commitment to give S\$1 for every S\$2 raised. This helps ensure that other charities, especially smaller outfits, also have the chance to benefit from the generosity of donors.

Visit www.ocbctodayfund.sg or call the SCS fundraising department at 6273 2010.

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