



A Wealth of Young Talent

“The primary objective of education lies not in comparison, but in helping children overcome their own limitations and reach their own peaks. With proper training, children with special needs can achieve success.”

— Ms Nancy Tsang, Director of Heep Hong Society

Children with special needs might encounter various problems in social interaction, like Lok-lam Chan, 13, who is not good at expressing herself verbally; and John Lau, 19, who was isolated by schoolmates when he first entered a mainstream secondary school. Both of them are teenagers with autistic symptoms.

Some children might suffer from more than one developmental disorders, like Kingsley Tsui, 10.

Nevertheless, if these children are given early intervention and proper training, they can still overcome their own limitations and blossom in their own ways.



▲ Lok-lam and her mum



▶ ▲ Kingsley went out of town for musical exchanges in the company of his mum



▲ John is much into reading

Early Intervention the Turning Point

Lok-lam has been taking drawing and pottery classes at a parent resources centre of Heep Hong for several years. "She is an active girl. Yet, whenever she is making pottery, she is completely engaged," Mrs Chan said. Lok-lam loves drawing wonderful flowers and folk tale figures, and making pizzas, shoes and farm houses out of clay.

Similarly, John since his childhood has participated in a wide range of training courses and activities at Heep Hong's parents resource centres, and is fond of reading. Apart from speaking fluent English and Mandarin, he also passed the grade 7 piano examination and can give a recital of classical music pieces from memory. He is now studying Internet and Multimedia Engineering at the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education.

Just like John, Kingsley showed his talent for music at an early age, though he has been diagnosed with autism and moderate mental retardation. At the age of 4, his music aptitude was assessed, by a psychologist at Heep Hong, to be comparable to that of a 6-year-old child. 3 years later, he could play the rhythm of a pop Cantonese song by ear. He enjoys playing electronic piano and is the representative of his school in musical exchanges with counterparts in Beijing and Shanghai. Heep Hong's training helped boost his oral, fine and gross motor skills, thereby enhancing his self-care ability and performance in swimming, track and field, rowing and calligraphy. In the Hong Kong Special Olympics, Kingsley stole the show as the second runner-up in a 25-metre kick board race and a softball game, and the runner-up in a 50-metre sprint.

"The primary objective of education lies not in comparison, but in helping children overcome their own limitations and reach their own peaks. With proper training, children with special needs can achieve success," said Ms Nancy Tsang, Director of Heep Hong Society.

Parenting Equally Important

Parents' efforts also play a critical role in the accomplishment of children with special needs.

To take care of Lok-lam, Mrs Chan gave up her career and grasps every possible chance for Lok-lam to acquire different skills. In last summer holidays, she accompanied her daughter to centres in Shau Kei Wan, Olympian City and Tsim Sha Tsui for courses and interest classes day after day.

John's parents are also fully devoted to their son. Since pre-school, good reads and computer teaching resources have always been at John's fingertips as they know autistic children are better at visual learning. Home tutors are engaged to help John catch up with the school curriculum. Right after work, Mrs Lau would prepare study notes and go through them with John. Throughout John's primary and secondary schooling, Mrs Lau has kept in close contact with teachers to resolve his day-to-day social conflicts and behavioral problems at school. For the long-term benefit of his children, Mr Lau studied naturopathic medicine and finished his PhD. He eventually changed his career from an architect to a self-employed health consultant.

"When I learnt that there were music classes at Heep Hong's Hoi Fu Centre, without hesitation, I drove straight to Kowloon from Hong Kong Island to apply for it," Kingsley's dad recalled, "so long as it helps my son, we would give it a try." Mrs Tsui also accompanied Kingsley to Shanghai and Beijing for musical exchanges. Whenever Kingsley is emotional, Mrs Tsui will hold him in her arms, and hum the first two lines of his favorite songs, followed by his humming of the next two lines. Taking turns in this way, he is then pacified.

Working Together for the Benefit of Children

"I won't complain about my child's inborn deficiencies. We should appreciate what has been given and groom them with our utmost care. In John's class, I saw a number of classmates who were smart and more gifted, but owing to family problems or their own giving up, their potential was wasted," Mrs Lau said with regret.

Apart from school and home education, whether the talents of these children could continue to flourish when they grow up also depends on the support and job opportunities offered by the community. Are you willing to give them a hand? 🙋



Having a Heart of Gold

“I trust that more children with special needs could benefit if more volunteers help with the flag sale.”
— Mrs Chan

Mrs Chan has volunteered her services to help Heep Hong Society since her son was diagnosed autism at the age of three.

“Since 2003, I’ve joined Heep Hong’s flag sale activity with my son in every single time,” she noted with a broad smile on her face.

“Selling flags is a good experience for my son. It leads him out of his sheltered life and makes him realise that life is not all plain sailing. Sometimes when we face rejection, we can learn how to cope with the unpleasant feelings,” Mrs Chan remarked.

She remembered several years ago, her son was too timid to hand a flag to the donor and lost his patience easily. He would stay with his mother for only a few minutes and then left to see something he felt interested. After years of practice, the little boy who used to be so shy with strangers has finally gone. He now takes an active role in asking passers-by to buy flags. Adding to this, he also manages to sell flags for a longer duration. Seeing the personal growth of his son, Mrs Chan feels gratified.

Mrs Chan hopes that passers-by will not only stop to buy flags but also spare a minute to learn more about Heep

Hong Society from the volunteers. Once a foreign passer-by asked her about the beneficiary organisation. After she briefly told him about Heep Hong, the foreigner said he did not have any coins. Then, to her great surprise, he took out a HK\$100 note and put it into the money collection bag. That’s a remarkable experience to her.

“I simply follow the Cantonese saying ‘Money or energy, give whatever you have to help’ and pitch in with the work,” said Mrs. Chan, explaining the motivation behind her voluntary services. “I trust that more children with special needs could benefit if more volunteers help with the flag sale.”

In fact, it means a lot. Every penny counts, and every minute of your voluntary services makes a difference to Heep Hong’s children with special needs and their families. 🇮🇪

Heep Hong Society’s Flag Day is scheduled for 4 December 2010 (Saturday), from 7:00am to 12:30pm, on Hong Kong Island. You, your family and friends are cordially invited to join us in the flag sale for the benefit of children with special needs. For more information, please visit www.heephong.org or www.facebook.com/heephong.

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Updates on Services



▲ Director I.C. of Social Welfare Mr Patrick Lip (middle) visited Fu Cheong Centre

▶ Financial Secretary Mr John Tsang (middle) at the "Ocean Heaven" Preview Screening



Support Required for Wan Tsui Centre Expansion

Since 1991, Wan Tsui Centre in Chai Wan has been at the services of thousands of children with special needs and their parents. More than half of its graduates went to mainstream schools and some graduates in early years are in employment now.

To accommodate more children with special needs on the long waiting list of government services and to ease the overcrowded problem, the Centre will expand by acquiring adjacent six units. Upon completion, the Centre will double its floor area and feature new facilities including a sensory integrative room, an Adventure Land, two speech therapy rooms and a gross motor training room on top of standard classrooms and basic training facilities. While part of the refurbishment and new equipment will be funded by the government, the balance of HK\$1.5 million is to be financed by the public. Heep Hong is inviting donations towards this project and would appreciate all gifts of any amount.

Director of Social Welfare Visited Fu Cheong Centre

Director of Social Welfare Mr Patrick Nip visited Fu Cheong Centre on 14 July. Mr Nip observed classes and met with parents to have a deeper understanding of the rehabilitation services for children with special needs.

RBS Interns Cooperation Programme

The Royal Bank of Scotland in Hong Kong lined up over 30 summer interns from world-class universities to present proposals to Heep Hong Society on six projects, namely the application of IT to children training, customer relationship management & system, mandatory provident fund provider review, investment strategy, donor retention programme and social media plan. The interns were enthusiastic and put forward innovative ideas and insightful suggestions.

A Special Father's Day —— "Ocean Heaven" Preview Screening

Financial Secretary Mr John Tsang, Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Administration) Mr Fung Pak-yan and Commissioner for Rehabilitation Mr Stephen Sui joined some 250 parents and supporters of Heep Hong Society at the preview screening of the autism film "Ocean Heaven" jointly organized with Edko Film Ltd on 20 June to celebrate the Father's Day in a special way. Following the occasion, several rounds of screening were also held by Heep Hong centres.

Professional Training & Parent Education

The new Professional Training & Parent Education series to be held between October 2010 and February 2011 is now open for enrollment. In addition to the all-time popular courses like "DIR® Floortime Parent Training Workshop", "Steps to Enhance Communication Skills of Children with Autism" and "Happy Learning Series", there will be new workshops for parents like "Theraplay® Therapy" and "Say No to Over-dependence". Monthly donors and staff of corporate partners of Heep Hong are entitled to a 10% fee discount. Details are available at www.heephong.org.

Supportive Learning Project (SLP) Website Gets Facelift

The new SLP website is designed with well-organised contents to cater to the needs of children with special needs and their parents. Useful information about the latest services and training programmes including videos are presented in a user friendly manner. Go to slp.heephong.org to get first hand look of the new website.





▲ Heep Hong provided speech training of children with autism for teachers in the Pearl River Delta

Training & Exchanges in Mainland China

Heep Hong Society participated in international seminars and provided training in Shanghai, Shenzhen and Nanjing between August and October 2010 to facilitate the development of children rehabilitation services in the Mainland.

At the invitation of Shanghai AiHao Children Rehabilitation Center, Ms Kan Wai Ling, the Center-in-Charge of Tung Chung Centre, delivered a speech at the International Forum on Rehabilitation Services for Children with Autism. Five selected drawings by children at Catherine Lo Centre were also exhibited at the Sweden Pavilion in the Expo 2010 Shanghai.

Heep Hong's speech therapists accepted the invitation of Shenzhen Autism Association and delivered a six-day course on speech training of children with autism for teachers in the Pearl River Delta.

At the Amity Seminar and Training on Autism organized by The Amity Foundation and Nanjing Brain Hospital, two of Heep Hong's senior staff members were invited to share their views on social adaptation and sensory integrative training. Immediately after the event, our speech therapists also conducted a 3-day training course on enhancement of speech and communication of children with Autism.

New Books

The newly published "Decoding Children's Behaviors: Practical Tips" and "The Finger Fun Activity Guide" (in Chinese) serve to improve children's behavioral problems and fine motor development. Monthly donors who wish to receive a complimentary copy of the books can send in their name, contact number and email address via info@heephong.org or by fax (2776 1837) to the Corporate Development Department. Limited copies. First come, first served. 📖



Monthly Donation Programme

I would like to be a monthly donor of Heep Hong Society !

MY DETAILS (Please write in BLOCK letters)

(Surname) (First Name)
Name in English : Mr / Ms / Miss _____
Name in Chinese : _____ Birthday : __ DD __ MM __ YY
Mobile No : _____ Home Tel : _____
Fax : _____ Centre (if applicable) : _____
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Monthly Donation

☐ HK\$800 ☐ HK\$500 ☐ HK\$300 ☐ HK\$200 ☐ HK\$150
☐ HK\$ Other _____

One-off Donation

☐ HK\$2,000 ☐ HK\$1,000 ☐ HK\$500 ☐ HK\$ Other _____

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For One-off Donation Only

Payable to "Heep Hong Society"

Credit Card

☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ UnionPay

Card Issuing Bank : _____

Credit Card No : _____

Cardholder's Name : _____

Card Expiry Date : ____ MM / ____ YY (Valid at least 6 months)

Cardholder's Signature : _____

Autopay

"Direct Debit Authorisation Form" will be sent to you or you could download the form from our website www.heephong.org

- Cash donation is not accepted.
- Monthly transactions will normally be processed on or about 7th day and 29th day of the month for bank autopay and credit card respectively. Monthly donations will be valid until further notice.
- An annual receipt for monthly donation will be issued every April for tax return.
- Your personal particulars will be treated in strict confidence and will be used for issuing receipt, fund raising and communication purposes only. Please notify us in writing if you do not wish to receive future mailings from Heep Hong Society.
- Please return the completed donation form to the Corporate Development Department, Heep Hong Society, G1, Tung Yu House, Tai Hang Tung Estate, Kowloon, Hong Kong.



Basics of Developmental Disorders



◀ Stroke-sequence routine helps children grasp the sequence of strokes of Chinese characters

▶ Making use of images in teaching Chinese characters



Dyslexia

Children with dyslexia are of normal intellect, except for their difficulties in decoding text, which impair their development in reading and writing skills. Studies revealed that about one in every ten local students encountered dyslexia, which is a developmental problem that will last for the whole life of those children if no early diagnosis and intervention is received.

Martin is in the third year in a mainstream primary school. He always mis-pronounces or mixes up homonyms and synonyms. He finds it hard to recognize and grasp frequently used vocabulary, resulting in a slow pace of reading.

"Despite repeated practices, during dictation in class, his work is always full of mistakes, including wrong spelling, missing strokes, clumsy calligraphy, disproportionate components, uneven spacing between characters, or wrong stroke sequence," Martin's mother said.

Apart from difficulties in languages, some children with dyslexia also have difficulties in sequential ordering and grasping mathematical concepts. For instance, Martin finds it hard to understand fraction, decimals and temporal dimension. In addition, the hand-eye coordination and motor coordination abilities of some dyslexic children are often weaker than their ordinary peers.

Dyslexic Students Beset by Written Exams

Heep Hong's Educational Psychologist, Ms Alice Keung, remarked, "Traditional teaching approaches, which rely heavily on reading, impose challenges on children with dyslexia. The academic assessment in the format of writing also makes it hard for these children to express their knowledge, resulting in poor academic performance."

The ensuing poor academic results lead to lack of confidence, low self-esteem and negative emotions. Coupled with misunderstanding and rejection by teachers and schoolmates, these children may develop emotional and behavioral problems."

Intervention Works on Dyslexic Students

Factors associated with dyslexia include abnormality and malfunction of the brain, as well as impairment of genes or cognitive skills (e.g. rapid naming, phonological memory and awareness, orthographic knowledge, and morphological awareness). No medication is in place to cure dyslexia hitherto, yet, with the aid of effective learning methods, adapted curriculum and timely training, children with dyslexia are able to overcome the difficulties, studies revealed.

Parent Seminars Polish Children's Learning Skills

The READ & WRITE Project Team of Heep Hong will hold a series of seminars from December 2010 to June 2011 for parents to learn more about dyslexia and interesting ways to help their children study happily and effectively. For details, please visit our website at www.heephong.org.



▲ Multi-sensory learning

◀ Missing strokes and disproportionate components are frequently found in handwriting of children with dyslexia





► Multi-sensory learning helps deepen their understanding of the objects

◀ Going on outings can enrich children's experience and expand their vocabulary



▲ "What do you think a fireman is?"

Vocabulary Acquisition Tips

Vocabulary is a basic element in our daily expression. The mastery of a wide vocabulary helps boost self-confidence, social and learning skills of children. Many parents want to know the normal development of vocabulary building and how to help their children build up their vocabulary.

Ms Emily Yuen, Speech Therapist of Heep Hong Society, said, "Children's vocabulary develops in three dimensions. First is quantity. Generally speaking, children's vocabulary rapidly expands from 800 words to 1,600 words as they grow from 3 to 4 years old, and becomes comparable to the vocabulary of adults as they develop through the stage of primary school. Second is the breadth of part of speech, from nouns and verbs to adjectives, adverbs, quantifiers, etc.; from concrete meaning (e.g. telephones) to abstract meaning of words (e.g. technology); and from frequently used vocabularies (e.g. cars) to technical words (e.g. four-wheel drives). Third is the enrichment of knowledge of words, including a deeper understanding of pronunciation, word meaning, part of speech, usage and related concepts.

Vocabulary Acquisition Capacity of Children Always Underestimated

Emily remarked, "We should not underestimate children's vocabulary acquisition capacity. In daily life, parents can take every opportunity to name actions, objects and surroundings to their children, and explain the inter-relationship among things. Going on outings can enrich children's experience and expand their vocabulary. Reading picture books to children is also a very effective way."

Interest-oriented, Multi-sensory Learning

To guide children to build up their vocabulary, parents can start with the interest of their children, such as toys, games and TV programmes, and then extend to related areas. For

instance, if a child enjoys throwing balls into a bucket, the parent may invite him to throw the ball into other containers, like a box, bag, basket, etc, and introduce the names and characteristics of those new objects. While the parent is describing, she may invite her child to touch, observe, listen and smell the objects. Multi-sensory learning helps deepen their understanding of the objects.

Assessing Understanding of Vocabulary

How to test children's understanding of certain vocabulary? "For young kids, parents may ask them to point at and name certain objects; or parents may verbalize the key features of objects, and then ask them to guess the objects. For elder kids, parents may ask them to tell the difference between simple objects, like banana and orange, and to distinguish between objects according to their nature, features and functions. Parents and kids can also take turns to tell the names of fruits, animals, means of transport, etc. For even elder kids, parents may ask them to expound vocabulary from various perspectives. For instance, to test children's understanding of 'fireman', parents may ask them questions like 'What do you think a fireman is?', 'What are the duties of firemen?', 'What equipment does fireman have? How to use those equipment?,' Emily said.

New Books on Vocabulary Learning Coming Soon

For more tips on vocabulary learning, parents may refer to the two books to be published by Heep Hong's speech therapists. Through vivid graphics and interesting activities, the books serve to help children aged 3-7 learn vocabularies, memorize them systematically and establish a vocabulary network, and help parents guide their children in the learning process creatively. In addition, Heep Hong also organizes workshops for parents on a regular basis to teach them how to unlock the vocabulary acquisition potential of their children. Check out details at our website at www.heephong.org. 📖



▲ MSIG invited over 200 Heep Hong children and their families to join their Fitness Festival for staff



▲ Promoting job opportunities for autistic youth

◀ MSIG's calendar incorporated drawings from children with special needs



▲ Ken took part in the Gobi March to raise funds for Heep Hong

Never Settle for Less – MSIG

MSIG Insurance (Hong Kong) Limited (MSIG) is a long standing partner of Heep Hong Society. For 11 consecutive years, they have been making valuable contributions to the welfare of autistic children and youth of the Society.

"Whatever I can do to help, just let me know." This is how Kenneth J. Reid, Chief Executive Officer of MSIG, expresses his unfailing support of Heep Hong Society.

Although Ken is neither a professional athlete nor an adventurer, he took part in the 250km Gobi March in 2008 to raise funds for Heep Hong to set up a Sensory Integrative Therapy Room at Yu Ming Centre in Tseung Kwan O. In 2010, Ken took up another challenge of the Atacama Crossing and mounted a fundraising campaign among his personal network again. This initiative has made possible another project to equip Jessie and Thomas Tam Centre in Tai Po with an Adventure Land for providing physiotherapy and sensory integration therapy to children.

Care for Children with Special Needs

Staff members in MSIG also share his vision and support for Heep Hong. In 2008, MSIG jointly developed a community adaptation programme with Heep Hong to help over 300 pre-school children with autism and Asperger's Syndrome. In the following year, MSIG supported the "United for Future Project" to help over 100 autistic teenagers aged 10-15 improve their social and communications skills and build self-confidence through engagement in community and voluntary services.

Career for Youths with Autism

In the same year, MSIG sponsored Heep Hong Society to study the employment situation of autistic youth. Among 105 autistic young people aged 15-24 surveyed, only 31 had ever been employed. Their biggest challenge was their inability to communicate and socialize effectively, and to express themselves during job interviews.

To help these young people overcome their difficulties, MSIG and Heep Hong together launched the "United for Future – The Autistic Youth Pre-job Training Project" to help 12

youths improve interviewing, socializing and problem solving skills. Apart from financial support, MSIG also took the lead to hire an autistic youth as an administrative assistant. Colleagues in MSIG further took the initiative to understand the characteristics of autistic people and learn how to get along with them.

To sustain the efforts, MSIG continued the programme to provide autistic youth with advanced pre-job training and a video for learning useful skills in job seeking and at the workplace. In addition, a booklet on "The Job Opportunity for Autistic Youth" was produced to appeal to business partners for support.

Remark: Organizations which are interested in hiring autistic youth, please visit Heep Hong's website at www.heephong.org for more details of the "United for Future – The Autistic Youth Pre-job Training Project" 📄

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Chinafame Asia Pacific Limited
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* which have made donations of HK\$10,000 or above to Heep Hong between May and September 2010.