



Sunshine News

May 2010

www.sunshinecentrecambodia.org

Parent Power!

Although you hear and see a lot about the children of the Sunshine Centre, one very important aspect we mustn't neglect is our work with the parents. For long-term sustainability, we must see progress in the way the families function and take care of their kids. All of our 67 families are regularly visited by our staff and every 2 months we hold a Parents' Day where they come to the Centre to be updated about new developments and also hear a talk about various health, family and parenting issues. Last month we invited a microfinance company to share about its services and there was a great deal of interest as it doesn't require collateral of any kind!

We plan to establish savings groups and fathers' and mothers' clubs later this year. We've also informed parents that

starting from next school year, we expect them to make a small contribution towards school fees. These initiatives require a real change of heart and attitude and probably won't be easy to implement but unless the parents are prepared to make changes there won't be any lasting progress.



Parents playing a game with face masks on Parents Day

Secondary Students Update

We are so grateful to all those kindly sponsoring our secondary and vocational students. The news is encouraging! 80% of our students scored "Excellent" in their latest school report. 20% scored "Good". NONE were "Average" or "Poor". One of our Year 8 girls frequently ranks #1 in her class—an outstanding achievement given the difficult home situations of SC kids. Our staff member, Deth, regularly visits the kids, their families and their teachers and is very proud to see how far they've come.



"It gives me such a good feeling to see Mr Deth come to our high school because we know he is interested in our progress." (Bopah)

In fact, it is very unusual for parents to enter a public school at all, unless there is trouble! There are no

mechanisms for parent councils, parent-teacher interviews, open days etc. So the relationships our staff build between the kids, their parents and the schools is bridging a real gap in the system.



Do you remember Solina?
(April 09 SC News)

Solina's dream was to become a doctor but frequently she was unable to attend school. If her sister or mother found work, she was required to stay at home to mind her disabled nephew. It has taken the best part of a year to find a suitable day-care place for the little boy. However, he is now attending the Rabbit School five mornings a week. We hire a moto-taxi driver with a specially adapted seat to take him there. Solina of course is delighted she is now able to focus on her studies.

Sensational Soccer!

On a hot and steamy day in March, our Under 13s boys competed in the Pricewaterhouse Coopers Cup for the third time, and advanced as far as the semi-finals, out of 23 teams! Being so close to victory was excruciating, especially as we have never won more than 2 games in any previous competition. Our boys were vindicated a couple of weeks later when they came

first in their division of the amateur soccer league organised by Indochina Starfish who provide free coaching and equipment. The shiny trophy is now sitting proudly in the director's office, along with all the medals received (safer here than at home). Ice cream and fried chicken were also happily devoured by our victorious athletes!



More Celebrations....

Khmer New Year fun!



Face Painting

At Easter, we introduced the foot-washing ceremony to the kids to demonstrate Jesus' servanthood. In the picture, Thoeun, the grade 2 teacher, is washing the feet of her pupils, who in turn wash each other's feet. In Cambodian culture, the one with the perceived higher status is meant to be served, and not be the server, so hopefully this demonstration goes a little way to building up a sense of mutual support.



Smashing a clay pot filled with lollies and talcum powder!!!



Slow bike riding—slowest wins!

Thank You

Under our new director Channy, the SC is continuing its vital work - exchanging lives the children have never chosen, for lives of hope and dignity. That process of change is possible only because of your kind and generous support. On behalf of all the beautiful SC kids to all our donors and sponsors.....a huge THANK YOU.

*Bonnie Lepelaar (Project Ambassador)
with Jill Williams (representing SC in Australia)*

HANDY INFO:

Enquiries: email Jill at newsletter@sunshinecentrecambodia.org or (02) 9144 7333 or post to SC Reps, PO Box 2243, Ringwood North, 3134

Donations: The Sunshine Centre is a Global Development Group approved aid and development project. Donations over \$2 are tax deductible in Australia. Donations can be made:

1. ONLINE via www.globaldevelopment.org.au/directdeposit.php to project **J529**
2. CHEQUES to NRUC Sunshine Centre Account, posted to the Ringwood address above including name and address for tax receipt
3. BANK TRANSFERS to NRUC Sunshine Centre Account No 10257096, BSB 063885, Commonwealth Bank, North Ringwood (advise your name and address details by email or post if a tax receipt is required)