

# Global Leader in Malaysia

Ruth Liew

Ann Subhasini

2008

# Our project

The issue affecting ECE in Malaysia is lack of direct access to research and information. As the family dynamic in Malaysia evolves and more women enter the workforce, there is a rising demand for childcare options outside of the home. To allow access to the most current ECE information the National Association of Early Childhood Care and Education Malaysia (NAECCEM) intends to create a website. Content for the site would include academic papers, journal articles and brochures from participating childcare agencies. To raise public awareness of the website five workshops are planned from October 2007 to August 2008. The NAECCEM also intends to use events other by other agencies to promote its website. The main target for the website will be parents, teachers, and childcare workers in West Malaysia. Standard evaluation forms distributed on a quarterly basis along with a feedback section on the website will monitor progress.

# Challenges

This year has been extremely challenging for us in Malaysia. We are currently facing economic downturn and political challenges.

In our Global Leader project, we decided to join forces with Malaysian Child Resource Institute to set up our online resource, along with NAECCCEM.

We have started our workshops but we could not complete all five as planned. We intend to continue the workshops in the last quarter of the year.



# Ruth Liew-Global Leader

- Global Leader in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, East Malaysia, seminar on Positive Parenting(June 2008)
- This was organized by Rotary Club of Likas Bay, Kota Kinabalu. They also donated RM1000.00 to Global Leaders Malaysia, recognizing our work with children in the early childhood education in Malaysia

# Ruth Liew- Global Leader

- Global Leader's Children's writing for Children's rights(June to October 2008)
- A project that promotes children's writing to promote children's rights. This collection of works will be published in both the website and in hard copy, distributed to primary and secondary schools

# Ruth Liew-Global Leader

- Malaysian Network of Child's Rights Programming(July 2008)
- Participated as Global Leader in a workshop to start MNCRP on Children's Rights. This network and workshop was funded by UNICEF in Malaysia and supported by Save the Children Sweden.

This network is formed by multi-agencies from both government and non-government sectors working together to promote awareness of Children's Rights.

Expert's advice on parenting

# 'Say what you mean, mean what you say'

## Elizabeth Majaham

KOTA KINABALU; The key to effective feedback is to be consistent and firm, so say what you mean and mean what you say, advises Child Developmentalist, Ruth Liew (pic).

She said as children grow and become more experienced they can tell when their parents are just putting on an act or trying to brush them off. It does not take much effort to be reasonable. Parents only need to recognise their children's needs as well as their interests.

"Some children crave for attention. They would rather get negative attention than have none at all. When you are on the phone, your child might interrupt just to see whether you will yield to him. If you scold or threaten your child, you are reinforcing his negative behaviour. He may try this again the next time you are on the phone."

She said children would behave accordingly when parents are reasonable with them. "So the thing to do in such circumstances is to tell your child that you will attend to him once you have finished talking on the phone. When he is able to wait without any interruption, thank him for his behaviour."

Children need to hear from their parents what they should not do as well as what they should do. When they act appropriately, they should receive encouraging words such as, "You waited for me to finish my phone call. I know you worked at being quiet." If parents want their children to learn the right thing to do, they must use the right words to guide them, she added.

Liew, who was one of the speakers at a public forum on "Parenting Skills", organised by the Rotary Club of Likas Bay, acknowledged that it is sometimes very difficult to get children to follow what they are told to do. Many adults like to insist that their children apologise to show

that they are remorseful for their wrongdoing. Some children can become so upset that they refuse to say sorry. When this happens, parents should not consider a harsher punishment or become angrier with the child.

Instead of forcing them to say sorry, parents can suggest alternatives to make amends. "For example, if your son hits your daughter, he can help her put away her toys for three days or he can give her a nice present."

She cited a school-age girl who was caught stealing money from a family member but refused to admit and apologise for her wrongdoing. Her foster mother told her that if she chose not to say sorry, she could use her allowance to repay double the amount she had stolen. She did not like this choice, so she returned the money.

In the process of helping their children learn to behave and cooperate, parents should go "one step at a time" and "concentrate on one problem at a time".

"With very young children, you need to give them more time before they learn the correct behaviour. You may have

to repeat yourself before they actually learn to do what you want. When you are trying to change a behaviour, focus on what is the easiest thing that your child can do.

"With older children, help them to develop skills to control their situation. For example, offer them the words to use to express their feelings and thoughts. Teach them positive ways they can get attention. When they try out positive measures to deal with their problems, acknowledge their effort.

"Believe that your child wants to be good and wants to please you. All you need to do is to strike a balance between providing support and nurturing to direct their behaviour."



# Ann Subhasini-Global Leader

Presented talks to primary school children on Sexual Harassment and Peer Pressure.

# Ann Subhasini-Global Leader

- Initiated a community parent support group project on "What do you do if you have a special needs child".

# Ann Subhasini-Global Leader

- A panelist speaker in the National Early Childhood Conference 16th -17th Aug entitled "Nurturing Thinking Learners in the Early Years". My presentation was on Inclusive education and followed by a movie

# Ann Subhasini-Global Leader

- Set up discussion with local MP Hannah Yeoh on 9th Sept and we will be organizing a family day for special needs children - the purpose of this is to create awareness and to educate the public that all children are entitled to their rights. This event is scheduled for November 08.