



## INTEGRATED PROJECT WORK

Project work differs from the structured thematic approach. It applies the principles of problem-based learning. Children get to do active investigations of a topic, often instigated by questions or problem pose by the children. Rather than solving the problem for the child or providing the answers, children are encouraged to find out the answers on their own through investigations and experimenting.

The principles of project work were translated into classroom practice at all Kidz Meadow Early Childhood Centres beginning June 2007. A project commenced with identification of a topic, which can even be decided by the children. Questions are generated that are centered around this topic and used to drive the project implementation. The project activities will include investigations through observations and experiments, research through books or Internet, field trips, cookery lessons, art and craft activities and discussions among the children.

Project Work has proven to enhance brain development and challenges children towards higher cognitive thinking such as critical and logical thinking, problem solving and creativity. From end to end the various activities and group work among the children, project work also develops the children communication and social skills. The result is a child who is capable, creative and curious and is given free rein to explore and do things himself.

In June 2007 for example, the Nursery 1 children in Kidz Meadow Childcare Centre @ Woodlands engaged in Project Work on the topic "Coconut". During Malay lesson, the Malay teacher, Cikgu Asiah cracked open a coconut. The N1 children tasted the coconut water in the fruit and scooped up the flesh of the juicy coconut, an activity which the children enjoyed very much. Later, they were introduced to the different food and items made from coconut such as the coconut milk, the Malay kuih "Dodol" and brush made from coconut husk. The Nursery 1 children had a field trip to Botanical Garden to see a coconut tree and did paper rubbing on the tree trunk and leaves. Back in school, the children transformed the seed of the coconut plant to a vase decorated with paper flowers and sang the Kelapa song.

Having seen the results of Project Work and how much fun the children had and how classrooms come alive in June 2007, Project Work will be here to stay as Kidz Meadow aims to continuously to improve the standard of its early childhood programme.