

Customers' Backyard – 2006 events

Viva La Familia 2006 - A Tribute to our Customers



25th November 2006 was a special day for our customers and staff as it was a day of family togetherness and bonding amongst the staff. The event was held at Palawan Beach, Sentosa from 9.30am to 2.30pm.

The emcee for the day was none other than our friendly neighbourhood policemen from 'Police & Thief', Suhaimi Yusof. He never failed to make us laugh with his antics and jokes on stage.

The day started out with mass workout led by Mr Matthew appointed by Health Promotion Board. The programme went on with two performances from our pre school and childcare kids, and their performances were applauded with cheers from the parents. After the performances, our customers showed us their physical abilities by taking part in our outdoor games under the hot scorching sun, which include the Amazing Race, Beach Soccer, Beach Volleyball, Telematches, Sandcastle Competition, Tug-of-War and Parent-Child Race.

Despite the hot weather, all the participants showed enthusiasm when playing the games. 20 of our lucky customers walked away with attractive lucky draw prizes.

To the organising team - Zulkifli, Harni, Akbar, Faizah and Sumarni - congrats on the job well done! Thank you to the rest of the staff who worked hard during the event. We would like to thank all our customers for their support and contribution for making this event a success. And the event wouldn't complete without any prizes contributed by our generous sponsors.

Special thanks to the following event sponsors for their generous support!

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<http://www.kodakgallery.com/l.jsp?c=8m73vx2.7n4u7opq&x=0&y=c7ce6k>



K2 Graduation Ceremony cum Concert - Animal Kingdom

After months of preparation and rehearsals, the day the children, parents and teachers have been waiting for, has finally arrived! More than 600 parents attended the K2 Graduation Ceremony cum Concert held on Saturday, 11 November 2006 at Singapore Polytechnic Convention Centre.

The stage and foyer area were decorated in accordance to the theme. Ducks waddling in the pond, tigers and giraffe donned the foyer area while the side of the stage was decorated with large leaves and pictures of wild animals, which gave the atmosphere of an animal kingdom in the wild. There was an exhibition of children's photographs featuring the children engaged in various classroom activities and taking part in events and fieldtrips throughout the year. The exhibition also featured the new initiatives introduced to the early childhood curriculum and MERCU™ series of enrichment programmes. Parents could be seen eagerly looking for their children's photographs.

The event kicked off with an opening performance from Woodlands Child Care Centre: Kuda Kepang and Spring Festival, which showcase a mix of Malay and Chinese traditional dance. The performers wore glittering costumes and headgears holding on to their colourful kuda and dragon. It was simply amazing! What followed were 2 energetic performances from Yishun Child Care Centre with Chicken Dance and Pasir Ris Pre School Centre with I Just Want to be King. The children were dressed in animal costumes in line with the theme. It was certainly a celebration of energy, creativity and talent!

The programme followed with the graduation ceremony. 130 of our K2 graduands from the 3 early childhood Centres graduated on this day, which marks not the end but the beginning of many opportunities for these children. The occasion was graced by Mr Zaqy Mohamad, MP for Hong Kah GRC who shook hand and presented certificates to these young graduates.

Mr Zaqy also witnessed the presentation of cheque donation from MERCU Chairman, Mr Moiz Tybellay for the Ready for School Fund to AMP Chairman, Mr Imram Mohamed. This is to acknowledge the effort of our parents and students in assisting to collect the funds. The fund is part of AMP's effort to provide assistance to children of the AFYS families by equipping them with school essentials such as stationery, bags, uniforms, books and shoes.

The valedictorian speakers delivered a heartwarming speech in the 3 languages to thank their teachers for their guidance, love, care and concern. Surprise tokens were presented to the K2 teachers, which was indeed a touching moment.

The event followed with many more energetic performances from the children. Rap and dance performances by Yishun Child care and Pasir Ris Pre School. A musical Speech & Drama performance, "Little Red Riding Hood" by children from Woodlands Child care. It was definitely a fine display of the potential and talent of these young children.

The event ended with in a high note with the finale, "Joy to the World", as everyone sang and dance to the music. It was indeed a memorable event and we will like to thank all the children, parents and teachers whom have made this possible.

To the K2 Graduands, we wish you all the best in your future endeavours. View the photos at the ceremony here: <http://www.kodakgallery.com/l.jsp?c=8m73vx2.2lsc5s1y&x=0&y=-qj1dg2>

TIES - Teamwork, Innovation, Etiquette & Skills



Based on the **TIES framework**, which means **Teamwork, Innovation, Etiquette & Skills**, 3 MERCU™ Student Care Centres - Woodlands Student Care Centre, Woodland Learning Centre and East Coast Student Care Centre embarked on a project work with the aim to develop students to their full potential and tap on their hidden talents.

Each theme is introduced every quarter, which includes planning, discussion, research work, project implementation and presentation. The actual production will be done during the school holidays when the hours are more stretched. At end of project presentation, students are rewarded with gifts and award for their efforts.

Jan to Mar were the months when all the three centres started on the first project title- **Teamwork**. This marks the beginning of the students' group activity for year 2006. The first project ended on the last day of the one-week March school holiday.

The second project entitled **Innovation** started during the period between Apr to Jun. Students from the three centres, together with their teachers as their mentors, brainstormed on ideas to create the most creative and innovative project for the period. All centres work on the same objectives namely: 1) To enhance skills and encourage creativity 2) To instill interpersonal skills and allow for problem-solving 3) To respect differences and acquire interaction based on mutual respect and encouragement within the group.

Woodlands Student Care Centre (WSCC) chose 'Save the Rainforest' as the project theme. Materials used were dead leaves, plant parts and unused materials collected from home. The children had to do a scrapbook on all the different types of plants and creatures living in the rainforest. They also learned how these living things survive and adapt to the environment. With the help of computer technology for their research work on the rainforest and the materials they had collected, the students made a model of the rainforest. The project ended with entertaining performances by the students in front of the delightful judges.

Woodlands Learning Centre (WLC) chose 'Re-invent' & 'Re-create' as the project theme. Students worked in groups and were encouraged to create their invention from re-cycled materials. They were also required to do a project journal listing all their thoughts, comments, questions, process of working together and general reflections on the project. The inventions were amazing! Judges were given a wonderful presentation of all their creations from a little puppet house, toy box to a bridal chair, all of which were done using re-cycled materials!

East Coast Student Care Centre (ECSCC) had a different approach to the project title – 'Innovation'. Students were divided into 3 groups. All the boys, in their own group, made gift bags and glass painting. Girls, under strict and disciplined guidance of their teacher, had a chance of making their own costume jewelry from colourful beads. They also had hands-on experience stitching a jewelry cushion to display their masterpieces. Lastly, all the primary one students had their hands busy making bookmarks and pop-up greeting cards under the supervision of their group teacher.

At the end of the project, the girls completed making a colourful set of jewelry - bracelet, ring and a necklace to go with their favourite costume. In the course of this project, they have acquired color matching skills and pattern design. The boys made their own gift bags from gift paper of various sizes and designs. They also had their favourite glass painted in their own unique style. However, the P1 students won the heart of the judges with their stylish creation of bookmarks and greeting cards.

Above all, the project work had helped students to become critical thinkers about their own ideas and creation. They developed maturity in understanding differences when working together in a group. Communicating effectively is also essential to build a strong classroom community. The gifts and rewards presented to them by the judges are ways to show appreciation of their achievements and to motivate them to strive for better performance.

Check out the beautiful accessories that the children did for their project here:
<http://www.kodakgallery.com/l.jsp?c=8m73vx2.8vg52qv2&x=0&y=-e47reh>

CAMP FOR STUDENT CARE CENTRE STUDENTS

On 15 and 16 June, MERCU™ organised our first camp for our Student Care Centre students. The 2 days and 1 night event was held at Pasir Ris Park. The theme for the camp was 'Young Heroes'. The purpose of the camp was to teach students how to be independent, build up their confidence and team spirit.

Students from East Coast Student Care Centre, Woodlands Learning Student Care Centre and Woodlands Student Care Centre were combined and divided into different groups. Each team had to name themselves after a Superhero. Together, the students had to work as a team to achieve their goals with their new friends.

Many team-building activities were planned. Tent pitching was one of such activity. With the guidance of their facilitators, each team managed to pitch two tents. Another activity that required the campers to work together as a team was Treasure Hunt. Teams had to scour the whole of Pasir Ris Park for clues and overcome some obstacles. This is where they were tested on what they have learnt.

The highlight for the camp was the BBQ night! However, this was no ordinary barbeque. The campers have to learn how to cook their dinner using mass tins. Under the supervision of the facilitators, the campers cooked their own dinner and ended up with a delectable meal.

An activity that everybody had looked forward to even before the start of the camp was the "Nightwalk". The campers were enthusiastic when it was time for this activity. As a group, the campers ventured into the unknown and emerged as a confident lot.

Despite the hardships that the students have to undergone, the camp was a success! Our students prove not only to us, but also to themselves that they can work better as a team!

P6 AMAZING RACE 2006 @ CIVIC DISTRICT



On 14 June 2006, the Primary 6 students from the various centres were all gathered at the Esplanade by 10.30 A.M. The students were then split into 18 groups, which were each led by a facilitator throughout the event.

Inspired by the phenomenal success – both the literary work and on the silver screen – of *The Da Vinci Code*, the theme of the P6 Amazing Race event was code-breaking through logic games.

After receiving their first clue at 11 A.M. sharp, the teams made a dash for the first checkpoint: the National Library at the Esplanade. The depth of the teams' vocabulary and keen observation skills were put to the test as they raced to solve the language-based activity.

The teams then proceeded to two monuments within the parks in the area, all the while mindful of the following pack and eager to make up ground on the leading group. More mind-boggling logic games followed before a welcome respite in the air-conditioned comfort of the Raffles City shopping centre beckoned.

The teams subsequently found themselves at the Singapore Management University. There, they put on their collective thinking hats to make sense of the aptly-titled *The Library List* activity. Before they received their next clue, the teams were forced to make a mandatory 30-minute stop to have their lunch.

The catered lunch was more than palatable, but with their minds highly-focused on the remaining race ahead, few noticed the delectable food. The facilitators had some of their toughest times during the event in ensuring that their respective group members take enough time out to chow down their food properly!

The Istana Park was their next destination. It was perhaps a good thing that none of the groups were confused enough to actually try to enter the *Istana* grounds and demand access to the park within the Presidential compounds! =)

The last but one checkpoint was the fountain outside Park Mall featuring seven water-spewing dragon heads. The facilitators had the tables turned on them when they found out that it was they who had to solve the puzzles at this crucial stage of the race!

Under the sweltering heat, some of the facilitators drew a blank. With their group members egging them on, it was quite a hoot seeing the stressed-out grown-ups trying hard not to let their teams down.

All's well that ends well...and soon enough, the first team made it through to the end point, much to the joy of team's members and the dismay of the others. Nonetheless, all 18 groups finally gathered at the scenic Fort Canning Park for a welcome rest after the exertions of the day. At the end of the day, all the groups had successfully manoeuvred their way past 10 checkpoints, collecting clues from 9 of them.

The lush green grounds of the park provided for the perfect opportunity for everyone to further mingle around. The organisers capitalised on it by conducting mass games that were thoroughly enjoyed by students and facilitators alike judging by the loud sounds of laughter emanating from the masses.

After the final briefing and more laughs in between, the tired but satisfied MERCU™ P6 Outdoor programme participants made their way to the waiting buses somewhat reluctantly. Well, all good things must come to an end.

View the photos taken here:

<http://www.kodakgallery.com/l.jsp?c=8m73vx2.6jmwo59e&x=0&y=-e9jb3e>

P3 - P5 AMAZING RACE 2006 @ SENTOSA



The Amazing Race on 13th June 2006 for Primary 3 to 5 was set on a popular island resort in Singapore; Sentosa.

The race was planned along the lines of the famous TV version of the Amazing Race. Teams of 10, each consisting of levels 3, 4 and 5 were accompanied by a facilitator.

They will need to follow a series of clues that lead to 13 different checkpoints, some of which were called Pit Stops, Detours and Road Blocks. Along the way the teams were faced with challenging tasks, where their Mathematical concepts and the understanding of the English language were put to the test.

Despite the difficult clues and tired bodies, all groups finished the race sportingly. Through the race students learnt to communicate more effectively, to work as a team and being cooperative. What better way to experience the sights of Sentosa!

Enjoy the snapshots we have here:

<http://www.kodakgallery.com/l.jsp?c=8m73vx2.5jdvozky&x=0&y=-jq9ocb>

P1 & P2 OUTDOOR PROGRAMME @ CHINESE GDN



Herald the era of Confusionism as the Primary 1 and 2 students were transported back into times when the quest for knowledge was the order of the day.

At the Chinese Garden, the students were divulged into a world of turtles and tortoises, where they had the first hand experience being in close proximity to some of the rarest turtles and tortoises in the world. The highlight of the enrichment tour that takes place within the realms of Chinese Garden itself, was a look at the incredible two-headed, six-legged turtle "Double Happiness" and a feeding experience with the turtles.

After a delectable and yummylicious McDonald's lunch, the students were all raring to set off on their mini Amazing Race! The race chanes the students and facilitators alike to take in the sights and sounds of the splendid architectural features of the garden, known to be modelled along the northern Chinese imperial style architecture and landscaping.

Checkpoint activities test students' wits on their English and Mathematics, simultaneously encouraging cooperative learning and teamwork. The hands-on activities are both challenging and delightful, and at the end of the day, students got a chance to get to know their fellow MERCURIANS from all over Singapore.

In the words of Confucius himself, "The will to win, the desire to succeed, the urge to reach your full potential...these are the keys that will unlock the door to personal excellence." And that was precisely what we, MERCUR™ had hoped to achieve through this experience.

View the photos here: <http://www.kodakgallery.com/l.jsp?c=8m73vx2.7oy3ozc2&x=0&y=-pdeuz2>