

Dear Team

One of the nicest things this year was having volunteers telling us how much they appreciated the opportunity to spend time with our children and their families. Previously, when we requested that parents accompany their children to outings and other events, volunteers would ask 'If the parents came, what would be our role?' We would explain that a child needs a supportive and loving family and so we are mindful that we do not replace or to compete with their family. One of the best ways to be helpful is to give children happy memories of their family.

This year, volunteers did much to support families in caring for their children. These efforts included the refurbishing of homes with a fresh coat of paint, new furniture and the creation of study corners for children to do their school work. There were also food packs and other goodies during festive seasons to enable families to honour their cultural and religious traditions. But perhaps the best outcome of all these efforts was the message to the children that their families were important.

To show children that their family was important, volunteers packed a picnic basket for each family during an outing. This enabled the children to eat together with their families and volunteers then used the opportunity to get the family members to show their appreciation to each other through games and other exercises.

As the year closes, I wish us all the ability to be grateful for everyone and every experience that has come our way and to regard each as a gift that has enriched our lives.

Wishing you a meaningful year-end warmed by family and friends.

Sincerely,

Gerard

*"I have learned silence from the talkative, tolerance from the intolerant, and kindness from the unkind; yet strangely, I am ungrateful to these teachers" - Kahlil Gibran*