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Project SCIFUN

Post-Event Report

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Project Overview

Project Background & Objectives

As a past volunteer with Operation Hope (OH), a Regular Service Project (RSP) under NTU's Welfare Service Club (WSC), I have had the privilege of working closely with several organizations, including Club Rainbow Singapore (CR). Through weekly tutoring sessions and ad-hoc events such as Science Workshops and Christmas events, I had the opportunity to interact with CR's beneficiaries – primarily children diagnosed with chronic illnesses. These conditions, which last more than a year, significantly limits their ability to carry out daily tasks. As a volunteer, I was driven to provide, at the very least, a temporary distraction from their pain and challenges through events and our weekly volunteering sessions. Through my interactions and based on feedback from the children and their caregivers, it became evident that the beneficiaries were eager to participate in more hands-on activities and explore new science concepts. This enthusiasm inspired the creation of Project SCIFUN. Project SCIFUN was created to bring the wonders of science to them and aimed to create a positive experience that they could share with their families.

The project initially included two key components: an excursion to Science Centre Singapore for a fun-filled "Amazing Race"-style activity, followed by the setting up of a Science Corner at Club Rainbow Centres. The Science Corner would feature experiment kits and other science materials like magazines and trivia to encourage children to continue exploring science whilst waiting for medical appointments or enrichment classes and events at the centres.

Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances, only the trip to the Science Centre could be executed. Nevertheless, I am hopeful that the Science Corner will be established in the future, allowing the beneficiaries and their siblings to enjoy science educational materials at the centres. Despite this, Project SCIFUN had a positive impact

on the children and their families at the Science Centre and I remain committed to providing them with ongoing opportunities to engage with science and spark their curiosity.

Science Centre Amazing Race

Event Objectives

The amazing-race based excursion to Science Centre Singapore was designed with 3 key objectives:

1. To develop a sense of curiosity in the beneficiaries, encouraging them to explore science through hands-on learning and interactive exhibits at the Science Centre
2. To create meaningful, memorable experience for beneficiaries and their families
3. To provide volunteers with valuable experience in engaging with children with chronic illnesses, deepening their understanding of their needs and challenges they face

Target Audience and Size

The excursion, held on the 10th of December 2024, brought 25 CR beneficiaries, aged 7-12, and their caregivers together for an Amazing Race at the Science Centre.

Amazing Race Planning Milestones

There were **6 main milestones** for the Amazing Race:

1. **Coordination with CR Staff**

Several online meetings were scheduled to discuss details of the trip, ensuring smooth collaboration between volunteers and CR staff.

2. **Volunteer Recruitment**

A group of 14 volunteers was recruited to be either a befriender or programmer. The programmers were in charge of designing the Amazing Race activities and curating the content for the activity booklet pre-event. The bendifenders were

tagged to the participants on event day, guiding them through the Science Centre and assisting them with the activities.

3. Science Centre Exhibit Recce

Upon confirmation of the volunteer team, the programmers visited the Science Centre to scout and curate suitable activities based on the centre installations.



Figure 1 Science Centre Recce with Programmers

4. Activity Booklet and Lanyard Design

A 20-page activity booklet was then carefully curated, focusing on the interactive and educational exhibits around the Science Centre. It included 5 exhibit-related activities based on the following exhibits: “Know Your Poo!”, “Earth Alive”, “Energy Story”, “The Mind’s Eye”, and “Professor Crackitt’s Light Fantastic Mirror Maze”. Activities planned were a good mix of interactive, knowledge-based and photographic tasks.



Figure 2 Introductory Pages of the Activity Booklet

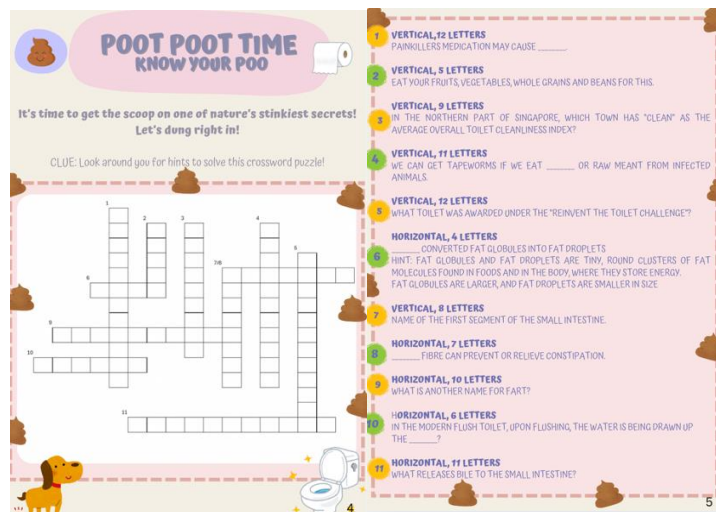


Figure 3 Exhibit-based Activity, “Poot Poot Time”



Figure 4 Exhibit-based Activity, “Natural Disasters”



Figure 5 Exhibit-based Activity, “Energy Around Us”

To keep participants engaged if they finished early, the booklet also featured filler activities such as crossword and “I Spy” puzzles. Additionally, a “My Favourite Memories” page was included for participants to reflect on their experience. Blank pages were also provided for participants to jot down thoughts on what they learnt during the Amazing Race.

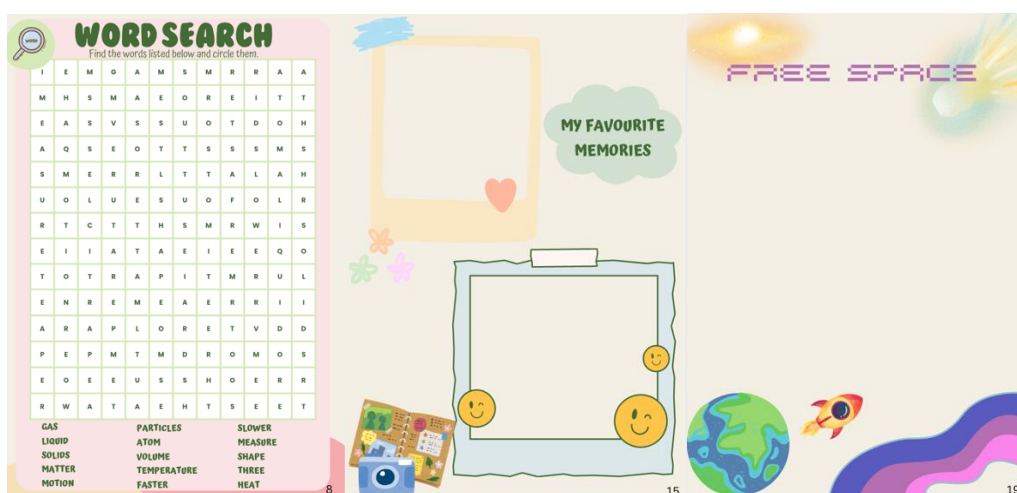


Figure 6 Filler Activities

The planning committee anticipated the Science Centre to be crowded with visitors given that it was a school holiday. As such, unique Project SCIFUN lanyards were designed to ensure easy identification of participants and befrienders.



Figure 7 Activity Lanyards & Tags

5. Procurement of Logistics

Logistics procured for the Amazing Race included printing of the booklets, lanyards, admission tickets and also the amazing race prizes. Every participant received a gift bag at the end of the event, containing 2 experiment kits, a kaleidoscope, and seasonal stickers in celebration of the upcoming holiday season.



Figure 8 Gift Bag Contents

6. Dry Run and Volunteer Briefing

A dry run and volunteer briefing session were held at the Science Centre ahead of the actual event to allow befrienders to familiarise themselves with the activities, the amazing race route, and their roles.

Event Execution

Each befriender was assigned to two beneficiary-caregiver pairs, ensuring ample attention to be given to each participant. The groups composed of 2 befrienders and 4 beneficiary-caregiver pairs that travelled together throughout the Amazing Race to complete the planned activities. The event lasted for 2.5 hours from 1400 to 1630.

The event timeline was as follows:

| Time | Activity | Remarks |
|-----------|--|---|
| 1400–1415 | Attendance-taking (Holding Area) | Volunteers will collect all logistics |
| 1415–1430 | Amazing Race Briefing (Holding Area) | Volunteers to brief and break SUs into their groups |
| 1430–1600 | Amazing Race | Volunteers are tagged to the groups |
| 1600–1630 | Debrief & Prize Presentation (Holding Area) | Upon dismissal, participants can choose to continue exploring SC (closes at 1700) |

Figure 9 Programme Timeline





Challenges Faced

Some Science Centre exhibits were not fully accessible to wheelchair users. As our group had several wheelchair users, navigating around certain exhibits, such as the mirror maze, was challenging. Some adaptations were made to ensure full participation. Groups with wheelchair users were redirected to other exhibitions with more accessible space.

In addition, it was difficult to conduct a debrief and closing ceremony in a public space with such a large group. To address this, the debrief was held in smaller groups, with befrienders leading the sessions to ensure a more intimate and manageable setting for closure and presentation of the gifts.

Acknowledgements

It has truly been an honour to be selected as a recipient of the OG Department Stores – Mr Tay Tee Peng Distinguished Undergraduate Student Award (DUSA). I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude for providing me with the opportunity to embark on Project SCIFUN, a project that I am very passionate about. This initiative aimed not only to bring joy and excitement to children with chronic illnesses but also to inspire them to explore the everchanging world of science. In addition, it offered families an opportunity to create fond memories together.

This cause is deeply personal to me, and seeing it come to fruition has been immensely rewarding. The journey was definitely not without its challenges, but the impact the volunteer team were able to make on the participants was well worth the effort. I am incredibly grateful for the chance to have contributed to such a meaningful cause.

I would also like to thank Nicholas Ang, Irene Tay, and the selection committee for their kind understanding and patience as I navigated the ups and downs of bringing this project to life. In addition, I would also like to thank the staff at Club Rainbow for their support and enthusiasm towards my project.

Lastly, a heartfelt thank you to my team of volunteers whose dedication and efforts in seeing Project SCIFUN through, despite their busy schedules, have been nothing short of applaudable.

As this marks the last volunteering project I will be embarking on before graduation, I could not have asked for a more meaningful way to conclude my volunteering journey at NTU. Once again, thank you for the opportunity to carry out Project SCIFUN!

