

BOLD Association for Children with Special Needs, Penang



ANNUAL REVIEW 2017



Help Us Help Children with Special Needs

Our Mission is to support the rights of
Children with Special Needs to:

- *Early Diagnosis*
- *Early Intervention*
- *Family Centred Services*
- *Inclusion in Mainstream Education*
- *Learn the necessary skills to lead a full life in the community*



The **distinctive features** of our programmes are:

- *Involving and empowering families*
- *Using research based, best practice intervention strategies*
- *Identifying and addressing the specific needs of individual children*
- *Constant upgrading of knowledge and skills*
- *Off-site outreach*
- *Emphasizing inclusive education to build an inclusive society for persons with different needs and abilities*

I am very pleased to report that 2017 has been a particularly active and exciting year for BOLD. Throughout the year, we ran 8 regular intervention programmes, 4 of which are shared with our partner organization Asia Community Service. Operating from 4 Activity Centres, these programmes benefitted a total of **641** children and/ or their families. This is a dramatic increase compared to the total of **460** achieved in 2016, testifying to the hard work put in by our staff, team members and volunteers.



Dato' Dr. Sharom Ahmat

Growing our intervention programmes to reach more children is a difficult process as we try to use best practice strategies which require us to identify and meet the specific needs of each individual child. To meet the special needs of each individual, our staff must work with children in very small groups, with intervention sometimes starting from a one on one staff to child ratio. Finding the funds to recruit, train and sustain good staff is therefore our top priority.

BOLD has been fortunate in getting generous funding from several different sources. Annual allocations from the Penang State Government, through its Majlis Mesyuarat Kerajaan Pendidikan as well as the Penang Education Council, provide core support for some intervention programmes. An annual grant from the Penang Skills Development Corporation supports Pusat BOLD-PSDC, our activity centre in Minden Heights. Several local organizations, such as the Lim Lean Teng Foundation, Rubber Trade Association, Budimas Charitable Foundation, Tan Sri Saw Seng Kew Memorial Fund, have responded generously to our fund raising appeals.

In addition, funding from the Kuok Foundation, ECM Libra Foundation, Edge Education Foundation and Shell's 2017 Raya Charity Campaign have enabled BOLD to undertake new initiatives in outreach work.

Each year we also receive donations from generous individuals, too numerous to list by name. But I would like to highlight that in 2017, a group led by Ms Cynthia Khaw donated both equipment and cash to help upgrade facilities at Pusat BOLD-PSDC. Together with funding from an Intel Matching Seed Grant to set up a Pretend Play Room and a Children's Library in 2018, Pusat BOLD-PSDC will emerge a better equipped and more conducive center for our services.

On behalf of BOLD, I would like to thank each and every donor. Your support is essential for us to continue to maintain and to grow our services for Children with Special Needs. And, to all our staff, team members and volunteers, please keep up your dedication and commitment as they are the essential ingredients in our mission to help more Children with Special Needs!

Committee Members 2017

President: Dato' Dr. Sharom Ahmat
Vice President: Ms Lim Kah Cheng
Honorary Secretary: Ms Khor Ai Na
Assistant Secretary: Ms Ivy Loo
Honorary Treasurer: Ms Yep Beng Hong
Members:
Ms Chia Kien Eng
Dr. Hamima Dona Mustafa
Ms Irene Teoh
Ms Poh Heem Heem
Ms Shirley Koay
Honorary Executive Director: Dr. Tan Liok Ee



Parents sharing experiences in their child's entry in mainstream settings.

PARENTS SUPPORT GROUP brings families with Children with Special Needs together so that they can give each other support by sharing their achievements as well as the challenges they face in raising their special child. In 2017, the Parents Support Group held a record of **10 monthly meetings** at Pusat BOLD-PSDC! The issue raised most often was related to problems of schooling in mainstream settings. Hence a special session was organized specially for some parents to share how they had successfully navigated their children's entry into Primary 1 in mainstream settings.



BOLD child was assisted in throwing bean bag through the circle.

PLAY GROUP is an intervention programme for 3-5 year olds with developmental delays/ disorders in the areas of social, communication and language skills. Weekly sessions combine action songs, games, creative arts work, in a fun-filled combination to help the children develop social and communication skills through interactive play. **27** children benefitted from weekly Play Group sessions conducted in Pusat BOLD-PSDC in 2017.

"My son loves BOLD so much and eager to go there every week to meet friends. This is his biggest breakthrough of the year 2017!", said a child's mother.

SOCIAL GROUP is a weekly programme for older children, from 6 to 9 years. Activities are designed to improve social as well as learning skills such as focusing and staying on task in various table top activities, following rules of indoor and outdoor games, developing good social behaviour towards peers. **16** children benefitted from weekly Social Group sessions in 2017.



WORKSHOPS, TRAINING, OUTREACH an important part of BOLD's work is organizing workshops to upgrade knowledge and skills of our staff and team members and as outreach to schools, teachers and parents. In 2017, our staff attended **6** workshops on various topics to improve their skills; **7** talks/ workshops were organized for the public with 3 focussing specially on topics of particular relevance to parents of children with special needs; BOLD staff spoke at **7** outreach and awareness talks in schools and public forums to publicize our work and advocate for the rights of Children with Special Needs.



One Day Workshop: Mindful Parenting at PSDC.



Children using finger puppets in developing learning skills.



Educator playing a game with a child in making reading a fun activity.



Invited storyteller Dr Fadilah Amzah from USM.

FOCUS ON LITERACY (FOL) is an intervention programme for 5-8 year olds facing difficulties in learning the basic skills of reading and writing. BOLD has developed specialized teaching materials in Malay, Chinese and Tamil as well as trained several teams to implement this programme. We advocate using best practice teaching methods to help children who have reading difficulties to achieve functional literacy in at least one language. FOL is carried out in our own centres as well as off-site as outreach. In 2017, this programme directly benefitted a total of 128 children, 86 in year round teaching sessions and 42 during the Holiday Literacy Camp.

At Pusat BOLD-PSDC, 2 full-time staff assisted by 3 team members taught a total of 59 children in small groups on different days of the week, from February to October, in Malay or Mandarin. At BOLD-ACS Centre in Seberang Jaya, 1 part-time staff assisted by 2 team members taught a total of **20** children, four afternoons a week from January to October.

A 3 week Holiday Literacy Camp, from 27 November to 15 December was conducted in both centres. At Pusat BOLD-PSDC, **15** children attended daily 2 hour sessions in Mandarin in the mornings and another 15 attended daily Malay sessions in the afternoons. Pusat BOLD-ACS had 12 children enrolled for daily sessions during the camp.

MONTHLY STORYTELLING SESSIONS began as an extension of the FOL programme but is now a programme in its own right with monthly sessions, conducted in either Malay or Mandarin. The objective is to enrich oral language fluency, encourage social and communication skills, stimulate creative/ imaginative thinking and general cognitive development. A total of 7 sessions (4 in Malay and 3 in Mandarin) were conducted on Saturday mornings, between February to October, by different volunteer storytellers. Each session was attended by **21 to 24** children. The storytellers included academician and students from USM, BOLD volunteers and staff.

FIRST STEP, an Early Intervention Programme for Children with Developmental Disorders/ Delays from birth to 5 years, is conducted at First Step Early Intervention Centre in Gelugor and Pusat BOLD-ACS in Seberang Jaya. Staff work one-to-one with the child and care-giver to empower the family to learn intervention activities for the child's specific needs that can be incorporated into daily activities at home. Older children meet in small groups to prepare them for inclusion into preschool. This programme benefitted **a total of 107 children** in 2017.



Messy and sensory play that is essential for child's development.



Jom Toy Library team promoting the importance of play in rural areas.

RESPIRE CARE offers short term or temporary care to children and young persons with disabilities so that parents and care-givers can "take a break". The objective is to help families to recover their strength, energies and resilience, thereby promoting the happiness of the child as well as the family as a whole. **10 children** attended a 3-day Holiday Respite programme in June and another **17** attended a similar program in December.



Children at Holiday Respite programme, Jalan Pemancar, Gelugor.



Inclusion support in Primary school setting.

SUPPORT FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION's objective is successful inclusion of children with special needs in mainstream education. In 2017, 37 visits were made to 10 preschools and 3 primary schools to support 60 children with special needs as part of our ongoing support for Inclusive Education".

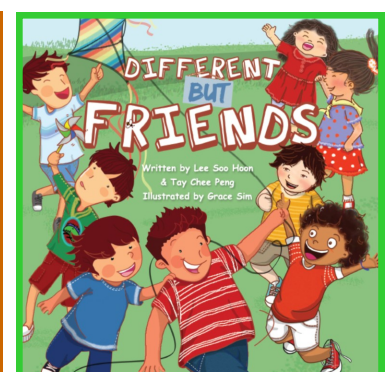
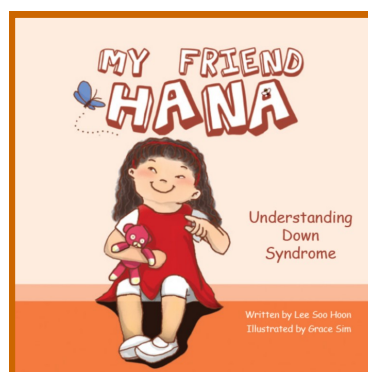
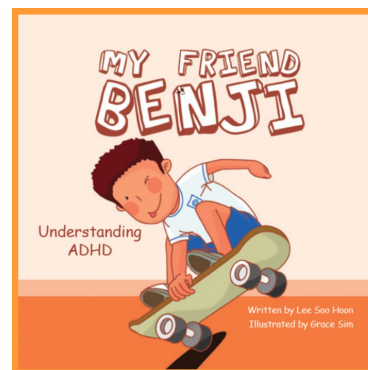
"BEST PRACTICE METHODS OF TEACHING EARLY

LITERACY" is a special series of training workshops for teachers from non-profit preschools located in rural or high density low income urban areas. The main objective is to upgrade teachers' skills so that they can make the first stages of learning to read more enjoyable and effective. Funded by Kuok Foundation, we have reached a total of 326 teachers from 75 preschools since the programme started in 2015. 149 preschool teachers attended workshops in 2017 and this series will continue into 2018 to reach teachers in more preschools.

"WE ARE FRIENDS" is the title of a set of 5 children's books about making friends and helping class mates with special needs. The objective is to promote peer understanding and acceptance of children with special needs in mainstream settings. Funded by ECM Libra Foundation, the books are produced in Malay, Chinese and English. They will be available at very accessible prices to encourage wider circulation. A set of 4 books, each focussing on a child with a special need will cost only RM20/=. The series is also available in loose-leaf Board Book format (at RM200/= per set or RM40/= each) for teachers to use in storytelling.

FOL OUTREACH is an extension of our core programme to help children with reading difficulties. Developed, tested and conducted on-site in our own Activity Centers, we try to take the programme to pre-schools and primary schools as outreach. In 2017, 7 children in SJKT Sungai Ara benefitted through the hard work of 3 team members who conducted teaching sessions four mornings a week from January to November. BOLD staff visited 2 preschools, Than Hsiang in Bayan Baru and Tadika Islam in Penaga, to assess children with reading difficulties and advise teachers on intervention strategies. Funding from the Edge Education Foundation will go towards growing FOL Outreach in 2018.

STORYTELLING OUTREACH - supported by an award from Shell's 2017 Raya Charity Campaign - will bring small teams of story tellers to preschools, children's homes/ centers and PDKs to help children with special needs who have problems in the development of language and communication skills. Recruitment and training of volunteer teams began in the last two months of 2017 but the project will take off only in March 2018.



Children's book series of "We Are Friends" intended to accept and befriend classmates with special needs.

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR WORK

As a non-profit NGO, our charges for services are nominal and, in some cases, totally free. We depend entirely on sponsorship, donations and various sources of funding to sustain our programmes and improve our services.

Donations can be made in Cash/ Direct bank-in to **CIMB 8003946993** or Cheque (payable to BOLD Association for Children with Special Needs, Penang).

ALL DONATIONS TO BOLD ARE TAX EXEMPT UNDER SECTION 44(6) OF THE INCOME TAX ACT 1967.



Website:

www.boldspecial.com

Facebook:

BOLD for Special Needs Children, Penang

BOLD Focus on Literacy

ACTIVITY CENTRES & CONTACT NUMBERS

- **Pusat BOLD-PSDC:**

81 Cangkat Minden Jalan 5, 11700 Gelugor, P. Pinang (04-659 8611)

- **Pusat BOLD-ACS:**

1 Lorong Sutera Prima 4, Taman Sutera Prima, 13700 Seberang Jaya, P. Pinang (04-398 4358)

- **First Step Early Intervention Centre:**

227 Jalan Pemancar, 11700 P. Pinang (04-658 5396)

- **Rumah Pemancar:**

227-A Jalan Pemancar, 11700 P. Pinang

- **Jom Mobile Toy Library:** (016-448 7006)