



NEWSLETTER

The latest news and updates from Dek Noi Pattana Foundation

A reflection from Khun Pimquan Suddhi-Dhamakit Year 10, Bangkok Patana School

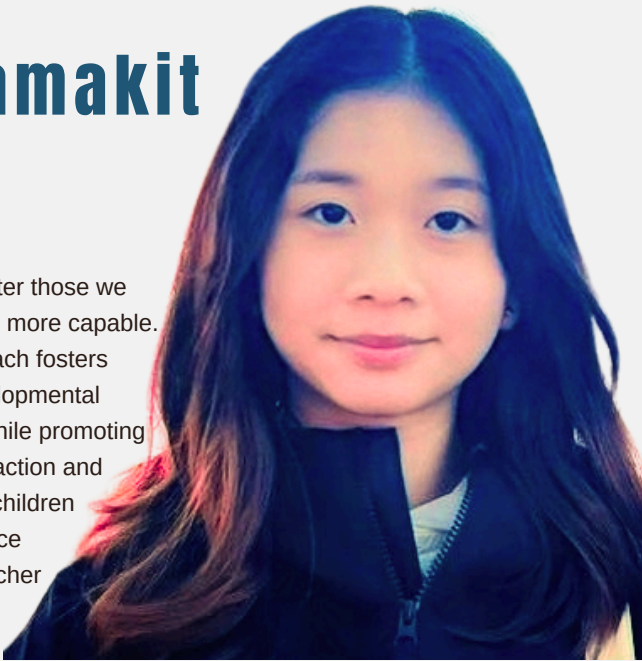
During my school Christmas break, I was given the extraordinary opportunity by Dek Noi Pattana Foundation to visit and support early childhood development (ECD) centers in Surin, Thailand. Surin is a rural province in the northeast of Thailand known for its vast paddy fields, traditional villages and elephant culture. Despite its beauty and rich heritage, Surin is still one of the poorest provinces in Thailand, with a GDP per capita significantly lower than the country average. Many families face financial barriers, and this contributes to limited access to quality education for children, making ECD centers even more critical.

Thanks to their dedicated and welcoming staff, I gained valuable knowledge about the region and its culture while enjoying many delicious local foods. The first ECD Center I visited was in called Baan Mueng Gae. Upon entering, I was greeted with heartwarming scenes of children aged two to three interacting joyfully with their teachers. The atmosphere was lively yet organized, with toys and books neatly stacked on shelves and walls decorated with colorful artworks proudly created by the children. When I arrived, the students eagerly sat in a circle to welcome me, their warmth immediately making me feel at home.



One fascinating aspect of the center was its mixed age groups. Unlike traditional classrooms, the children were not separated by age, and they were the ones moving from class to class, each led by a different teacher. This setup allowed younger children to learn by observing and imitating the older ones, which aligns with the natural human tendency to model

behavior after those we perceive as more capable. This approach fosters faster developmental progress while promoting social interaction and allows the children to experience diverse teacher styles.



The day's activities were centered around Christmas themes and included four main tasks: playing the role of Santa, decorating Christmas trees, placing corresponding shapes into their correct slots on a tree, and arranging 3D shapes and toys into a Christmas tree structure. These activities not only enhanced the children's physical development, such as improving wrist strength through rolling balls, but also encouraged creativity and problem-solving.

The role of these ECDs extend far beyond education. Many parents in Surin work in other provinces, leaving their children in the care of grandparents or other relatives. This often results in children spending long hours with minimal supervision, most of the times entertained by phones meaning the teachers encouraging nurturing of independence are crucial. They encouraged the children to scoop their own food, wash their dishes, and take pride in their accomplishments. One teacher shared that parents had observed their children enthusiastically demonstrating how they had "cleaned up their own toys" or helped at the center, which filled them with pride.

Although I only had the chance to visit two ECD centers during this trip, the experience was incredibly enriching and impactful. It gave me a new perspective on the importance of supporting young children during this crucial stage of their development. Moreover, Dek Noi Pattana Foundation has shown me that even small efforts can make a meaningful difference in improving the lives of less fortunate children. I am deeply grateful for this opportunity and hope to return soon to continue contributing to their wonderful mission.

Coaching for teachers in child development centers

By Piyanun Phulsopha

Ajarn Piyanun, head of early childhood education program, Faculty of Education, SRRU, in collaboration with Dek Noi Pattana Foundation (DNPF) has been coaching ECD teachers of the 17 model centers for the past several years. She highlighted core principles of coaching.

1. Coaching is a tool that can bring out teachers' potential and efficiency very well. It can improve teachers' capacity in providing experiences to early childhood children to have age-appropriate competencies as intended by Early Childhood Curriculum B.E. 2560 (A.D. 2017). This is one of the critical roles of teachers in cooperative classroom management (performance management).

2. Potentiality

Coaching is a cooperative process in working together between a coach, who encourages a teacher receiving coaching to unlock barriers and improve his/her potential through procedures experiences provision activities, and various instruments. This will help teachers to realize their potential, have a good attitude towards changes and be able to take action by themselves.

3. Trust - Deep listening skill

Coaching helps build relationships, trust and faith. It is important to build trust between a coach and a teacher through listening, speaking, and communicating effectively between the two people.

A coach can apply several techniques that can help coaches build rapport with ECD teachers by making them feel understood and comfortable. A communication technique can also be used to help learners build rapport and trust with a coach. This aims to create a safe zone for ECD teachers to trust and be open to coaching. A coach can use this technique by demonstrating understanding and respect for teachers' perspective, emotion and actions.

4. Questioning and feedback skill

Questioning leads to the process of thinking and reasoning. It provokes thoughts. When being asked regularly, teachers will be able to think and find solutions by themselves. Questions used are open-ended to allow teachers to express opinions. Once carried out, a coach will provide feedback which contains the three important parts i.e, behaviors, results, and the part requiring improvement or change. First, a coach will compliment, followed by providing recommendations with encouragement so teachers can take the recommendations for improvement for better results.



Teacher – Safe space

- Reducing a gap between a coach, head of the ECD centers and ECD teachers by collaboratively revisiting the goals through listening and exchanging opinions, encouraging, providing suggestions and direction for improvement, building understanding to oneself and others. There is a brainstorming to open space for everyone to share opinions independently.
- Help bring out teachers' potential to get out of their comfort zone, be open-minded to learn new things and improve themselves continuously.
- Reducing conflict and building trust and faith through deep listening. This will lead to an exchange of knowledge and a sense of team spirit in solving problems and researching new recommendations for other teachers.

The art of storytelling



By Nanthannat Wanunam
Dek Noi Pattana Foundation project assistant

During the second week of October, Dek Noi Pattana Foundation (DNPF) in collaboration with Surindra Rajabhat University (SRRU), organized an advance training event for ECD teachers on the art of storytelling. DNPF and SRRU are very honored that Ajarn Preeda Panyachand (an award winner of Esarn Heritage award 2024) accepted the invitation to lead a two-day workshop for the ECD teachers.

Ajarn Preeda started off by giving an introduction that stories have been passed down from generation to generation with the aim for children to have fun and create imagination from listening to the stories. He emphasized that stories are very important to early childhood, and telling stories to children builds good relationships and stimulates children's imagination. This can also enhance the development of children's skills i.e, cognitive, language, speech and listening skills.



He demonstrated to the participants, techniques in both reading the stories and telling the stories to children from abstract things by using simple words for children to understand and enjoy as well as stimulate ideas for children to use as role models and apply in their daily lives. He shared his inspiration for writing stories so that children can learn consonants and vocabulary from storybooks. He then guided the participants by going through simple steps of creating stories, the making of storyboard and creating simple flap books for children to enjoy at their ECD centers. He concluded that each storybook must contain content, character, events and hidden insights that are appropriate for the child's age.

At the end of the session, the participants expressed their satisfaction that it was a very rewarding experience for them to be trained directly from Ajarn Preeda who shared his talent and 40 years of experience in two days.



Action Plan towards high quality early childhood development centers

By Anuje Sirikit

During the first half of last year, DNPF in collaboration with SRRU organized a training workshop on facilitation skills for ECD teachers, education committees and local authorities with Lampang Community Foundation team as trainers. The purpose of the training was for stakeholders involved with improving the quality of early childhood education to work together in the formalization of the action plans.

In the second half of the year, DNPF was fortunate to have Ajarn Kanchana Taochali, Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, in assisting the ECD teachers, education officers, education committees and other stakeholders concerned in reviewing and refining the action plans. She emphasized that the designing of the action plan must be consistent with the mission, strategy and goals. This is because the action plan is a guideline for the implementation of the organization mission to achieve the set goals.



Of the 17 model centers, Ajarn Kanchana has already supported Ban Chan, Narong, Nong Sanit, Sawai and Wat Chai Sri-saad ECD centers, in Sangkha, Sri Narong, Chom Phra, Muang, and Rattana districts respectively.

It is hoped that in future these action plans can link in with the process for preparing the annual subdistrict administration organization (SAO) plans. For the current year Ajarn Kanchana and her team will be supporting the ECD centers in the implementation and monitoring of the plans.