



# Fishing for neighbourhood ties

Pupils put up projects to promote neighbourliness among residents. **Amanda Phoon** reports

In a big wading pool lay 20 decorated and laminated paper fishes, with a question about neighbourliness pasted on each of them.

More than 200 neighbours in Aljunied and Boon Keng estates got to try their hand at catching one of these fishes in March and April. If a resident caught and answered the question on a fish correctly, he would win a prize.

The project, titled Friendship in Singapore Housing Estates, or Fishy for short, was organised by 10 Primary 2 pupils from Geylang Methodist School (Primary). They set up the simple game booth in two events held separately in the two estates.

Their aim? To let neighbours have fun and develop friendships through the game.

The project title had an added meaning, said Madam Pakrisamy Jamuna Rani, one of the teachers in charge of the project: Neighbours are like the variety of fishes living in harmony in the sea.

The project was recognised as one of the top three most outstanding ones in the primary school category of the Good Neighbours Project, netting the pupils \$800, a plaque and individual certificates.

The Good Neighbours Project, jointly organised by the Housing and Development Board and the Singapore Kindness Movement, aims to promote ground-up initiatives that encourage bonding among neighbours.

Members of the public participated in the Community category, while primary, secondary and post-secondary schools took part in the Youth category.

Thirty-five projects out of a total of 78 were shortlisted and given seed funding of up to \$1,000 to be implemented.

## GREAT FUN

The pupils from Fishy had a lot of fun designing the fishes and interacting with the neighbours, they said.

Describing how they used their hands and paint to decorate the fish, Yoon Kai Xin, eight, said: "We dipped our hands into the ink and printed them onto the fish."

Rita Ong, eight, said: "My favourite part was doing the thumbprints." She explained that they used their thumbprints to imitate the "scales" on fishes.

The other top two projects from the primary school category were "My



Pupils from Geylang Methodist (Primary) School put up game booths for their Fishy project (above), while Greenwood Primary pupils organised an event where residents picked up health and fitness tips (below).

PHOTOS: GEYLANG METHODIST SCHOOL (PRIMARY), GREENWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Neighbours LAH" by Greenwood Primary School and "A Place Where I Call Home" by Chongzheng Primary School.

For "My Neighbours LAH", where "LAH" stands for "living actively and healthily" with neighbours, the students organised an urban race for Admiralty residents.

Participants picked up tips on leading a healthy lifestyle and made new friends.

Krithika Udayasamkar, 12, a Primary 6 pupil from Greenwood Primary School, said: "The participants were laughing and enjoying themselves and they also said they learnt many things. Seeing them smiling and enjoying themselves was really memorable."

Over in Tampines, the pupils from Chongzheng Primary School threw a block party for about 120 residents there.

Kyleen Cabael, 11, a Primary 5 pupil, said: "Parties are always lots of fun. Every time you hear the word 'party', you want to

attend. People can also get to know one another and will remember the experience."

The residents enjoyed skits by the pupils, who acted out scenarios that neighbours encounter in their daily life, and also penned down their thoughts on what "Home" meant to them.

The projects were exhibited at the Good Neighbours Showcase at HDB Hub from May 24 to June 1.

Said Krithika: "I thoroughly enjoyed this project and thought that it was a very good opportunity to give back to society, so I really put my heart and soul into it."

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