

Shower with Love to the Autistic Children

Written by Grace Shi
Mon, 30 May 2011



On the 29th of May, Tzu Chi Autistic Children Group has just launched its first Love Shower Activity. At 9.30 a.m., fifteen families with autistic children braved their way through inclement weather to arrive at the Tzu Chi Sydney. In order to settle the children's families, they were offered some special tea by the sisters amid warm and comfortable ambience and soothing music. Thereafter, the program of activities were presented.

It is said that: "When God closes one window, another one opens". It's important that one looks for a way to find it. Tzu Chi's role is to be a companion and provide assistance in one's quest for this window, to open it, and let life's sunshine in. As an example, two months ago, some senior Tzu Chi brothers and sisters organised the "Autistic Children Group" aimed to look after the welfare of autistic children and to encourage the families of these children to integrate with society. It is hoped that with the strength of Tzu Chi's benevolent participation, this would lead to a more compassionate society.

Firstly, Brother Si Yi introduced the purpose and objectives of forming the "Autistic Children Group" while showing a video of DaAi television's "Children of the Earth". This portrays the special characteristics of autistic children, and the inevitable heavy emotional burden their parents must bear. The relevance of music as a tool of medical treatment is briefly discussed, giving hope and inspiration to the parents of these autistic children.

Sister Liang Hui Lan presented the current Australian branch's position, and invited on stage three parents to share their perspectives and experiences. General knowledge of the nature of autism is rather limited. Not knowing what to do and where to get assistance is a common sentiment. These parents are deeply grateful that Tzu Chi at this time is able to extend them a helping hand, and provide them a forum which is becoming a source guidance and consolation. These parents are able to share with each other

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their knowledge and experiences caring for their autistic child. Life's journey of pain becomes less isolated when shared in the company of others.

To provide companionship and assistance is Tzu Chi's mission. Tzu Chi Australia's CEO Ji Yaying presented the Autistic Children Group's future planned series of activities. At present, these include the Environmental Conservation Train, tree-planting, and inviting more people to join by encouraging families of autistic people to participate in group activities. In so doing, this becomes an effective form of rehabilitation. Proposed activities are monthly meetings with the autistic families group, music, arts and crafts classes for rehabilitation. These classes would be fee-free to allow parents to take the first steps on the road to assimilating with the community at large. Brother Zhong Kun Cheng shall organise and explain the plans to be taken regarding the Environmental Conservation Train. We request that parents give their contact details in order that they may be informed of future activities.

Finally, we shall conclude this two-hour Love Shower Activity by singing the hand-gesture song of "One Family". Parents kindly remain in your respective places and enjoy our rice dumplings; while the cherubic children may romp around. It is evident that the parents and children are enjoying a few brief moments of emotional liberation.

Translated by Roger Yu