

Head StART for underprivileged kids

By G.PRAKASH

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PETALING JAYA: The children love it here. They find the place inspiring. The StART Society in Jalan Gasing is an arts academy and it's certainly brightening the lives of underprivileged kids.

Children spoke of the wonderful things they are learning at the society.

"I always look forward to attending my music lessons here," said Tan Chee Keong, 17, of Agathians Shelter.

"I've always wanted to play the guitar and now I have the opportunity to do so. I get to learn from really good teachers," he added.

"It is definitely a fun learning environment here. We also get to mingle with other kids. The dance class is my favourite," said Evon 14, from Tiratana Welfare Society, who aspires to be an artist.

For A. Dinesh 14, the lessons he learnt at StART Society made him come out of his shell into a more confident person.

"I used to be very shy, but now I am more open and have no problems to be around people," he said.

StART Society is an arts academy specially set up to serve the underprivileged children's community.

As a baby of Foetus International, StART provides free music, drama, art, craft, dance, speech, writing and life skills lessons.

Last Thursday, the Tan Sri Tan Chin Tuan Foundation organised a Christmas party for underprivileged children at StART Society in Jalan Gasing.

About 90 children had a grand time with lots of food, goodies and presents.

The talented children trained at StART gave an outstanding dance performance while Myanmar Children,

who recently released an album entitled A Christmas Journey that was produced by StART, sang three Christmas songs.

Apart from giving the underprivileged a memorable time, the tea party also marked the beginning of the foundation's long-term collaboration with StART Society.

"It's wonderful to know that you have another organisation that will join you to include the underprivileged in your celebrative activities and that's what we have found in the Tan Chin Tuan Foundation," said Joshua Lee, programme director of StART.

To date, StART has 300 children, and 60 more at the Myanmar shelter that the society reaches out to. The "Start house" is designed for conducive learning and a full-range of facilities to provide the children with ample hands-on exposure and practice.



MEMORABLE MOMENT: Kids from many charity homes attended the Christmas party organised by the Tan Sri Tan Chin Tuan Foundation. Pic: SHARUL HAFIZ ZAM

StART has a permanent panel of dedicated teachers, selected for their expertise, reputation and exceptional track record of working with children.

This permanency of teachers guarantees continuity and long-term

child-mentor relationships.

Among the facilities are art and dance studio, guitar studio and drum percussion studio. The children are selected through auditions and recommendation from the respective shelter homes.