

MORE LIFE

Issue 2: Winter 2008

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FOR LIFE
*4*Life
THAILAND

Welcome

Dear For Life family,

Welcome to MORE LIFE Winter 2008, packed with news and information about what is going on both here in the UK and at CCD in Thailand. It has been, as always, a varied and interesting few months with some ups and some downs. Financially speaking, it's a hard time for everyone globally and charities have been effected as people tighten the purse strings to get through the Winter. However, we continue with faith, and we are really pleased to announce that CCD have purchased the first piece of land opposite Rainbow House! CCD want to build independent living flats for the older residents of Rainbow House who have not been adopted and need to think about their future. CCD plan to run a group home where the residents can learn to be independent and also train in vocational skills with the aim of being fully integrated into society as adults. They have bought half of the space which they ultimately want, and are saving up for the rest. In the meanwhile, they have started up a group home for adult men called House of Love in rented accomodation. I visited Thailand in November and had dinner with the new residents of House of Love. I was struck afresh by just how important someone's living environment is, and how much young people flourish when they are surrounded by loving people. During my visit I was even able to go up to Chainat province and have a look at Manorom Hospital. I was impressed by the beauty and serenity of the area, and also excited about the prospect of CCD in the North of Thailand. However, there is a lot more funding that we need in order to open the daycare centre in Manorom, so please do consider giving generously to this project (see p6).

Ways you can get involved:

- Do a sponsored event such as a cycle ride, a marathon, a sponsored silence or even a fast! Everyone has something they can do!
- Hold a Chilli for Charity meal in aid of For Life
- Give regularly by standing order
- Nominate For Life as a charity in your school, church or work place
- Volunteer to work with the children in Thailand
- Give some time to help with admin at the For Life London office
- Visit CCD in Thailand
- Consider adopting a child



While out there I spent some time at Rachawadee Girls and Rachawadee Boys daycare centres. I was blown away with Donna Matthews (pictured left) who has been doing music therapy in the daycare centres and wards for the last three months. She plays guitar and harmonica at the same time, while also dancing, singing and doing actions.



Foreground: new land which has been bought opposite to Rainbow House (Background of photo)

Back in the UK we have been touched as always by the dedication and determination of many of our volunteers and fundraisers who have been tirelessly working for us. Jon and Gilly Davies from Uxbridge have been biking around

Thailand for the second year in a row to raise money for CCD. For the whole month of November 08 they have been biking round Thailand, Burma, Vietnam and Laos carrying around a CCD money box. Lila Steele and Vivien Scott from Northern Ireland have raised an astounding amount of money with the team they are taking out to CCD in Easter 09. Thank you so much to all of you who support the work in Thailand - every bit counts!

Kind regards,

Lydia

Our vision is to bring LIFE to the thousands of abandoned disabled children who lie neglected and unloved in the Government institutions of Nonthaburi, a district just outside Bangkok. We want to see lives transformed and hope restored to the children and teenagers who have been deserted because of their disabilities.

We are a purely voluntary charity. None of our staff receive a wage so that more of your money goes straight to the children in Thailand. We keep our costs to a bare minimum also, with stamps and stationary often being donated.

We work with CCD to reach disabled children in the following ways:

Daycare centres - we run four daycare centres inside the Government institutions where the children come for the day to be stimulated, educated, looked after and loved.

Rainbow House - A specialist residential home for up to 50 children with disabilities. We seek to reunite them with their families and where this is not possible, to help them get adopted so that they can have a second chance to live a happy life.

Community-Based Rehabilitation - we work in the poorer provinces of Thailand with families with disabled children. We provide help for parents financially, educationally, and by creating support groups with other parents in a similar situation.

For Life

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It's NEVER too late...



House of Love

CCD now have a group home for young adults which was opened on the 15th September 2008. There are now nine young men who live in community in this house (left) which is located in the street next to Rainbow House. The men do the cooking, washing up and other household chores as a step towards living independently. There is one CCD teacher, called Takitan, who is resident in the home and provides support and care for the boys if they need it.

CCD have had a vision to build some independent living flats on the land opposite Rainbow House for many years, but the land is very expensive, and so this rented group home is a taster of what is to come! Many of the Rainbow House residents are now in their teens and have not been adopted, so Wasan is thinking carefully about their future and how he can ensure they lead lives which are as full as possible.

House of Love was started after the Government asked CCD to submit a proposal to take 8 or 9 young men from the Government institutions and create a loving environment in which they can learn to live as independent adults. Within a month they found the house and set it up. All the residents have come straight from the Government institutions except Yuthana who has been living at Rainbow House for many years. On their recent trip out to CCD, Rob, Henry and Lydia were able to spend an evening at the House of Love and eat with the residents and carers (see photo below). The atmosphere was wonderful and the men seemed so incredibly happy to be living in a home rather than a big institution.

Many of these men are experiencing for the first time the ability to decide when they go to bed or get up. Similarly, they are able to watch TV, play games and go out onto the streets to mingle with the local residents. **This is integration in the fullest sense of the word.**

During the daytime some of the boys have jobs and others go to the vocational training rooms at Rainbow House where they are learning skills such as carpentry, craft-making, office skills and how to use a computer.



Left to right - Front row: Henry George (For Life trustee), Tum Jea-Ma (resident, 23), Lek Seannonghee (resident, 32), Yuthana Charoenchai (resident, 23), Wasan and Chariya Seanwian (directors of CCD). **Second row -** Rob George (For Life trustee), Chollatan Sriwande (resident, 25), Kitti Meanhan (resident, 20), Ninart Seanim (resident, 23), Rawit Wongnonthapo (resident, 24), Weerawat Sengrit (resident, 24), Lydia George (For Life director), Takitan (CCD Group home project manager), Briget Blackburn (CCD long-term volunteer)

New kids on the block

CCD are really pleased that they have recently got two new residents at Rainbow House. There is space for up to 50 children to live at Rainbow House, and thanks to several recent adoptions, some vacancies have opened up. These two precious children have come from the Government Baan Fung Fah centre where they have spent most of their lives. Now they can, for the first time, really begin to receive the love and attention that they need to blossom and develop.

FACTFILE:

Full Name: Banthita Sukchareon

Nickname: Chi-Cha

Age: 5 years old

Birthday: 3rd September

Date arrived at the government institution: 5th November 2004

Date arrived at Rainbow House: 30th October 2008

Disabilities: Delayed development



FACTFILE:

Full Name: Jakkit Pawamai

Nickname: Ton

Age: 3 years old

Birthday: 3rd March

Date arrived at the government institution: 28th June 2006

Date arrived at Rainbow House: 30th October 2008

Disabilities: Delayed development, cerebral palsy



Community Projects

CCD began their first Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) project in 2002, and since then they have helped hundreds of families who have disabled children. CBR projects are working with the root of the problem and helping prevent disabled children being abandoned in the first place. Many families don't have any support in caring for their disabled child - no specialist medical care, equipment for their homes, financial support or most importantly, advice and friendship. CCD are now able to provide all of those things, and are bringing joy and hope to many parents. Let's have a look at the different community projects that are transforming people's lives.

CBR1 - Pui's House update

This project is based 60 km away from Rainbow House where we have two daycare centres, but we also do a lot of work with families in their homes in the communities. Many of you will remember our feature on Pui, the girl with the wonderful smile who appears at the end of our For Life DVD. Pui has been living with her three sisters in a tiny shack house where she has no freedom to move. CCD want to build her a suitable home with hand bars and a western-style toilet so that she can go to the toilet herself and move around independently within her home. Thanks to yourselves we raised the £2000 needed to build Pui's house and we are pleased to report that building work has begun and the house will hopefully be finished soon. Pui is delighted! Pui is a twin and has severe cerebral palsy because of complications during birth.



Above: Pui's current home, and **Below:** her new purpose built house



CBR2 - the new Centre!

CBR 2 was opened in July 2008 and so is a very new project. CBR2 is based in Nonthaburi province which is where Rainbow House is also located. The centre has a toy library (first photo right) and a sensory room, as well as a group activity area. Every day they are working with children who would otherwise have been left without specialist care and support.



transforming lives!

CBR 3 - Manorom Project in the making!

Manorom hospital was a big missionary hospital established 50 years ago in Manorom, Chainat province. The complex is beautiful and set in a stunning location. In the past few months Manorom have closed the leprosy wing of the hospital because leprosy is so rare in Thailand now thanks to the work of hospitals such as Manorom. Manorom have offered CCD use of that wing for a very nominal rent.

CCD are going to use the hospital wing to begin another community project. The wing has 13 treatment rooms as well as a large waiting room area which could be used as a large meeting room. CCD have plans to create physiotherapy rooms, sensory rooms and vocational training areas so that the wing will become a daycare centre for reaching out into the local area.

The idea is that staff working there will open the centre for sessions and drop-in times three days a week, and then do home visits to families in the local area for two days a week. Although the fundraising target has not yet been reached, Wasan is going to begin employing Khun Winichai to do research into the disabilities in the local area, and to begin to form relationships with families. Winichai will be in charge of the daycare centre when it is up and running. For more details of this proposal, please visit our website



One mum called Khun Nonglak brought her two children Toom and Ann to the centre when it first opened (pictured furthest right). She regularly goes there and has seen her children improving massively. Toom can now ride a special tricycle with a handlebar instead of pedals. He can also walk with a zimmer frame and clap his hands for the first time ever. The joy on his face is remarkable. His sister Ann can sit up on her own and also show signs of interacting with people around her. This is just one family whose lives are being changed by CCD.



Be a hero, be

Fancy a challenge for 2009?

Would you consider running a marathon in aid of For Life?

If so, we would love to hear from you if you fit into either of these categories:

1. **If you already have a place in the 2009 London Marathon through the ballot.** If this is you, you could choose to get sponsorship and raise money for us. Sadly we were not able to secure charity places for the London Marathon this year, but if you are already in through the ballot we would love to hear from you.
2. **We are able to buy a charity place for you in the Edinburgh marathon** if you fancy running round this beautiful city. It is held on the 1st May 09.

Can't face running 26 whole miles?

Well, there is an option in the Edinburgh Marathon to run the **Hairy Haggis Relay** which is the marathon in four relay runs of 6 miles each. You run the marathon with three friends and take a 6-mile stint each, much more manageable! Please do contact us if you are interested.

Ed Pakenham's Marathon Runs



Tobi Rustler, Rich Airey, Ed Pakenham and Ed White

Ed Pakenham and his team have run TWO half marathons within three weeks in aid of For Life. They began with the Bristol half marathon and then did the Great North Run on the 5th October. They improved their times for the Great North Run, and have also raised £2000! Thank you to the team for their generous hearts!



Mydudu Gaven, from Chesterfield is doing a SKYDIVE in aid of For Life on the 20th December 08! She is hoping to raise around £2000 so wish her luck! Thank you Mydudu!

a fundraiser!



Hair dying in aid of For Life!

David Rodgers, from Northern Ireland, has taken an amazing step and dyed his hair blonde in order to raise money for the children at Rainbow House! He raised an amazing £2200 through sponsorship, so his friends and family must have realised what a sacrifice this must have been.

David and Sandra Rodgers have recently adopted Tiger, a lovely boy from Rainbow House. They are delighted to have him at home with them in Northern Ireland now (see p10).

Jo Brand at Alleyns School

For Life were delighted to be chosen as the charity for a band night at Alleyn's School in Dulwich, where Jo Brand was the compare. The fundraising evening was held on the 4th December and featured many bands of Alleyns school and even a staff band! Jo Brand had the audience in stitches and made the event incredibly enjoyable! The total amount raised was over £2500. Lydia was especially honoured to be there because Alleyns was her secondary school where she spent 7 years of her life studying and enjoying herself! Thank you to all of the charity committee and Annable Boltsa for organising the event.



Adoption Special

David and Sandra Rodgers from Northern Ireland have just adopted Tiger, one of the Rainbow House residents. They are still calling him Tiger as that is what he calls himself, but they have also given him the christian name Toby. Tiger spent a considerable amount of time under CCD's care, and Wasan and Chariya were a massive support during the adoption. I caught up with them to find out what lead them to consider adoption, and how things are going in these early days.

What made you consider adopting in the first place?

We had worked in Nepal from 1995 – 2001 and had considered adopting whilst we were there but because we had two birth children we were unable to as the government of Nepal did not allow a family, after adoption, to have more than two children. We had visited Thailand several times whilst in Nepal and this seemed like a great place to adopt from.

What drew you to adopting from Rainbow House?

We are friendly with a family who have adopted two children from Rainbow House and we had seen what a positive experience it was been for them. We had also been able to meet with Wasan when he was in Northern Ireland two years ago and we were impressed with his compassion and care for the children in Rainbow House.

How did you pick Tiger from a bunch of such gorgeous children?

Fortunately we didn't have to! We visited Rainbow House in April of 2008, just after our papers had arrived in Bangkok. When we visited Wasan told us that Tiger was the only child available for adoption who wasn't already spoken for. We had initially asked for a girl, but as we had not "chosen" the sex of our birth children it wasn't difficult to accept God's choice for our third!

What were your feelings when you got out to Thailand to pick him up?

Excited and nervous. We were very excited about meeting Tiger again and welcoming him into our family. We were also nervous about the big changes Tiger had to make from Rainbow house to our family and the fact that we had very little Thai to communicate with him or reassure him if he was frightened or confused. We travelled together as a family, David and Sandra together with our birth children Hannah and Matthew.

What have been the challenges of having Tiger so far?

I think communicating with him has been the most challenging thing so far, trying to understand what is going on in his little mind and what his needs are, but overall he has coped with the changes very well and we have all learnt the power of non verbal communication. He is learning English at an amazing rate.

What advice would you give to anyone considering adopting a disabled child?

We felt it was very important to be honest with ourselves and those assessing us about what our limits would be in caring for a disabled child, prior to visiting Thailand. We feel it would be very important for prospective adoptive parents to ask themselves "Can we meet the needs of a disabled child, physically emotionally and spiritually. And what would be our limits?" Adoption is about providing a family for a child who does not have one, there is no perfect family but it is wise not to stretch ourselves beyond our limits.



Above (left to right): Sandra, Wasan, Hannah, Tiger, David, Matthew and Chariya at Tiger's leaving party.

More For Life News

For Life Alternative Gift Catalogue - Out Now!



Fed up of buying the same old presents and never knowing whether the person will like your choice? Well, instead of giving your money for presents to big corporations, why not opt to buy them an alternative gift which will go to the children in Thailand. To get your copy of our wish list, please fill in the response slip, tick the appropriate box and send it back to us using the frepost envelope provided. **Thank you!**

Voluntary Accountant Needed!

We need a chartered accountant who might be willing to put in a few hours a month for free to help with our books and accounts. At For Life we want to keep our running costs to a minimum so all our staff are voluntary. If you are interested or know someone who might be, please contact lydia@4lifethailand.org.



Congratulations to Meg Inchley and Jon Cripps who are getting married on the 22nd December 2008! Meg volunteered with For Life at Rachawadee daycare centre for four months, and has been a regular supporter of For Life since then. They have an option for family and friends to donate to For Life instead of wedding gifts - thank you Meg and Jon!

FOR LIFE MEDIA COVERAGE!

Wasan and Lydia were interviewed and then aired on Hope FM in August by Ann Brignall which was a real privilege. Lydia was also interviewed by Mandy Pilz for Christianity Magazine. The article is available online if you would like to read Lydia's story of how she won £16,000 on 'Who wants to be a millionaire?'

RESPONSE SLIP

We know that many of you are already giving regularly and sacrificially, but if you would like to make a special one off donation, or get involved in another way please fill in your details clearly, and choose from the options below:

Give a one-off gift today

Please note: do not send cash in the post, please only give cash if you are handing this slip to a member of the For Life team in person. Thank you.

PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY IN CAPITAL LETTERS, SIGNING AND TICKING ONLY IF YOU WANT US TO CLAIM GIFTAID.

Title First Name This gift is: Cash Cheque

Surname Amount £

Address

Post Code

(Please tick) I am a **UK tax payer** and I would like For Life to treat this gift and all donations I make from the date of this declaration, as a **Gift Aid** Donation, until I notify you otherwise. To qualify for Gift Aid, what you pay in income tax or capital gains tax must at least equal the amount we will claim in the tax year.

Signed..... Date.....

Sign up to be a regular giver

Regular givers are a real blessing because they enable us to plan for the future. You can give regularly whether it is yearly or monthly, whether it is £2 per month or £200 per month!

Get your *Chilli for Charity* Pack

You can order your FREE fundraising pack which includes a recipe booklet, posters, invites and even napkins.

Request a copy of our Alternative Gift List *Make a Wish!*

Please tick here if you would prefer to receive our newsletters by email. Print your email address clearly below. Alternatively, you can email lydia@4lifethailand.org

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Registered Charity No 1104291

GET INVOLVED!

MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN A CHILD'S LIFE





Our sincerest thanks go to all of you who have contributed to For Life either with your time, your energy, your money or your skills...

A special mention goes to:

- Everyone who gives by standing order. We really couldn't improve the projects so effectively without your regular support!
- Pat and Andy Ogden for their generosity and encouragement - their chilli nights, catalogue support and more!
- Eric and Ann Brignall for their generosity.

- All our wonderful volunteers who have been out at CCD over the past six months. These include: Ellie Rowland, Astrid Omell, Katie Huggins, Suzie Lant, Lorna Goldring, Nazleen Romjon, Bukky Fashade, Jacqui Marshall, Donna Matthews, Susie Nichols, Hannah Johl, Pennie Lamkin, Sarah Eves, Sofie Andersson, Natalie Johansson, Emma Ottoson.
- Well Street Baptist Church for their generous donation.
- Hannah Lowe for selling CCD notelets and raising money for us.
- Kai Smith who gave the money from his piggy bank to For Life!
- Dr and Mrs T Baxter for their repeated generous donations to CCD.
- Sean and Eleanor Ashton for choosing For Life to be one of the options on their wedding gift list.
- Downton Baptist church for their ongoing fundraising which has completely amazed and inspired us! They have now raised over £7000!
- Jill Baker, Paula McCreight and Kim Stevenson for their fundraising coffee event at Starbucks, and for now planning a Chilli for Charity night.
- CBC Missionary Fund who continue to support us generously.
- Margaret Lory for holding a Chilli for Charity night.
- Hannah Goldsmith for donating several packages full of toys and games for the children at Rainbow House.
- Tony Whatnall and his team from St Andrews in Leicester for more market stall and garage sales in aid of For Life.
- Sally Bailey for asking for donations to For Life instead of 60th birthday presents.
- Melisa McGarvey and her family for raising an incredible amount at her birthday party!

For Life

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