

The Predicament of the Newly-arrived Children

In well-off Hong Kong, it is just inevitable for us to deal with different kinds of problems, in which aging population and newly-arrived children from the mainland are the most significant ones. Poor elderly people are in plight. Leading the penurious and lonely life; while primary school children newly arrived from mainland are also in dire situation, facing enormous discrimination and barriers against both study and life. On reflection, I prefer taking part in a voluntary work project that lending a helping hand to primary children. My reasons are explored in the following.

First of all, they have to encounter tremendous language barrier. Since they are just newly-arrived, it is difficult, if not impossible, for them to listen to Cantonese clearly, not to mention speaking it fluently. In terms of study, hardly can they understand the meaning of teachers who impart knowledge in Cantonese. Thus, their academic results will be affected. In terms of life experience, they find it difficult to communicate with others, which cast influence on their interpersonal skills and pose a grave menace to their daily life. In long run, their enthusiasm on study will gradually go down and they may experience the feeling of loneliness and desperation, which are certainly not the situation we want to perceive.

Secondly, most newly-arrived children come from destitute family, whose parents have to work all day in order to support the living. Their parents are too busy at work, having no time to communicate with each other. Let alone taking care of their children. When those children experience difficulties on study and life, they find no one to consult but stand a high chance to go astray. Therefore, they are in dire need of help offered by the voluntary work programme. Volunteers can act as a consultant and inculcate the right messages into their minds, helping them to overcome the obstacles and develop a positive attitude towards life.

Thirdly, primary school children newly-arrived from the mainland may find themselves extremely hard to integrate into such a cosmopolitan city – Hong Kong. Because of the cultural difference between mainland China and Hong Kong, they find extremely hard to adapt to new circumstances that advocate the virtues of high efficiency and fierce competition. Moreover, the taste of food and ways of entertainment are all different from their tradition in mainland. With a view to cultivating their sense of community and belonging, there is a dire need for us to run the voluntary work project, which targets at them and immerse them into Hong Kong.

All in all, never should we forget that those primary school children newly- arrived

from the mainland are also part of our community. While conceding the need of the elderly, I do agree those children stand a preference to receive our help and love.