



Digital marketing and creative strategist Wilshia Maruli (from top), national golfer Jen Goh and arts entrepreneur Victoria Chen of HopeFull. The project has distributed "survival kits" – consisting of arts and crafts materials, activity sheets, reflection journals and simple science experiments such as plant-growing kits – to 192 families in the past few weeks, mostly by post. PHOTO: JEN GOH

'Survival kits' to engage and inspire kids from needy families during circuit breaker

It started with an idea in April to help children from needy families pass the time at home during the circuit breaker period.

Since then, national golfer Jen Goh and three of her friends have put together "survival kits" for these children, and distributed them to 192 families in the past few weeks, mostly by post.

The Tinker Kit, as the group calls it, consists of arts and crafts materials, activity sheets, reflection journals and simple science experiments such as plant-growing kits.

Ms Goh said more boxes will be given out this month. Most of the families live in Woodlands, Choa Chu Kang and Yishun.

A volunteer for nearly two years with the Milk and Diapers Programme started by a Catholic charity, Ms Goh said she has befriended some families and come to understand their needs in the process.

"The feedback from parents during this holiday period was that kids are stuck at home with nothing to do," she said.

She roped in her friends to start

the project, HopeFull, to tap community resources and help these families. They are Ms Wilshia Maruli, 25, a digital marketing and creative strategist, Ms Victoria Chen, 26, an arts entrepreneur and Ms Nur Hadziqah, 25, who works in branding and public relations.

"Some families may not have printers at home. We want to make this period easier for their kids to do the things that many other kids are lucky enough to have," said Ms Goh, a third-year psychology and public policy student at Singapore Management University.

"We are trying to equip them with resources beyond the basic necessities."

HopeFull now has 10 volunteers – some of whom are local athletes and artists – who provide the content for the kits.

They include former national sprinter U.K. Shyam, basketballer Ng Han Bin and cyclist Calvin Sim.

A private sponsor, Mr James Walton, the sports business group leader at Deloitte Singapore and South-east Asia, has also come on board to fund the next three

batches of kits.

HopeFull, which is supported by Mr Mark Richmond, team lead of Team Singapore, has plans for the boxes to be sent to the families on a regular basis, even after the Covid-19 situation has passed.

"The logistics have been quite difficult to operate because we're all working separately, but we hope that with the easing of measures, we'll be able to get more volunteers to help," said Ms Goh.

Ms Maruli, who is also a children's book author and illustrator, said the group is also working on online resources and getting people to share their stories with children.

So far, about 10 people – from athletes to artistes to entrepreneurs – have expressed interest.

"We're looking for talents that are unconventional and are hoping to inspire the kids to think out of the box, about what they can do in future," said Ms Maruli.

To find out more, visit wearehopefull.sg.

Amelia Teng

BEYOND BASIC NECESSITIES

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10

Number of volunteers HopeFull has who provide the content for the kits.