

London Forum 7 City Hall

Dan Lescure, Senior Programme Officer (Health) gave a presentation on the GLA's mental health initiatives. The Health Inequalities Strategy was launched last year. It has 5 objectives in the areas of children, minds, places, community and living. They are expanding the Healthy Schools strategy to cover early years. 32 boroughs are involved. They have produced a mental health in schools tool kit as an online resource. Some schools may have counsellors and others not. However the approach of the Healthy Schools Strategy is to involve the whole school, including teachers, support and administrative staff, governors and pupils, to catch early signs of mental health problems. They want to ensure that everyone is aware and involved.

Susan Crisp led on from this by speaking about the background to the **Boys on Track report** which was launched at the end of last year. Education and Health commissioned the report. Schools in London are doing better than schools in other regions, but not all children have good results. On a London level, 2 groups of children who do least well are black Caribbean and white school meals eligible white boys. The study looked at common themes. It is a literature review of research combined with interviews with practitioners and young people. They looked at London and the kind of interventions that might be helpful, engaging with practitioners, professionals and young people. They arrived at a list of 7 areas of focus which are best bets and areas where energy and focus should yield results.

The top of the list is wellbeing and mental health. A momentum is being built from the focus on mental health initiatives in London. The report is [here](#)

It is helpful to recognise the interplay between factors as a whole to see where the gaps are. The GLA is not able to cover all the issues so it is asking other organisations to think about it and review their own activity.

Liza Fior, a founding MUF architect and one of the Mayor's Design Advocates took up from there. Liza is working with the London Plan Good Growth agenda, looking at the effects on communities where growth and development



happens. Different small teams are exploring specific themes, one of these is children.

There are a number of different initiatives which are covered in their inclusion of children whether this is TFL & Healthy Streets which includes a requirement of designing for all ages or the emerging London Plan which includes design guidance on making space for children and their mobility. She illustrated some examples from MUF projects of how making room for children.

You can read a full report of the meeting [here](#).

The Alliance for Childhood London Forum

The 8th London Forum took place on 26th March 2019. Our question related to why boys do not do well at school and the effect of school exclusion. Susan Crisp and Anne Bamford presented on the theme and brought new perspectives to underlying causes and what can help to encourage boys to engage at school. Notes from this meeting will follow. Our next Forum Meeting will focus on Early Years. What gives children the best start in life? The date will be announced shortly. For more information contact Marion Briggs: marion@allianceforchildhood.org.uk



Photo by Alamy

HeartMath

By Aya Husni Bey

I have recently been developing my own practice as a HeartMath Coach. HeartMath is a system of techniques which help transform stress into resilience for the purpose of achieving health, happiness, becoming the real you, while maintaining a life of meaning, and purpose. In our current climate we are witnessing an increasing number of our young generation suffering from acute levels of long-term stress. This is of great concern especially when research is showing that 95% of disease is caused by stress, and that there are reports of a rise in mental illness such as anxiety and depression, as well as witnessing a rise in youth crime.

As a health professional I like to stay up to date with the latest resources available and am pleased to find that there are significant developments being made in relation to the betterment of health and wellbeing. In my search for solutions to the problem of stress and trauma I came across a way to measure stress in real time; this is known as Heart Rate Variability (HRV) which lead me to HeartMath.

In this brief introduction I cannot begin to give you the full science behind the methods that have led to the specificity of the HeartMath techniques, I can inform you that I have used them, experienced the results, and can guarantee that they are simple and effective.

The basic method begins with placing your attention to your chest area, the area of your heart, and you may even place your hands to your heart to help keep you focused. You are to breath steadily, and regularly while focusing your attention to your heart; this method is called 'heart focused breathing'. The breath in, can range from 4 to 6 seconds before releasing on the out breath for 4 to 6 seconds. The seconds you take depend on what is most comfortable for you. You are then encouraged to connect with an elevated emotion, and it helps to recall a time, place that makes you feel happy, or someone you care about or something you feel grateful for. This method brings you into coherence, and what this means in scientific terms is that your sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system are in balance and therefore you are physiologically able to make clear decisions through your heart-Brain connection. 'as you learn to hear and follow your heart directives, you can flow much more smoothly through the challenging times of your life and later turn your challenges into inner strength and success.' Through a coherent heart-brain

connection your body is no longer overly producing the stress hormone cortisol and the effects of a challenging situation are alleviated; which relieves your body from reacting to a situation long after it has happened, and empowers you to be in control of your emotions.



I have been using these techniques for a few months now and have seen many possibilities where the reaction and response to certain situations have led to a far better outcome than I would have seen before. The methods are simple and are easy to follow, what it needs is practice and commitment, a commitment to remember to practice and to use the techniques in real time. 'True strength comes from the heart. If you have the strength to keep checking in with your heart, really hearing what it has to say, then applying it, you will be doing what is right for you.' For example, you can build your practice starting at home before bed or when you wake up, and then when you find yourself walking or travelling alone between places, and eventually to use a technique when faced with a challenging situation. It has been helpful before going in for an interview, meeting a deadline or when overcoming a shocking or stressful situation involving a family member, a friend, acquaintance, and even a stranger. And once you get to experience life in this way it becomes more and more manageable and enjoyable!

Aya Husni Bey is a Transpersonal Art Counsellor MCGI, Holistic Counsellor, HeartMath Coach and Therapeutic Play Practitioner.

Over the last 20 years Aya has worked in a variety of settings between North Africa, The Middle East, South East Asia and Europe; providing 1:1 and group facilitated support in the field of Mental and Emotional Health, Well-Being, and Personal Development. www.creativityunmasked.com

For further information resources, and reading please go to: www.heartmath.co.uk

McCraty R. PhD, Moor S. Goelitz J and Lance S. W. (2016), Transforming Stress for teens: The HeartMath solution for staying cool under pressure. ISBN 978-62625-194-6

Childre D. L. (1992), The How To Book Of Teen Self-Discovery: Helping Teens Find Balance, Security & Esteem. ISBN 1-879052-36-9

Defining and Lighting, Your Internal Fire

By Talmud Bah

What lights your fire? And what do we mean by fire: Your inspiration, your passion, your unique motivation...

But one persons 'turn on' could be someone else's 'turn off', so let my words be a guide on a journey which is definitely personal...

So, what tools do we have/need to find that feeling? We have emotional intelligence.

We use our emotional intelligence every day to instinctively inform our lives and decision making, it tells us what we like, who/what we find attractive, where we feel safe and what inspires us, but what is emotional intelligence?

Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive, control and evaluate your emotions.

Emotional intelligence:
The Four Areas

Step one to Perception:

Understanding your emotions is to accurately perceive them. This may involve understanding nonverbal signals such as body language and facial expressions.

Reasoning:

Step two involves the use of emotions to promote thinking and cognitive activity. Our emotions help



us to prioritise what we pay attention and react to; we naturally respond emotionally to things that garner our interest or attention.

Understanding:

Step three; the emotions that we perceive can carry a wide variety of meanings. If someone is expressing angry or sad emotions, it's down to the observer to interpret the potential cause of their anger and what it might mean.

Managing:

Step four is having the ability to manage your emotions effectively, which is key to emotional intelligence. Being in a place where you can regulate your emotions, responding appropriately to the emotions of others, are important aspects of emotional management.

This is just a breakdown of the innate human capacity we all have and use, to a lesser or greater extent depending on who we are.

It's a bit like being a Jedi without knowing it and Yoda stopping you in the street and saying " young one...you're a Jedi and you've been using the force the whole time!"

Now let's explore some places where you might find your fire or the thing that lights it...

You

A good place to begin your search is within.

What makes you feel good instantly? What puts a smile on your face? What is it that interests you, warms your heart and makes you feel alive? What resonates with you, gets your heart beating and adrenaline pumping? What generates either warmth and happiness or excitement and fear? Or all of the above and then some?

Make a date with yourself to reconnect with 'you' and explore what lights you up.

People

Sometimes we can learn much about ourselves through our interaction with others.

Who are the people that you feel good being around? Do they enhance or bring out the best in you? Do they challenge and excite you in a positive way? Do they support you in generating a sense of wellbeing and invigoration? And vice versa? What kind of conversations do you have with them? What language do you use? Do you come away from seeing them or her/him feeling invigorated, inspired, refreshed and ready to go? We all need different types of people in our lives and it can't always be rosy but, it's important to recognise those in your life that 'lift you up' and generate the desire in you to do the same for others ...

Places

Many of us draw our inspiration, our energy, our fire from environments...

Where do you find yours?

In the heart of nature, a jungle or Green fields? Sandy beaches, blue skies, bright sun and clear sea? A crowded bar, amid laughter and chatter? Or a club with pounding rhythmic bass, blaring beats, swaying bodies and electric energy? wherever it is, find it and go there if it lights your fire...

Music

We all have songs that get us moving as soon as we hear them, some old, some new...

Maybe they hold good memories, maybe it's the way the songs are put together, that makes the hairs on the back of our necks stand up and give us that feeling in our stomachs...

Be it funk, classical, hip-hop or punk, certain sounds or songs just do it instantly for us...

So what are you waiting for? Press play and get lost in the music...

Art and Media

There are books we can read over and over again, because of the emotions and images that the author evokes in us, films we like to watch that make us feel good and inspire us, that take us to places of fantasy and imagination, of narrow escapes, challenging situations, mysterious worlds and characters, maybe it's a painting or a comic or a graphic novel or a game on our console or phone, maybe it's going online and connecting with our social networks?

It depends on the person and everyone's different, but look for your 'fire' where you will, the only limit is your imagination...

Fanning the flames

Wherever you find what lights your 'fire' I guarantee like all fires it will go out at some point, which is why once you've found what method works for you (and it could be all or none or a mix, of the above) it's important to fan the flames and be ready to relight it when it goes out...

Fire safety

Like all things, it's about balance, so by all means 'light your fire, fan the flames!' but don't let it become all consuming, as a controlled and sustained fire generates light and warmth, drawing people close to it, but a blazing fire can burn everything that's near it, so once you've lit your fire, it would be advantageous to endeavour to keep it in harmony with the other 'elements' in your life...

I hope this has been helpful
Talmud Bah

www.philosophersstonecoaching.com

www.qicmentors.com



Play areas excluding children

By Marion Briggs



There was uproar when the Guardian published an article about a housing scheme in London which segregated children in social housing from the play area for children in private accommodation. Politicians from all parties including the Mayor Sadiq Khan and others including Anne Longfield, Children's Commissioner for England, protested. Mothers from both sides of the barrier had been trying for the most part of a year to have the barrier brought down.

The original plans which had received permission were for a gate. The developers have relented and the Council have now removed the wall.

Vigilance is needed when it comes to children's play areas to avoid the disturbing trend for developers to try to avoid the needs of children to play even when set out in the Mayor's Plan and other policies.

You can read the article [here](#)

The Alliance for Childhood (AfC) is a network that facilitates reflection and action by people with concerns about the care and education of children. It is not a conventional organisation, but an expression of a willingness to work together for the betterment of the experience of childhood.

Some Core Group Members and Contributors

Elsa Rossi - Writer and Educator

Aya Husni Bey - Therapeutic Play Practitioner

Emma Stow - Author, Counsellor, Singer, Poet

Marion Briggs - Childhood Advocate, UK Co-ordinator of AfC

Talmud Bah - Mentoring and Support for children and families



Contact us & get involved

info@allianceforchildhood.co.uk

Phone: 0870 766 9657

London site www.allianceforchildhood.org.uk

UK site: www.allianceforchildhood.co.uk

International site: www.alliancechildhood.org

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/AllianceforChildhoodInt

Imagine

By Daniel Rossi

**Imagine if different parties were allied
To eradicate extreme poverty
If they played the nuances out
If efforts were concentrated here and now
And attack the problem node**

**Imagine if the temples unite
To help a school
In each neighbourhood an action
Improve education
And end the alms**

**Imagine if companies got together
To give better assistance
In each village a fondness
Affection and nobody alone
And by all indulgence**

**Imagine if society accepted
The possibilities of divergence
A path without dissent
The tenderness with where to go
And the breadth of consciousness**

 Links to Multiirão Institute
(People Working Together) [project in Brazil](#)
(In Portuguese - press Google to translate)

Child in the City

Children in the Sustainable City International Seminar



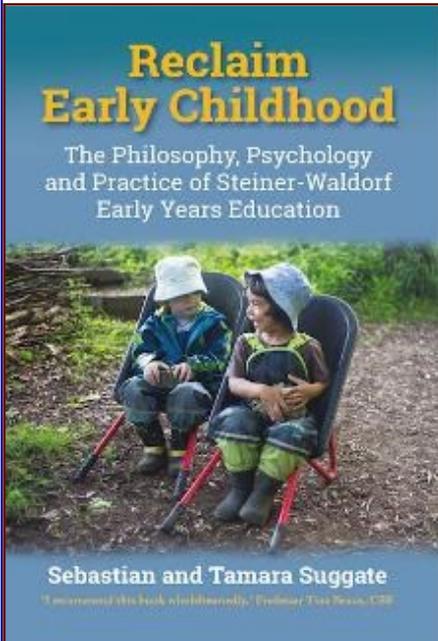
**20-21 May 2019,
Antwerp, Belgium**

Register here:
<https://www.childinthecity.org/2019-antwerp>

Books

Reclaim Early Childhood

Hawthorn Press
Sebastian and Tamara Suggate



Sebastian and Tamara Suggate have written a well-researched book about early years Steiner education, comparing it critically with contemporary mainstream education, illustrated by examples of teaching practice from around the

world both theoretical and practical. Dr Sebastian Suggate has written previously about children's readiness for school and the age at which they should learn to read and write, particularly an earlier essay in **Too Much, Too Soon**.

"This book addresses many of the issues which I and others have worked on for decades, and it is most welcome both for its contemporary look at Waldorf early education and its emphasis on what is needed for a healthy, well-balanced childhood. It fills an important niche in academic circles and among parents who want to deepen their understanding of Waldorf early education and its relevance today."

Joan Almon, Alliance for Childhood.

Finding Political Identities: Young People in a Changing Europe

Alistair Ross

This book explores how young people in Europe construct their political identities. Based on small discussion groups with 2000 young people across 29 European states, Alistair Ross explores how 13 to 20 year olds create identities in contemporary society, creating contingent narratives of local, national and European with families, friends and social media.

As well as exploring what these kaleidoscopic identities look like and the sources they draw on, it also examined how these accounts are assembled and integrated with each other.



Ross argues that many of these young Europeans form a distinctive and different generation: more attached to European human rights, less tied to concepts of nation. They are digital natives, cosmopolitan and with a strong sense of justice and equalities.

[Click on the book for details.](#)

Early Years in London report

The Mayor of London, Education and Youth

The Mayor of London's Early Years in London report (March 2019), provides data on whether the quality and accessibility of early education in London is improving.

It also gives an overview of what the Mayor is doing to support the sector and London families.

[Read the report](#)



Have Your Say

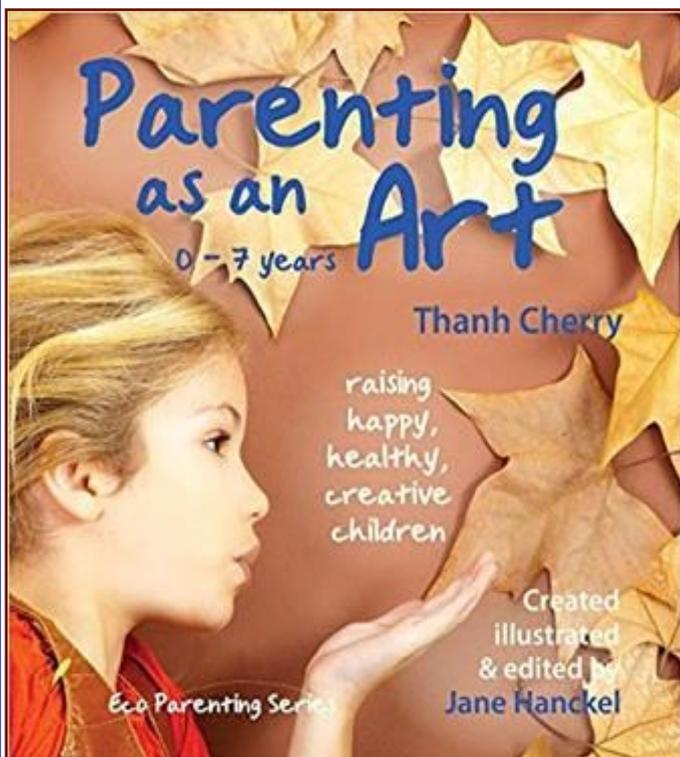


[5Rights Foundation](#) is supporting the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child to develop a General Comment on Children's Rights and the Digital Environment.

[You can make your comments here](#)

Parenting as an Art:
**The art of raising happy, healthy,
 creative children**

(Eco Parenting Series) Hardcover, 8 Jun 2016
 Thanh Cherry (Author), Jane Hanckel
 (Contributor)



Parenting as an Art provides practical and creative advice and inspiration for parents.

The premise of this book is that all children are amazing and that by embracing a creative, caring and connected approach as outlined in this book, parents will discover the creative art of helping their children to realise their extraordinary potential.

Written by renowned early childhood educator Thanh Cherry, Thanh draws upon her extensive wisdom and experience of thirty five years as a Waldorf/Steiner early childhood teacher and international educator and teacher trainer.

Co-creator Jane Hanckel, author of Growing Greener Children, has had many years of experience in the field and in research fostering healthy relationships between children, families and nature, all easily overlooked in our busy life.

Jane co-founded the Spirit of Childhood Foundation to help children to realise their full physical, social, emotional and spiritual potential.

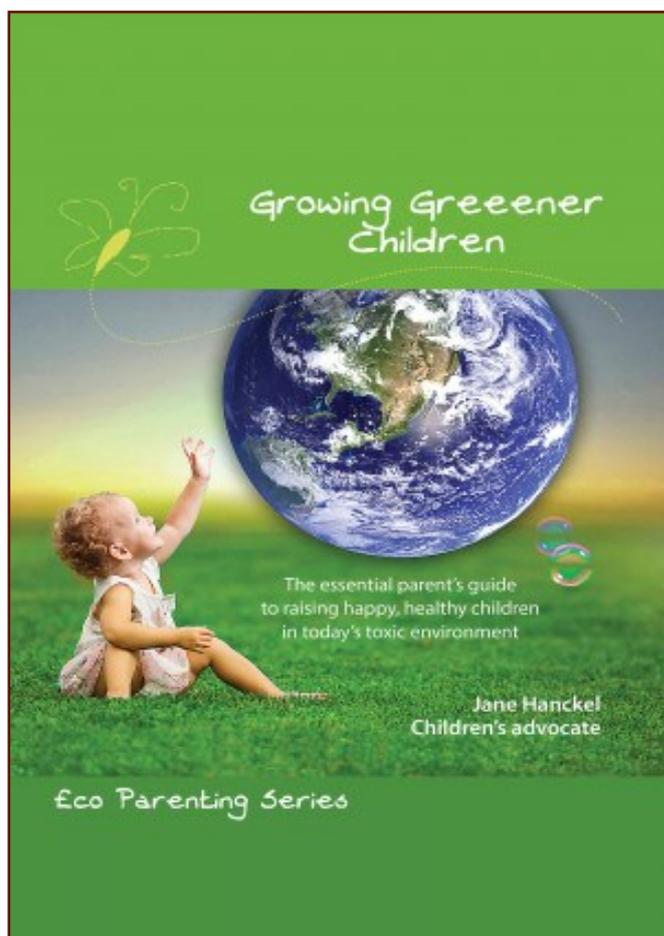
Growing Greener Children

eco Parenting Series
 Jane Hanckel

A comprehensive guide for parents who care about their children's health and the environment.

Growing Greener Children provides easy access to information about common toxins in our environment and food with practical suggestions of how to protect their children from potentially damaging side effects.

From environmental triggers in our society to common childhood concerns - ADHD, asthma, obesity and precocious puberty - the book provides positive steps that every parent can take to make sure that their child's risk of exposure is kept to a minimum.



“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” Nelson Mandela

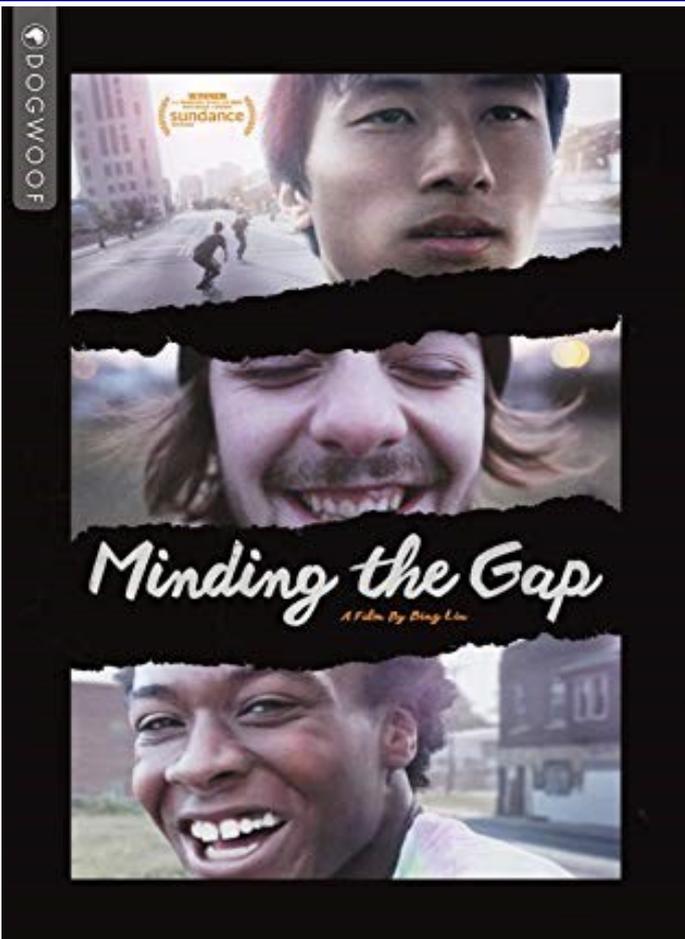
Alliance for Childhood film review by Aya Husni Bey

Minding the Gap

Minding the Gap is a must watch documentary film which weaves together the lives of 3 young male skateboarders. It illustrates the stamina and endurance acquired in the captivation of play as an emotional outlet from their turbulent upbringings; through the precarious age of adolescence, and the complexities of modern day masculinity.

Director Bing Liu draws upon over a decade of footage; spanning themes of racial identity, grief, domestic violence and parenthood, all while navigate the challenges of his own past.

This film informs, confronts, pays homage to the human perseverance in the face of adversity, and its affects otherwise. Its first U.K. screening was at this years Human Rights Film Festival, and the film has received Oscar (nominee) for Best Documentary Feature at the 2019 American Academy Awards.



Capernaum



Capernaum refers to an ancient city on the sea of Galilee whose name stands for anarchy and disorder.

This Lebanese drama is an exercise in realism and it explores its theme with no boundaries or limits. It is one savage gut wrenching punch after another as we follow the life of Zain, a resourceful, courageous, empathic twelve year old boy; physically underdeveloped, yet perceptive beyond his years. Zain and his siblings are regularly exploited by their parents to sell drugs and soon after his sister passes her first menstrual cycle at the age of 11 years, she is sold to the landlord in exchange for chickens. The sorrow would be unbearable without the flashes of humour.

In order to accurately portray the lives of the children living in the slums of Beirut, director Nadine Labaki spent three years researching, six months filming and a further twelve months editing the film. The actors are residents of the slums and it is clear to see how naturally they fall into re-enacting their life experiences.

The husband and wife team mortgaged their home to assure this sympathetic cry for the dispossessed came to completion. And as a result the main actors were either able to return home or immigrate to join their families abroad. The film has also been brought in for viewing at the United Nations to bring a voice for these children and the lives that they are enduring to a greater stage.

In 1892 Margaret McMillan was concerned about hunger and its effect children education. At Wapping Road School in Bradford in 1887 the head had seen several children keel over and faint during morning assembly. He sent out for bread, jam and tea and paid for it from his own pocket. Does anything ever change? Today children in Britain still go hungry to school. Poverty affects more than one in four children in the UK today, according to C.P.A.G. In a recent survey almost half of teachers surveyed said more children were going hungry compared with three years ago. Read more [here](#)



multi irao

www.multiirao.org

@multiirao

<https://www.facebook.com/multiirao/>

Children at risk - Chanty town. Curitiba, South of Brazil.

The Institute aims to create an education movement that reconciles voluntary participation and entrepreneurial social projects in line with the socio-environmental demands of communities involving the social ecosystem actors. The integral vision is realised by using arts as a method, sports as an incentive and the entrepreneurial perspective of the social factory to the young and their families as a goal, giving to the whole family the opportunities of improvement as a community.



EDUCATION WITH KINDNESS, LOVE & CARE!!!

Institute Multiirao is helping with dignity the development of children and families from a shanty town, a poor area in our big city, providing wellbeing, social and spiritual balance. **"TO EDUCATE CHILDREN IN POOR AREAS, WITH COMPASSION"** is our main point. Compassion because the children from our shanty town are already suffering so much in their daily lives, struggling even to get food. Some children live with a grandmother, others with brothers. Some have parents who are in prison or ill. Multiirao is struggling to remain open, but the most important thing is helping as many children as possible so they can be away from drugs, from sex trafficking and so on. We want to promote their wellbeing by giving support to families and children, so they can live with dignity.

WHAT WE ARE...

- Social method of education
- Own model of social approach (4Cs)
- Contact – Consideration – Contents – Courses
- Children and young people aged 6 to 18, and families..

PRINCIPLES...

- Affection: I affect the other. The elder cares for the younger.
- Changing the world is changing yourself and around you.
- There is no such a thing as us (workers) and them (the assisted); we are all one.
- Art disarms the soul. Assistance in sharing, not giving.
- Economic, entrepreneurial and social sustainability
- Identity and belonging - the project is always from and to the community.
- What were isolated projects before, have now been integrated into the school methods.

From inside to outside (3rd sector installed rooted in the place, community leaders, residents' associations and labour cooperatives to create Identity with the public or external project)

Affection (scientifically, ethics based on affection is the model of greatest result for the human being - self-realization both for the subject of the action as for the attended ones)

We... Suppress the approach we and they (those who help and those who are helped) equating the treatment (communication, recognition and identity of values). When volunteers, preference to those who live close to the area... When paid, preference to young people recently graduated who live nearby.

Multiirao Project needs permanent support, for maintenance, and pay at least 3 people to be there.

Talk to us: UK - volunteer Elsa Rossi, 07950181581 / Brazil: Daniel Rossi:

danielrossimulti@outlook.com