

VACD activity update: Report on Health Clinics and Mother's Union and other matters.

The initial health clinic was held on 25th April 2012, led by praiseworthy efforts of Dr. (Mrs.) Kumudini Cooray (Pediatric Specialist of Diyatalawa Base Hospital) and her staff. Since then, 8 further clinics have been successfully held. A discussion evaluating clinics was held on 23rd July, 2012 at the Base hospital auditorium and the related report has already been made available.

On 3rd August, 2012 a meeting was held to discuss the needs of children who were examined at the clinics and among those present were Dr. (Mrs.) Kumudini Cooray, Dr. Pushpakumara Weerakoon and Mr. Milton A. Perera with Mr. K.A. Ratnayaka, representing VACD.

A few days ago another goal was achieved by organizing a Mothers' group. The mothers who gathered at Dharmashoka Vidyalaya, Bandarawela on 4th August, 2012 decided to name their group "**Mothers' Union of Children with Special Needs**". A comprehensive report on this gathering will be forwarded shortly. A program to improve the skills of the disabled children was held in parallel with this program.

Future programs:

- A meeting of the action committee will be held in mid September, 2012.
- The Mothers' Union will meet a day prior to this action committee members' meeting
- The first task of the Mothers' Union will be to organize small groups for the counseling programs which Dr. (Mrs.) Kumudini Cooray has recommended for the parents of disabled children. The background for this will be primed in the near future.
- Mr. Felix Stephen (Australian Sponsor and Advisory Board Member) will be in Sri Lanka on 2nd October, 2012 and in Bandarawela on 4th October. Ms Gabriella Vascotto – From the Western Autism School of Victoria will also be present along with the Project Leader and Project Sponsor at a lunch meeting with Dr. (Mrs.) Kumudini Cooray, other medical officers and the staff of the hospital will to discuss all aspects of the VACD program.
- On the same day a special gathering of the action committee members and its sponsors will be held at 'Hotel Redumahala' in Bandarawela at 3.30 pm and conclude with a High Tea.
- Mr. Felix Stephen is due to meet Government officials and Education officers on 05th October, 2012.
- On the same day at 4.00pm a play by the children with disabilities will be staged at the Bandarawela Town Hall to mark World Children's day. This event will be led by Mr. A.M.P.D.Chathuranga and team.
- Ms. Gabriella Vascotto, the educational specialist from Australia who will be conducting a training program for teachers of children with special needs will be based in Bandarawela from 3rd October though till 21st October and will also have meetings with staff of the children's unit of the base hospital and the Mother's Union.

- An annual get together and a distribution of school equipment for the children will be held at the end of December, 2012, organized by the Mothers' Union.

Milton A. Perera – VACD Project Holder

(For the Action Committee - VACD)

10th August 2012