

# Newsworthy

A NEWSLETTER OF THE HCD INSTITUTE  
Connecting you to children advocacy and development



**Newsworthy** is an electronic publication of the HCD Institute containing news and information about our work and also the fellowship of the student alumni. It is published three times per year in English and Chinese.

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The *Holistic Child Development (HCD) Institute of the Malaysia Baptist Theological Seminary (MBTS)* is a department for training, research and networking in holistic ministries to children. We seek to transform and enable the Church to do child advocacy and development through Christian-based theological education, research and awareness raising. The Seminary is part of the *Global Alliance for Advancing Holistic Child Development*, a network of theological institutions seeking to promote HCD programs worldwide.

## In this issue

### Interpreting Isaiah's vision

*Newsworthy* gives you a first hand account of how two churches in Sabah interpret Isaiah 61 in their ministry to marginalized children; to proclaim the good news and bestow on them a crown of beauty.

### Training teachers to make a difference

Let's see how several kindergarten teachers are seeking to make a difference in their *kampung* by advocating for the children.

### Vision-mission opportunities

The HCD Institute will be organizing several vision-mission trips to various children's ministries. Interested persons please contact the HCDI office.

### Recommended readings

*Newsworthy* recommends three "must read" books available for loan from the MBTS library.



## A few words...

Dear friends,

As you may know, the HCD Institute (formerly known as Child Resource Center) was inaugurated in 2004 as a department of MBTS for advocacy, training, and coordination of holistic child development concerns in South East Asia. One of its objectives is to develop and implement contextualized training for Christians serving in various capacities of children's work. In this issue of *Newsworthy*, we highlight several children's ministries which the HCDI are working with to provide training for their workers, vision-mission opportunities for the later part of 2009, and a recommendation of three "must read" books.

Enjoy this issue and as usual, we hope to hear from you.

*Rosalind Lim-Tan*

Director, HCD Institute

For a better reading experience, we suggest you view this copy in Full Screen mode. To do so, go to View in your Adobe Reader (or similar PDF reader) and select Full Screen Mode.

# Interpreting Isaiah's vision (Isaiah 61)

*Setting captives free in Sabah, the land beneath the wind*



*Classes in session at the Keningau Vision Center*

The **Keningau Vision Center (KVC)** was started on Oct 5, 2007 by the Keningau Baptist Church. It was birthed as a vision to educate "stateless" children whose parents are refugees residing in Sabah. Being "stateless," these children are not able to have access to basic education amenities to maximize their development. KVC initially planned for a capacity of 45 students but the student population ages 6-13 has in recent years risen to 185. The school uses the Malaysian Education curriculum as its instructional guide. The teachers are a dedicated team of full time workers who are paid a small honorarium for their teaching ministry. KVC believes that education is one way to help these children move out from their vicious cycle of poverty and reclaim their dignity as people created in God's image for meaningful living.



*Children at the 'extension school'*

**Faith, Hope, Love Center** is a school using the same premise as *His Sanctuary of Glory*, a church located on the second floor of a shop-lot in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. The center was started by the church pastor and his wife as a response to the many street children loitering around the city. Most of these children originated from Indonesia and the Philippines, are stateless and live in dire poverty. The school of 125 children is managed by a team of seven dedicated teachers. Other than academic learning, the school also conducts weekday chapel services and creative art programs for the children. Lunch is provided during school hours courtesy of friends of the ministry. Due to the high demand in enrollment, the school has a long waiting list. Presently another "extension school" based on the same vision is being conducted in a nearby village.

**PRAYER NEED** *During our visit to these schools, the teachers requested for "formal training" in education of children as most of them have no prior training in the area of work. The HCD Institute is networking with other agencies to meet this need. A training program has been developed and the first module will start in December 2009. Pray for this concern as often as you remember.*

# Training teachers to make a difference

Most Lunbawang children do not have the opportunity to attend pre-school. When they enter primary school, all too often they struggle to keep up with their peers and most eventually drop out. Part of the problem lies with the lack of trained teachers. Also, existing teachers and caregivers are not well versed with cultural issues that affect ethnic Lunbawang and Tagal children. The Lawas Project aims to provide quality pre-school education for ethnic *kampung* children in Lawas, Sarawak. The goal is to empower local teachers and caregivers; ultimately helping the children.

Since 2007, the HCD Institute has been working with Harvest Center Bhd and World Vision Malaysia to implement training for *Tadika* (kindergarten) teachers and caregivers in Sarawak. This effort to bring early-years education to the *kampung* kids has many challenges. But we are very thankful that by 2009, three *Pusat Jagaan* (Care Centers) have been set up and presently managed by women from the village. These women are mostly *ibu muda* (young mothers) who are trying to make a difference in their community by providing a good learning foundation for the children so that they can have a headstart to primary school life.

Ms Beant Kaur, a staff of Harvest Center and also the project manager visits the Care Centers on a regular basis while the HCD Institute coordinates the training. Similar centers are being explored in the states of Perak and Pahang in the Peninsular. Contact our office if you are interested to visit these places.





## Recommended readings

The below recommended readings are available for loan from the MBTS library.

### Toddling into the Kingdom

*John Collier (ed.)*

This book is not about children. It's true that children feature prominently in its pages but it's not about them. The focus of all true Christian theology is God in Christ. This is what Child Theology and this book attempts to develop. So if you want to think about God and 'the way God does things' (aka 'The Kingdom of God'), this book is for you.

(Published 2009 by The Child Theology Movement, U.K.)

*Can be purchased from HCDI, RM25 FOR HCD & Child Studies Students only / RM40 for others*

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### Listening to God with Children

*Gianni Gobbi*

Gobbi says that "to enter into the secret of childhood requires of us, as adults, both a willing spirit and a particular discipline. Above all, this discipline comes as a result of patient observation of the children in addition to a careful preparation of ourselves, so that we can understand what we observe and know best how to respond to the child's self revelation...to understand the child and journey with them toward God" (Gobbi, vii, 2002). In this book she guides the reader in observation and preparation of an ideal environment where adult and child shares together in prayer and learning to listen to God.

(Published 2002 by Treehaus Communications, Loveland, OH. Purchase from Amazon).

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### Children & Spirituality: Searching for Meaning & Connectedness

*Brendan Hyde*

In this book, Hyde identifies four characteristics of children's spirituality: *the felt sense*, *integrating awareness*, *weaving the threads of meaning*, and *spiritual questing*. These characteristics can be observed in children if those who work with them know what to look for and are alert to the time, place, and space in which children find themselves. This book provides ways in which caregivers can nurture and foster these particular characteristics of children's spirituality. The book also provides valuable insights to those who work with children to support and develop the spirituality of children.

(Published 2008 by Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London, UK. Purchase from Amazon).

## Vision-Mission opportunities

Those interested, contact [hcd.institute@gmail.com](mailto:hcd.institute@gmail.com).

### MYANMAR

- ▶ Ministry opportunities to orphans and orphanage workers, August 6-10, 2009.

### SITIAWAN

- ▶ Ministry opportunities to *Orange Asli* children, August 14-16, 2009.

### KOTA KINABALU

- ▶ Ministry opportunities to refugee children, first week of December 2009.

### PULAU BANDING, (PERAK/THAI BORDER)

- ▶ Anytime when there is a group of 6 persons.

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## Important dates

### JUNE 8 – JULY 3

- ▶ M.A. in Holistic Child Development 2009 at Penang campus (all Modules). See [www.mbts.net.my/\\_SK\\_MA\\_HCD.html](http://www.mbts.net.my/_SK_MA_HCD.html) for course titles.