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This issue begins with the long vacation programme of August/September, 2000. This is a programme which entices every child who uses the Children's Centre. Children eagerly look forward to the vacation activities and the 2000 programme was a most successful one. Children from the Centre also shared Christmas joy with the motherless babies by organizing a party at the Home. Significant developments in the library are also reported, such as the library's outreach to primary school, a basic skills centre for out of school youth and the prison. The Centre is setting up a new Psycho-educational Testing & Counseling Centre to meet a long-felt need of the community. The library has many new books and we have listed a few of them, especially those by Nigerian authors. We hope that you will enjoy the newsletter, and we as well will welcome any suggestions you may have on ways to ginger up the growth of the Children's Centre.

LONG VACATION PROGRAMME 2000

The highlight of the year's activities was a long vacation programme which ran for six weeks. It was coordinated by Dr.(Mrs.) Wilhelmina Kalu, assisted by Mrs. Grace Anyanwu and a formidable host of youth volunteers, former beneficiaries of the Children's Centre programmes in their childhood years. Patsy Kalu was the students team coordinator. Six of the eight scheduled programmes received large patronage by the children. These were excursions, creative arts, sports activities, playroom storyhour, cookery and caring for others. The two programmes without patronage were youth forum and parenting today's children. This is because the youth avoid mingling in the bustle of children's activities. Our youth need a separate and more private area and programme. As for the parents, there needs to be a greater effort at publicity for them to take advantage of programmes tailored to help them cope with the challenges of parenting. A total of 190 children registered for the activities.

Excursions

Children visited the zoo, fire station, Orba market and other places of interest in Nsukka, using the Centre bus. The grand finale was a trip to Enugu to visit the zoo and airport. Mrs. Jo Okereke, assisted by the student team coordinated the excursions. This was a favourite activity because children do not get opportunities to travel out of the community except during Christmas visits to their village homes. They love the excitement of moving vehicles and seeing new things. It was only after persuasion that they agreed to try out other activities.

Sports Activities

Table tennis and basketball were the two main activities. The student volunteers gave the children gentle, disciplined and expert coaching in the necessary skills. The instructors were Chinweze Dike, Kana Ogban, Chesa Okereke and Lenu Fakae. Children were encouraged with stories of early training to develop hidden talents as well as create opportunities for national and international sports participation. Those who registered thoroughly enjoyed themselves. The table tennis players also drew eager spectators from those attending the library and other activities.

Caring for Others

Children loved the visits to the Motherless Babies Home, Nsukka. The home has up to 13 babies, most of whom lost their mothers to death and need care outside their families during infancy. Dr.(Mrs.) Wilhelmina Kalu coordinated this activity with the assistance of Udi Ijomanta and Youth Corper Lawretta Akaeze. Food and clothing items were collected and given to the babies. Most of all the children enjoyed holding and playing with the babies.

Creative Arts

This activity developed skills in producing small gift items, mobiles, greeting cards, poems, drama and fine arts. Children enthusiastically registered for creative arts and even came on days they were not scheduled to meet. Mrs. Grace Anyanwu did a beautiful job with this activity, assisted by fine arts student Udi Idika.

Playroom Story Hour

This was a package of storytelling, drawing and dramatization for expressive and acting abilities. The activity was coordinated by Ms. Terri Emezi and Dr.(Mrs.) W. Kalu. Chinweze Dike assisted and was wonderful with the puppet shows. Although the programme was designed for children between 3 and 6 years, older children also requested to register.

Library Services

Library services were offered throughout the vacation in spite of an industrial action involving the staff. The hard-working student team was led by Patsy Kalu and included Chesa Okereke, Lenu Fakae, Kana Ogban and Chinweze Dike. The library was full to capacity each day. When it got rowdy and boisterous, audiotaped stories and songs calmed the children down and brought order. This is an indication of the need for a tape player and video-television set at the centre.

Cookery

Mrs. Grace Anyanwu ran a successful cookery class within the last two weeks, using the centre's kitchen. She was assisted by student volunteers from the Hone Economics Department. Again there were eager participants even at this late hour.

Conclusion

The programme was exciting and enjoyed by children, coordinators and their student assistants. We learned that we could use students with previous centre activity experience to expand the range of programmes and run them effectively. It was an excellent leadership training programme. Secondly, children need orientation, with explanation of the benefits of each activity and gentle encouragement to try out new activities. Thirdly, some activities like sports need follow up during the year. "Catch them young" is the drive in sports skills development all over the world. Let us not fail our children!

MOTHERLESS BABIES CHRISTMAS PARTY HELD

Children who participated in the long vacation programme held a Christmas party in the Motherless Babies Home on December 15, 2000. The purpose was to bring joy and laughter to the faces of the babies as well as to encourage their participation in Christmas activities. The children brought various party goodies and entertainment to the party.

PORTABLE LIBRARIES REACH OUT TO THE COMMUNITY

During the year two portable libraries were sent out to schools in the larger Nsukka community. One went to Union Primary School I, which library science students also visited for storyhours. Children visited the headmaster's office daily during their break period to borrow and return books. The school has a large room designated as the library, but it needs extensive repair to the floor and roof as well as improved security before it can serve as such. In the meantime children in the upper grades are flocking to the portable library for borrowing and thoroughly enjoying the books, especially the stories. Teachers also select books for use in class.

The second library went to the MEST basic skills centre, a UNICEF sponsored project for out-of-school youth. MEST has also set up an evening secondary school for the youth, serving those who must work or serve as househelps during regular school hours. The library operated from the school during the session and has moved to the skills centre for the long vacation period.

PRISON LIBRARIES SERVICES

Following a visit by the University Women's Association, led by UWA patron Dr.(Mrs.) Nkechi Mbanefoh and members of the UWA executive in March, 2000, the library initiated library service to the Nigerian Prison Service, Nsukka. A collection of between 100 and 200 books and magazines are kept in the prison library for the use of inmates and staff. Originally housed in the chapel, the library has now moved to an office which opens onto the prison yard. The library has been run by Uju Onyejiaka and Nneka Omenkwu, two library science students doing their projects on prison libraries, and Lawretta Akaeze and Isaac Okogie, Youth Corpers serving with the Children's Centre. It opens two mornings a week from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Inmates have welcomed the library with great enthusiasm and participation continues to increase. Favourite materials include novels, textbooks in all subjects (both primary and secondary), and magazines, especially news magazines, National Geographic and devotional literature. Thanks go to the Chief Superintendent of Prisons, Mr. Amaliri, and Welfare Officers Mr. Ekeanyanwu and Mr. Akam for their support of this project.

NIGERIAN SCHOOL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE HOSTED

The Children's Centre played host to the 16th annual conference of the Nigerian School Library Association from October 23-26, 2000. Over 150 participants from all over the federation attended the conference, which was held on the theme: Effective school

library service for the successful implementation of the Universal Basic Education programme in Nigeria. At the end of the conference the Association presented a gift of N10,000.00 to the Children's Centre Library in appreciation of the good work it was doing.

UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA ALUMNI VISIT THE CHILDREN'S CENTRE

A delegation of alumni visited the Centre during the University's 40th Anniversary celebrations in April this year. This was in continuation of a long and fruitful association between the alumni and the centre. The Madam Hulder Iwuanyanwu Building in which the centre is housed was donated by alumnus Chief (Engr) E. C. Iwuanyanwu in honour of his mother. Another alumnus, Prince A. E. Koripamo, provided the initial book collection and centre bus. The building was opened as part of the alumni contribution to the endowment fund during the University's 25th anniversary celebrations in 1986.

On this occasion the alumni, led by National President Arc. Ezigbo T. Okoro, gave donations and pledges in support of the Children's Centre. Most exciting was the donation of a website by Mr. Dave Obiorah, the UNAA Kaduna Branch President. Among others, Dr. Njemanze and Prof. Obidoa gave donations of N5,000.00 to the Centre. A list of needs has been put on the UNAA website in order to reach a wider audience for support of our work.

CHIEF (DR.) E. C. IWUANYANWU TAKES ON BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS

Our ever-attentive donor, Chief (Dr.) E. C. Iwuanyanwu, has once again come to our aid with the offer of N375,000.00 to effect improvements to the Madam Hulder Iwuanyanwu Building. These include painting, burglary proofing of additional areas, termite treatment, and other renovation and repairs. The promise was made when Chief Iwuanyanwu visited the University of Nigeria during the 40th Anniversary celebrations in April. He has also requested a comprehensive plan to see how he can assist with the future development of the Children's Centre.

PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL TESTING & COUNSELLING CENTRE SET UP

The Children's Centre is developing a psycho-educational testing and counselling centre for children and youth with special educational needs. This is being done by Dr. Wilhelmina Kalu and a team from the Children's Centre Committee, in cooperation with the Faculty of Education. The testing centre will serve as a laboratory for postgraduate students in educational psychology, special education and measurement and evaluation. It will provide testing and counselling services for children with learning disabilities, the gifted, the mentally retarded, and those with other special needs. Before now children with special needs have lacked access to any diagnostic, correctional or guidance services within the community. Already, the centre is being furnished and equipped in the clubroom wing of the building and its collection of reference and testing materials organized for use within the very near future.

DONATIONS TO THE CHILDREN'S CENTRE

The library has benefited from a number of major donations since the last newsletter. These include cash donations of N25,000.00 from the Fund for Integrated Rural Development and Traditional Medicine, \$100.00 from former Library Committee Secretary Ada Udechukwu, and \$200.00 and N500.00 from students of the City University of New York and their lecturers, Prof. And Prof.(Mrs.) Udeogalanya, who recently visited Nsukka. Our former member, Elisabeth Odenigbo, has also donated \$100.00 for the motherless babies project.

Major book donations have come from Book Aid International, through the British Council, Enugu; the Indianapolis Public Library, U.S.A., through the good offices of Miriam

Geib; the Traverse Area District Library, U.S.A., through Barbara Nowinsky; our former member Bibiana Ukaegbu, Terri Emezi and her sons Ikenna and Nna-dozie; Ada Udechukwu and her children Ijeanuli and Nworah. The Children's Centre is grateful for all these wonderful donations.

NEW BOOKS IN THE LIBRARY

The library has many new books, among them the following recent titles by Nigerian authors.

Picture Books

Among the new picture books are four beautifully photographed titles by Ifeoma Onyefulu published in Britain and the United States. The books are *A is for Africa*, an alphabet book introducing the Nigerian environment; *Emeka's gift: an African counting story*; *Ogbo: Sharing life in an African village*, a description of age grades in her hometown Awkuzu; and *Grandfather's work: a traditional healer in Nigeria*, which describes traditional and modern occupations of all the family members.

Another beautifully illustrated picture book is *Osun and the hunter*, a Yoruba legend retold by Pat Oyelola and illustrated by Inose Osose. It is published by the Osun Grove Support Group and gives a message of environmental protection.

Fiction for Young Readers

There are many new Nigerian titles for younger readers. These include the new Lantern series by Literamed. Among the many titles are *Sade at the beach*, *Moji and malaria*, and *The dreamer* by Olajire Olanlokun and *Folake and her four brothers* and *A blessing in disguise* by Ifeanyi Ifoegbuna.

The library has a donation of 9 books by Enoch Etuk Irukwu, the radio and television children's programmer known as "Aunty Enoch". Some of the titles are *The tall man in the land of short people*, *Bitmus and the river*, *Binta*, *Amos the naughty boy*, and *the adventures of Okon*.

From Macmillan comes *Boys masquerade and the sacred tree* by Cyprian Ekwensi (Winners series) and *Tears on my pillow* by Ibrahim Salihu (Past and Present). Also from Macmillan is a new series created by IBBY Nigeria's Preventive Drug Education Creative Writing Project. Two titles are *Which way, Amina?* by Christy Ade-Ajayi and *Dele the lion of Aroko* by "Biola Odejide.

Spectrum has two books by the late Kolapo Oyefeso, both beautifully illustrated by his wife, Rosalie-Ann Modder. They are *The wind and the tree* and *The goddess of the kitchen and other stories*, a collection of African folktales.



