



CATHOLIC ACTION FOR STREET CHILDREN

Konkomba market children.



USING THE CORRECT PROCEDURES.

Newsletter 70

June 2016

Dear Reader,

We are ready to give you another update on the activities of CAS.

NVTI EXAMS.

First of all, we will report again on the NVTI exams because we did not explain to you the experiences of staff as well as those who took part.

The catering and carving exams were conducted at CAS whilst the hairdressing was conducted in a hairdressing salon at Kaneshie. The exam in Decoration took place in a workshop/shop where this trade is introduced, it is close to CAS premises.

Only one boy took part in the carving exam. We were asked to select the product the candidate had to make and the “thinking man” was chosen. On the first day the examiner witnessed the performance of the candidate. He examined the handling of the tools, the selection of the wood, and the sketching/ drawing of the item. The examiner allowed the candidate to continue on his own, he only returned to see his performances and the end product at a later stage. The candidate was happy with the result and of course hopes he has passed the exam.

Candidates for the catering exam were, 2 girls and 2 boys. Because of this, we prepared the general handicraft room for this exam. The examiner interviewed all candidates and asked them several questions individually. This proficiency exam is a practical exam and no written test is conducted. All candidates should know a bit of the English language because they should be able to read the text on canned food items. I personally was not present but I am sure the local language was used as well. Although all the candidates took part in the measuring classes, they experienced some problems with this and during the evaluation we decided to intensify these lessons. These four candidates were very optimistic they will come out successfully.



The decoration exam is new to CAS. One boy took part. He was the only boy who joined the four girls from that training center.

All these skills can be learnt in stages and you have to reach a certain level to be able to do the exam. Several members of staff took part in the decoration training sessions conducted at the Refuge last year and we have a fair idea what is involved. In addition, to be able to make certain items, the candidates have to know the tools and materials used when to apply them. In the decoration trade they use balloons, papers, plastic flowers, ribbons, cloth etc. Glue. Drawing pins, tapes and paint are also used.

We have employed this candidate although we do not know as yet whether he would have passed the test, but we know he can pass-on his knowledge to other children.

Three candidates from CAS and five other girls took part in the hairdressing exams. They were examined on different days because not all were fully prepared and ready to take part on the first day. The examiner allowed some of them to start later. Members of staff from CAS assisted as “clients” and willingly offered to be examined on. Their hair style corn-rolls was chosen and this had to be finished in a particular time.



CAS staff, learnt that we have to emphasize more on discipline and punctuality to the children. During the exams the children came in contact with others and they are most probably not so patient than the staff of CAS.

As mentioned before, we evaluated these exams and we hope that we could improve the general preparation next time.

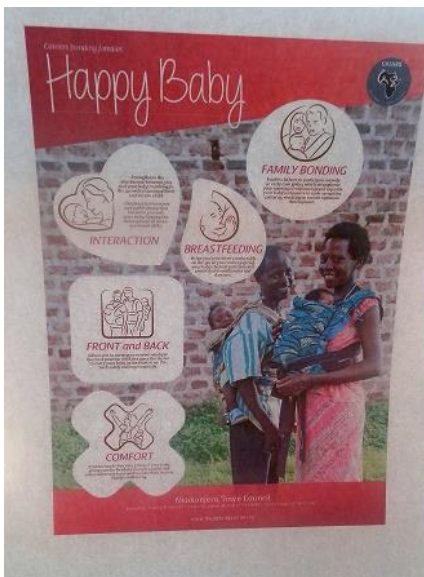
HAPPY BABY TRAINING AT HOPELAND.

The NGO-Happy Baby organized a training course in the sewing of baby carriers. This course took place in the sewing workshop at Hopeland center.

We arranged it in this way because, it took place over a period of ten days so that the candidates and trainer could stay at the center for that period. They stayed in the dormitories and food was prepared as well. Three staff and four children (one boy and three girls) took part. Within the period of ten days the baby carrier should be completed made of cloth and foam. It has been a difficult exercise because, when the foam is inserted the material is still having to be sewn.

However, it all went well and each candidate managed to complete within the given time. In addition, a small bag was made to keep the carrier when not in use.

This course needs to have a follow-up because eventually small workshops could be started to sew these carriers for sale.



THE CORRECT PROCEDURES.

Since 1995, CAS has prepared children to learn skills and trades. The step by step procedure which was used during the first 15 years of CAS was very successful. In the streets the children followed the street corner education programs. They were invited to continue the education at the House of Refuge. After a certain period, many were invited to stay at Hopeland center and while staying there, workshops or schools were selected where the children could continue with their training.

This step by step approach changed when CAS came in contact with children who were born on the street. In addition, the introduction of the skill training workshops at CAS, were reasons to change the procedures. Many children started the training before the preparation period was completed. They did not go to Hopeland and some chose skills they did not really liked, because they were influenced by their friends.

At the workshops in the Refuge we try to follow official rules such as starting on time, working at least 7 hours a day, and be present all the time.

However, many children were not serious. They arrived when they like and some were often absent. Still they want to sit for the exam. Another problem is the presence and influence of their mothers. In the past, (Migrant children), the child was alone and could decide as such, now the mother is involved. "My mother wants me to learn hairdressing because one sees money every-day and payments are instant.

We also allowed too much time for a child to abscond before following up. A child absconds for a reason; this means we have to know the reason before we can correct it. If too much time is allowed, it will become more difficult to find solutions.

These problems as well as others have made us decide to go back to the old procedures.

- All children have to go through an agreed period of time during preparation.

This preparation starts at the House of Refuge; it continues either in the Refuge-workshops or at Hopeland.

- All children who want to benefit from the sponsorship scheme, are invited for a period to stay at Hopeland.

Those who do not want to go to Hopeland are not sponsored to learn a skill or trade. During this period, we will get to know whether the child can take care of him/herself, whether s(he) is able to follow instructions, and most important whether s(he) behaves properly.

- All children should have a Social Survey report which indicates a contact address.

Children can be sent to Hopeland before the social survey report is ready. A preliminary report is sufficient to start, but the social survey report should be completed while the child is in Hopeland. These reports would still be opened for additional information on the child.

- Some children could be chosen to follow the functional literacy program either at the Refuge or at Hopeland.

Children who are too young to start an apprenticeship training follow this course. Or children who are not able to decide which skill or trade to learn could be included. We want to teach them for a period of one year. It seems to be a long period, but when a child is 12 years old starting this training, s(he) is still young after one year. Decisions can only be taken on individual basis.

- The welfare committee at the Refuge as well as the committee at Hopeland will know the children well during and after the preparation period.

The welfare committee at the Refuge has members of each department. They have to meet once a week. The committee receives information about the children while they take part in the activities. This committee will be able to assess each child and decide what is best for its future.

There are also children who come to the Refuge and have bad influence on other children. It does not help when we prevent this child from coming to the Refuge because in the street s(he) can prevent others to take part in the activities or even visit the Refuge. We want to assess this child as well and try to work on its strength rather than on its weaknesses.

- Fieldwork and street corner education.

Fieldwork is very important because the children live and survive there. Members of the House of Refuge and Demonstration department are ready to visit the streets when necessary. For instance, children who are following skill training but are not regular, somebody has to find out why. When children have been asked to stay at Hopeland but choose not to stay there, somebody has to follow-up. We have now decided that members of Hopeland visit the Refuge and together with the follow-up workers try to locate the child. We also will carry out some fieldwork at Adjei Kojo and Ashaiman as soon as arrangements are ready. We are still waiting for favorable responds to our applications made to some donors to expand this work.

We thank you all donors, individuals and organizations for the support given to the children. Thank You.