

MENCAFEP
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Mentally Handicapped Children & Families Educational Project

A Programme for Children / Young People with Learning Disabilities

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MENCAFEP



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Sharing Smiles

A SEMI ANNUAL PUBLICATION FOR FRIENDS OF MENCAFEP

Number 28



FOUR DAYS THAT CHANGED MY LIFE.

Is not life strange? I have been a neighbour of MENCAFEP for many years and I thought it was about time I went for a visit.

I first stepped into MENCAFEP on the 17th of January 2005, the Coordinator of the project, Ranji talked to me and explained very clearly all about MENCAFEP and it's work for special needs children. I thought WOW, this sounds like a great place. I was introduced to the staff and they were so kind and gave me a warm welcome, which made me comfortable.

The MENCAFEP Centre is divided into several units; Administration Unit, Special Education Unit, Sheltered Workshop/ Vocational Training Unit, Profoundly Disabled Unit, Integrated Play/ Day/ Pre-School, Home visit and Outreach Unit, Family Group Home Unit, Respite Care Centre, Training Unit, House Keeping Unit, Farming Unit, Maintenance and General Unit.

On the 18th Of January I was told to work in the Educational Unit along with MENCAFEP staff. Here there were Sinhalese and Tamil classes, with about 50 children, split into four smaller groups. This was my first experience of being with and experiencing special needs children. Although I had a smile on my face, my inner feelings were different, I did not know how to react to them, at times I felt repulsed. There was one big girl who wanted my attention and rubbed some snot on my blouse, I felt angry but managed to stay calm. However, towards the end of the day, as I felt more relaxed and the children got to know me, I felt really comfortable, I got involved with some free art and it was fun.

I really admire the MENCAFEP staff that is committed to working in this unit, as they have divided the children according to their abilities and not according to their age.

This Newsletter is sponsored by Bairdwear Inter Fashion, Nuwara Eliya Sri Lanka.

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A programme for children/young people with learning disabilities.
The special child/young person has the right to live & be part of their community.

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