

SALUS Programme

“Opening MINDS, Not Filling GAPS”

Adventure and Outdoor / Indoor Camping

- Our education system places great emphasis on acquiring knowledge, relying solely on the acquisition of knowledge and examinations. We must also focus on children and young people’s wellbeing as a ‘person’ with their needs, worries, anxieties.
- Our children and young people are better when they open up and share their thinking and emotions than when they think and feel alone or when they are being told what to do. It is not going to be an easy process but it is going to be worth it!
- As we are now in the 21st century, our children and young people face the challenges and pressures of achieving academic excellence, often at the expense of their mental wellbeing, either in acting and reacting without thinking or keeping thinking without acting. The problem gets so large and significant as a plethora of interesting and concerned issues arise in the digital age of the 21st century. We should not just sugar-coat the consequences. We need to understand and create awareness of mental health issues among children and young people as one of the central challenges in the 21st century.
- Adventure and Outdoor/Indoor Camping Activities offer add-on value to our children and young people’s personal development by experiential learning in outdoor learning environments, instead of classroom / school curriculum structured learning environment. In pursuit of organized outdoor/indoor camping activities in campsite including rope courses, group games, tent camping (pitching a tent and sleeping there for one night), these external activities provide students enjoyment, fun and opportunity to learn teambuilding and responsibilities, usually they are assigned responsibilities.
- Questions raised:
 - Can children and young people (CYP) really have a genuinely educational experience from Adventure and Outdoor /Indoor Camping?
 - Can Adventure and Outdoor/Indoor Camping help children and young people to acquire life skills on how not just survive but to flourish and thrive in schools?
 - How have children and young people dealt with their anxious thoughts and feelings in order to stay focused and collected?
 - What can we do to fix our failing education system in preparing children and young people to thrive in schools in tune to changes of the 21st century as ‘school typically does not prepare young people for real life.’ (Ray Dalio)
- There is often a disconnection from our education system and the real world. Our children and young people need to start asking themselves what they want to achieve in their life. They need to create and constantly working on themselves as Warren Buffett said, “The best investment you can make is an investment in yourself.”

What is it all about?

- 2 days 1 night Camping Activities serves as a doorway into self-discovery. The camping aims to create an outdoor experiential learning of optimism, hopefulness and positivity by being:
 - Practical
 - Realistic
 - Transformation
- As a follow-up to the camping activities, applied psychologist Dr S H Lua and a team of trained mentors will present and share practical, realistic and transformative approach so that attending the camping is a worthy endeavor for children and young people.
- Within a limited and short span of camping time, they will discover for themselves in their ability to make a first small step toward behavioural change.
- It is common for our children and young people to believe that they cannot do, even without trying. During camping, they can have 'aha' experience for they are capable of so much more than they ever realize and aware of, only if they can focus in defining what matters most to them.
- Change only occurs when children and young people are aware and notice of what is happening within their own selves. During the training camping session of practice and role-play, they gain insights into themselves – how they perceive, learn, feel, think and act. Even though it is a slow process of change, the momentum of change will energize children and young people to keep going and moving forward.

Camping Learning Outcomes – “aha’ experience

- ‘Aha’ That is how it is done in changing children and young people’s thinking habits for the better. To acquire life skills in developing a broader and deeper perspective of self as a ‘person’ through experiential learning:
 - a sense of responsibility and accountability
 - a sense of accomplishments / achievements
 - a sense of resilience and self-reliant
 - a sense of independence in self-esteem and self-confidence
 - a sense of belonging
- By acquiring the ‘aha’ experience of what they do during the camping, children and young people will be able to see and experience in their self-discovery journey - the difference between who they are and who they want to be. They will learn to: (i) never let the things they want make them forget the things they have; (ii) they must do the thing they think they cannot do and if they want it, they have to put an effort and work for it; and (iii) they are always responsible for how they act, react and behave, no matter how they feel.