

Kampuchea House Newsletter



May 2020

SUASDEY and greetings to all our supporters.

Here is an update on our latest news from Kampuchea House.

As we reported in our last newsletter back in March, all our kids are at home in the residence in Siem Reap, including brothers Chinh and Minea, both medical students, whose university studies in Phnom Penh have been interrupted. To date there is no news as to when schools and unis might be resuming. Unlike Australia, no school work has been set for our students and while Chinh and Minea are able to follow some classes online, the school students are pretty much left to fill in the long days of isolation as best they can.



Mindful of the impact of isolation on our kids' physical and mental well-being, our director, Leng, has imposed structure to their daily routine at home. The kids exercise in the mornings by playing various games, such as soccer and badminton, in the yard, then shelter from the intense heat by staying inside the house from lunch time on. The afternoon is dedicated to doing indoor games such as jigsaw puzzles and also reading, while time is set apart each day for the kids to keep up with their school work. The younger kids are benefiting from having our older students help them out with their maths, and Yim is helping Somnang with his Khmer writing.

Above: Exercise time

Below: Yim helping Somnang

Right: Chinh demonstrating good hand sanitizing



Hom, our manager, is responsible for hygiene and sanitation round the house, ensuring regular hand washing takes place and wiping down all surfaces with disinfectant. The house mothers have been limited in their shopping outings, particularly to places like the markets, and visits by ex-students have been temporarily stopped. As medical students, Chinh and Minea have been able to help with hand washing awareness and technique. At the outbreak of Covid, with the news that food items and household supplies which normally arrive from Thailand would be in short supply (very little is actually produced in Cambodia), Leng did a large shop and procured provisions to ensure supplies for the kids and staff for a couple of months. Apart from this foresight she has been pro-active in enforcing standards of hygiene and social distancing that are not always observed elsewhere in Cambodia. She really has gone above and beyond in the interests of our KH community.

A HUGE THANK YOU TO LENG FOR HER ORGANISATION OF LIFE AT KH DURING ISOLATION TO KEEP ALL OUR STAFF AND KIDS SAFE AND HAPPY.

SPECIAL KHMER NEW YEAR CELEBRATION - THANKS TO JAN



Since travel to home-villages to celebrate the three-day festival of Khmer New Year in mid- April was banned this year, our long-time supporter Jan decided to donate money for a party for our kids at KH. The day was filled with special food from a charcoal bbq, soft drinks, and old-style party games. Everyone had loads of fun and the special event helped ease the boredom of isolation. Our director Leng said: “We had so much yummy food, and we couldn’t stop laughing. We were having so much fun no-one wanted the day to end.”

A VERY BIG THANKS TO JAN FOR HER GENEROSITY AND SUPPORT.



In the past few weeks we have received a number of donations directly into our bank account for which we are extremely grateful in these challenging times. To Gaye, Megan, Kereira, Anna and all others who have made donations with no reference data, we would like to say a big thank you, and we're sorry we don't have contact details to thank each and every one of you personally. The funds have been used to buy four 50 kilo bags of rice which should last about six weeks.

A BIG THANK YOU TO FERNANDA FOR HER PILATES INITIATIVE



One of the best outcomes of the difficulties presented by the Covid 19 pandemic has been the emergence of many heart-warming instances of human solidarity. One such instance has been promoted by our wonderful pilates teacher, Fernanda Cury, who has been tireless in her efforts to promote mental and physical health by practicing pilates on-line for her clients, and also setting up a Sunday morning stretching class. Many of Fernanda's clients, friends and associates wished to show their gratitude for the free Sunday class by contributing funds, so Fernanda generously decided to make these optional donations available to KH. So a moment of Sunday morning relaxation and physical well-being, which unites people from Australia to Brazil, has provided extra funds for KH during this economically challenging period. We very much appreciate this act of generosity.

CHOUM REAB LEA until next time.

For more activities and news about everyday life in Siem Reap check out our **Kampuchea House Facebook** page.

