

Friends of Tribob Children's Swimming Program - May 2010

The summer is speeding past and we are already at the end of the second program of 2010. Due to the huge generosity of a local business woman, this year we now have our own swimming pool which has been built in one of the local primary schools. Having access to this makes a huge difference. We can hold more lessons and classes can be more varied and fun (and noisy!) than they can be in hotel swimming pools. We now have more local teachers and a constant stream of highly experienced volunteers. Therefore we have been able to significantly increase the number of children taught this year. Already 300 children have completed the course this summer and we aim to train 400 more before the end of the season. We also have increased our focus on advanced swim training. We now have 45 children taking part in mini-squads where they are increasing their endurance and learning all swimming strokes. We are organising some inter school competitions where they can show off their new skills.



Look at our new pool. Isn't it brilliant! It comes complete with changing rooms and showers.

I think that you have probably heard quite enough from me in previous newsletters so it should be much more interesting for you to hear some comments from various other people involved in the program. Here are some thoughts from some children on the program and one of our current volunteers.

Students's story



From zero to hero - the boys take a breather in their advanced swimming class. Last year they could not swim at all, now 200m and counting.

Meet Mãn, Cường, Tú and Lợi. These boys attend Chu Văn An school in Hoi An. Their school is close to some major rivers and the area is prone to flooding during the monsoon season. . Boys of their age are in one of the highest risk categories for drowning. These boys all completed our basic swimming program in 2009. They had no swimming ability when they joined us. They are now swimming 200m twice a week and learning all swimming strokes. When asked why they liked the swimming classes they all agreed that it was great for their health and fitness. Mãn, one of whose school classmates drowned last year, said he felt happy to know that if one of his friends ever were in danger in the water, he could now save them.

Volunteer's story – AJ Stewart-Vibart from Esperance , Australia

The kids love coming to swim class. In fact I have never before worked with children who are so determined to learn to swim. They enjoy the whole experience of coming to swim class. It would also be great if we could extend the classes to adults. I quickly realised that not only do the children not know how to swim, but the adults also do not know and desperately want to learn. After being here in Hoi An and conversing with locals once they know what we are here for , instead of saying “you buy from me?” they say “you teach me swimming?” Although let me just say that the shopping is great and the food is fantastic! What I really enjoyed was every day teaching those kids, their smiles were bigger than Ben Hur. Their politeness, their appreciatevess and effort was outstanding. I was amazed! Even the ones who really struggled with their strokes gave 100%, it was amazing to watch and be involved with.



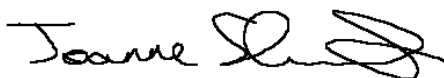
Volunteer AJ gets kitted out for a hard day at the office!



180 proud kids on program one graduation day..

Many thanks to all our supporters. Particularly to Barclays Capital, Vietnam Swans, Palm Garden Resort, all our volunteers (Kim, Glen and Liam Baker, AJ Stewart-Vibart, Tanya Carmont and Lee Nicholls) and to everyone who has donated time, equipment or money to the program. There have been a few recent stark reminders of why we are here. Now summer is upon us, unfortunately, drownings and near drownings are becoming more frequent. In recent weeks here in Hoi An, we have had 2 deaths by drowing and one near miss. Please understand that your contribution to the program has a real impact on the lives of people living in this community.

Feel free to forward this update onto anyone you think would be interested. Alternatively, if you want to be removed from receiving any more updates just send me an email. If you are interested in assisting with the program in any way please do contact me.



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This is a Tribob initiative supported by

