2013

Discover Yourself Summer Camp Report

Guangzhou English Training Center for the Handicapped
www.canpei.org
July 2013
The Discover Yourself Summer Camp, initiated in 2008, is an effort by Guangzhou English Training Center for the Handicapped (GETCH) to empower youth with disabilities to develop self-confidence; provide opportunities to form peer relationships with other students with disabilities; and expand awareness of important opportunities in education, work, and life.

To support this purpose and, to provide information to the broader disability community about the efficacy of such programs, GETCH conducts an evaluation of the project.

The Discover Yourself Summer Camp has three overarching goals: to enhance program development and capacity-building in disability agencies, to identify effective youth development programs targeting youth with disabilities, and to disseminate information about program planning, implementation, and evaluation nationally in China. Figure 0 depicts the overall Discover Yourself Summer Camp program model.

Since 2008 the Discover Yourself Summer Camp, organized by GETCH, has worked with over 200 youth with disabilities from across China. Participants come from different parts of China.

23 students from Anhui, Fujian, Guangdong, Henan joined the 2013 summer program. Two thirds were high school students, one third were college students. The cost for the camp was covered by in-kind donations and fundraising efforts organized by GETCH. In addition, 6 students from GETCH and 1 former camper worked on the program leadership team led by GETCH staff.

Lasting for 7 days, the 2013 summer camp included several trainings on leadership, communication, teambuilding, on disability and society, visits to 2 companies (Mars and HSBC), a project where students are trained to use flip cameras to create videos about their life experiences, and a few outings in Guangzhou.

For 2014 summer, GETCH intends to bring the camp to 1-2 other agencies outside of Guangzhou and work with local partners to organize and plan local summer camps. As well, partnership with university programs from abroad, may also be a direction that the camp would like to move.
2013 Discover Yourself Summer Camp Report

DYSC Program Map

<Context>
20-25 youth with disabilities from across China, ages 16-22;
1 former camper, 6 students from GETCH as student leaders;
7 days in Guangzhou

<Mission>
Youth with disabilities in China have few opportunities to be independent, to work alongside other youth and adults with disabilities, and to consider options for their personal development and for their future.

The goal of Discover Yourself Summer Camp is to:
1. Develop self-confidence
2. Form peer relationships with other youth with disabilities
3. Expand awareness of opportunities (in education, work, and life)

<Outputs>
Leadership, teambuilding, communication workshops
Disability rights and social inclusion workshop
Video-making workshop
Company tours and group outings
Daily discussion to explore identity, personal stories

<Expected Outcomes>

Discover Self
*Improve Skills:* Video-making, communication, leadership, teamwork

Discover Others
*Connect to Peers:* Make friends with disabilities; Learn about disability theory

Discover Society
*Identify New Opportunities:* Go out and meet professionals from different backgrounds, career paths

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Film-making

Led by two professional film-makers, video training aimed to teaching students how to tell their stories and capture events even using a portable flip camera or video camera on their cell phone. Training consisted of a short overview of frame and interview techniques, guided practice and review, demonstration of correct usage. Participants formed groups of 5-6 and made a wide-range of videos expressing their stories through autobiography, nonfiction, and fiction, and received positive and constructive feedback from trainers.

Visit to Mars and HSBC Incorporated

Participants also split into two groups to visit Mars Information Services Department and HSBC. During the tours, participants had opportunities to learn more about the company histories and policies (including hiring policies), shadow and talk with employees (including employees with disabilities). Following the tours, the two groups convened to discuss further about their experiences and reflections on their own aspirations and concerns regarding work in the future.

Quotations

*I love the film-making workshop very much* and the videos made by the small group give me a very deep impression. It is my first time to realize that a lot of things seem very simple, but we need to struggle to do it if we want to make it successful. ----Camper

I am so surprised *though I am a person with disability, I can also make a great film*. ----Camper

Before summer camp, I thought if I could find a job, then it is enough. *After summer camp, I think I can be better and I should pursue a better life.* ----Camper

*It is my first time to make so many friends with disabilities.* We shared our story with each other so that I discover and improve myself. ----Camper

The company is very meaningful. For all campers, *it is a good chance for all campers to learn interviewing skills* and how to become a good staff in company. ----Student Leader
Evaluation Activities and Findings

Complete preprogram and post-program and final evaluation data from the surveys was available for all 22 of the participants. Participant survey and observation data were augmented with interview data from the participants. Mid-way through the program, GETCH Foundation staff selected 6 participants who were considered representative of various factors (school, family background, medical perspectives, gender) affecting individuals with disabilities. As data collection for the follow-up evaluation is still pending, the following findings should only be considered preliminary.

Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data From</th>
<th>Gathered</th>
<th>Summarized</th>
<th>Analyzed</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test Survey</td>
<td>July 21</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>November – December</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>July 22-23</td>
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<td>Observations</td>
<td>July 23 -24 Film Workshop</td>
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<td>July 26 Disability Theory Workshop</td>
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<td>Post-test Survey</td>
<td>July 26</td>
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<td>Final Survey</td>
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Evaluation focus:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Evaluation will focus on capturing</th>
<th>Method for collecting data</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase in knowledge of disability theory</td>
<td>Survey, observation, interview</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development of self esteem, cooperation, conflict resolution, leadership, relationships with peers, problem solving, motivation to learn</td>
<td>Survey, observation, interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of confidence in communication through utilizing technology</td>
<td>Survey, observation, interview</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expansion of awareness of opportunities in education, work, and life</td>
<td>Survey, observation, interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with program</td>
<td>Survey, observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective activities and why</td>
<td>Survey, observation, interview</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reference: Research for the Discover Yourself Summer Camp involved participants’ surveys, observations, and interviews. Survey Questions were based on evaluation tools published by YouthARTS Development Project, “Your Opinion Counts” Survey, Data Collection Implementation Guide Heather J. Clawson, Kathleen Coolbaugh.
Findings from the 2013 DYSC Evaluation

Findings from the 2013 DYSC Evaluation highlight pressing concerns for many youth with disabilities in China as well as improvement in confidence during the program relating to skills and to their futures.

Problems with Bullying and Discrimination in Schools

Majority of students surveyed indicated high levels of concern with need for changes in schools.

The areas that were identified as needing most urgent change: acceptance from peers, support from teachers, accessibility to school facilities or course materials were all rated consistently high by participants as impeding their personal development (see Figure 1, for each of these areas, 50% or more of participants indicated as urgently needing to change).

With regard to support from teachers, survey data shows an increase (20% more identified as an urgent need by the end of the program), suggesting that students may have been influenced from program workshops on disability and social inclusion as well as from hearing others’ experiences during the program. This suggests that students may also have developed heightened sensitivity to this through the program.

Despite differences in degree were reported, the majority of students indicated having had experiences of discrimination in school (see Figure 2).

During participant sharing as part of the “Tell Your Story” communication workshop, several students described an absence of support from teachers during their study or exams, and lack of intervention from bullying by fellow students.

Figure 1. Participant Attitudes toward Urgent Changes in Schools Necessary for Students with Disabilities.

Figure 2. Frequency of Reported Experience of Discrimination in School.
Improved Confidence in Presentation and Video-Making Skills

Majority of participants (50-60%) indicated initial levels of self-confidence and hopefulness about their futures that were high, despite the challenges in schools. Participants showed greatest gains in self-perceived ability to give presentations, and make videos about their own lives were evident after the program (29% and 32% respectively, see Figure 3). These were also indicated as gains by participants in the final survey.

Data from the pre-, post-survey regarding participant gains in communication and teambuilding did not show significant improvements after the program. This conflicts with student feedback in the final survey where 42% indicated improvements in communication and 60% indicated improvements in teambuilding after joining the program.

Improved Confidence about the Future

Findings from pre-, post-survey show improvement in attitudes among participants regarding their future as it relates to their disability. At the start of the program relatively high levels of concern were common for finding a suitable job and having a long-term relationship, attending college, feeling ashamed for their disability. Significant improvement was indicated across all areas (see figure 4).

Findings from pre-, post-survey show differing attitudes among participants regarding their future as it relates to their disability. As shown in figure 4, at the start of the program relatively high levels of concern were common for finding a suitable job and having a long-term relationship. Significant changes were reported across all measured areas.

Figure 3: Participant Perceptions Regarding Gains in Program-Related Skills.
Alongside this increased confidence after the program, participants showed greater motivation to connect to wider society. Greater numbers of participants (18-32%, see Figure 5) indicated willingness to contribute time and energy to the community, from recycling to neighborhood clean-up, beautification, helping other students.

These findings suggest that The Discover Yourself Summer Program was successful in meeting its goals of helping youth with disabilities develop self-confidence; provide opportunities to form peer relationships with other students with disabilities, expand awareness of important opportunities in education, work, and life.

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**Figure 4:** Participant Attitudes toward the Influence of Disability on Their Futures

**Figure 5:** Participants’ Willingness to Contribute to the Community

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Considering program goals and student survey remarks, areas to develop further in future programs include adaptation of content of disability training, communication, and teambuilding workshops to better suit the needs of students.

Participants show greater confidence about their abilities and their futures, but may not yet show significant change in their commitment to larger disability issues. For future programs, more consideration can be shown to how to further adapt disability training content (specifically, to how to communicate novel ideas about disability and society to youth in China).

Communication skill is another area to consider for further development on the program, spending additional time to focus on higher level skills for inquiry and for enlisting support from others. This may assist participants in further developing further opportunities in education, work, and life.

**Plans to Take DYSC to Other Cities in China**

In order to further the capacity of similar agencies focusing on disability and reach more youth with disabilities, from summer 2014, GETCH intends to launch 2 camps in partnership with other agencies and work alongside other disability organizations to hold additional summer camps outside of Guangzhou. As well, GETCH is seeking to connect with disability organizations, corporations, or university programs (domestic and international), as new partnerships will be vital to further the reach of DYSC in the coming year.

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