

Dear friends,

This month we welcomed our new IT teacher, celebrated Khmer New Year with AP and our families, finished our first parenting skills training classes and saw Sreythea participating at the Thailand Open Karate-Do Championship. This month we'd like to share the story of Kaka. We wish everyone a great new year! :)

Aziza's Place has a Karate Champion

It has been a very special week for Sreythea. From April 20th to 24th she has participated in the Thailand Open Karate-Do Championship 2017.

It was Sreythea's first time outside Cambodia! She travelled together with AP's Karate teacher Dek Penak and her cousin Sreyty to the annual tournament in Bangkok. The first days were mostly filled with training at the Huamark Stadium with the Cambodian National Team. On Sunday the 23rd it was finally her time to show her skills.

There, in a challenging tournament, a huge stadium and a crowd watching her every move... Sreythea impressed everyone! You can see one of her fight clips (it takes some time to load, Sreythea is in blue). Sreythea came out strong and won the bronze medal! We are all so proud of her achievement!

Thanks to your support we were able to provide Sreythea with a passport, a new karate outfit and a trip (together with Sreyty) to Bangkok, including accommodation. Also a special thanks to Dek Penak for teaching our children to such a high standard in karate. Let's see if others we already have 4 black belts) want to follow in Sreythea's footsteps.

Sreyty and Dek provided us with some nice pictures, we've collected them for you [here](#).



Sreythea with Sreyty and Dek

The story of... Kaka

Every month we want to share the story of one of Aziza's Place's children. We share the good and the bad, so you know who we are supporting and what challenges lie ahead of us and their families.



Kaka joined AP in August 2016 at the age of 6, following his older brother Yeak (11). They have 2 more siblings, a brother and a sister.

Kaka has a strong bond with his grandmother and currently lives at her house, with his parents just around the corner. His mother stays at home taking care of the other children and his stepfather collects plastic at the dumpsites for a living.

Upon joining AP, Kaka started going to the first grade in elementary school and has been making significant progress in the past 6 months. In general Kaka is a timid and quiet boy, but at the same time he can be very stubborn when he gets told to do things. We've seen some significant changes over the past months but he is starting fast and making good progress in the Khmer and English classes. He has been helping out his mom with the household chores and he is slowly becoming more self-assured and communicative with the staff and the other children.

Kaka gets sick regularly (with colds and fevers), but there is nothing serious we can pinpoint as a cause. We keep a close watch on him and he has regular health checks.

Last month he celebrated his 7th birthday with us.

Parenting skills training

As part of the Reintegration program, Aziza's Place has taken the initiative of organizing parenting skill classes for the families of our children. To make sure this is done in the best way possible we work together with ICS - an NGO focusing on improving Cambodian society through more skilled parenting. In March, ICS started with a series of 12 workshops at Aziza's Place to improve our families' parenting skills.

In the past 2 months the parents were invited to these weekly workshops, where they learned about child protection rights, detecting risk factors in their community (for example physical abuse), how to communicate within the family, the role of the parent towards the child, positive disciplinary actions, and many other skills...

Now that the first series of sessions are over we will follow up with the participants and see how they bring their training into practice. This training is definitely added value, so we will search for new training and set up more collaborations between the families and other NGOs in order to keep increasing the parenting and communication skills in the families.



Khmer New Year

Khmer New Year stretches across three days and is perhaps the most important festival and national holiday in Cambodia. It is based on the ancient horoscope, but also represents the end of the harvesting season. It is the time of the year for families to reunite and many Cambodians go back to the Provinces to spend quality time with their families. According to the Buddhist calendar, April 13th marks the start of the year 2561BE (Buddhist Era).

The day before closing for the holiday, we organized a party for our staff, teachers and children. We had an amazing time playing games, dancing, and enjoyed a nice dinner together.



Our social worker Mandy gave us a short explanation of the Hindu and Buddhist traditions which have given birth to the story and history of Khmer New Year. The three days are not just about bringing family together; it is also about sharing with the less fortunate and visiting the pagodas.

The children (and the adults) had so much fun playing 'dance around the chair', ending first with their hands behind their backs, bursting balloons held between two player's backs... And when we started to dance, several children clearly remembered the traditional moves they saw a week earlier at a demonstration at the skate park. Legs were flying in the air... :) More pictures on [Facebook](#).

Meet Borey, our new IT Teacher

Learning how to use a computer, a keyboard, the internet, Microsoft Word & Excel... These are basic skills any child needs to learn in today's digital world. Our children wouldn't get any exposure to this side of life if it wasn't for AP. So we put extra effort into making sure they catch up and develop these skills by the time they go to secondary school.

We are excited to introduce you to Noun Borey, our new IT teacher with a special drive to help underprivileged children. Borey obtained a Bachelor degree in IT and has been working for Doctors Without Borders for the past year. As he has recently started his own business, the part-time hours at AP fit perfectly with his schedule. This way he can still contribute to Cambodian society while pursuing his personal professional dream.

Today Borey [gave his first classes](#) to our youngest. Not an easy job (it was their first time on a computer), but he managed very well.

We wish him a warm welcome to our team!



Support us

When our new IT Teacher tested our computers, he came to the conclusion only 6 of them were still operational. In order to organize our classes efficiently, we need at least 8 computers. On top of that, some of our staff have been working on laptops that barely still operate. So we are in search of (budget for) 7 laptops/computers. If anyone wants to help us out by a fundraising or donation, please contact us!

Thank you for reading our stories and supporting us along our AP's and our NGO's journey! See you next month!