

Shanggao Social Welfare Institute Report: November 24, 2011

1. General Information

- a) **Institute Director:** Leng Weiming (冷伟明)
- b) **Institute Vice-Director:** Vice-Director Zhang (female, also head of the Foster Care Division)
- c) **Head of Amity Foster Care:** Grandma Li Xinxu (interviews all foster care families and writes follow up reports)
- d) **Number of Children:** There are more than 30 children, 10 of whom are in foster care sponsored by Altrusa through Amity and about 19 are in foster care sponsored by Holt.
- e) **Physical Exam and Vaccination Protocols:** Children return to the Institute each month for a physical exam and go to the nearest medical clinics for vaccinations.

2. Overall Impression

The number of children at the Shanggao Social Welfare Institute is smaller than previous times. The designated orphan room in the Institute is empty because a majority of the children live in foster homes. The foster families are exceptionally warm and loving towards these children and have great relationships with them. They are also experienced in hosting foster children and are able to make them more comfortable in their homes. The children have formed strong attachments to their foster families as well and receive the best care from their family members.

3. Interviews

- a) Met with our two “Hugging Grannies”



Grandma Li (a former kindergarten teacher) is in charge of the Amity projects in Shanggao and is also responsible for conducting the foster family interviews. During this visit, Grandma Li was visiting this child who is sponsored by Amity. Although she is deaf and both of her ears are deformed her foster family has discovered that she can hear some sounds very faintly. According to her foster mother and Grandma Li,

she is a very intelligent child. One time her foster mother became suddenly ill and fell on the ground. When this little girl saw what happened she ran over to her neighbors' home and brought them back with her to help. The neighbors took her mother to the hospital to recover and to this day, she thanks her foster child for saving her. Overall this girl is making a lot of progress and understands many things but still cannot fully communicate with her family. Grandma Li is instructing her foster family on how to improve her language abilities so that she will be able to communicate better with practice.



Picture 1



Picture 2

Grandma Ding Lingling is taking over Grandma Liu's duties because of her recent illness. Grandma Liu is currently recovering, but cannot continue her responsibilities as a Grandma. As a former orphanage nurse Grandma Ding is very familiar with the work of the Amity Grandmas and works hard at her job. She sometimes accompanies Grandma Li on her foster home visits to help her with physical therapy exercises, language training, or physical exams. Grandma Ding is already familiar with each foster family's situation and each child's development and adjusts her training (to the foster families) accordingly. In Picture 1, the foster child is still very young so Grandma Ding first plays with him and sets him at ease before she begins the exam. In Picture 2, the foster child has a learning disability and he cannot communicate very well, so Grandma Ding walks with him to make him feel comfortable and practices speaking with him at the same time. This child really likes Grandma Ding, especially when she pulls on his hands to walk, and they are able to happily talk with each other in simple phrases.

- b) Scholarship student (photo below): XF is now in her second year in high school. She has a very warm personality and her grades are excellent. She gets along well with her classmates and they all have fun together. Although the Senior 2 coursework is not very difficult and there is not much pressure on the students, this is the time to form good study habits to prepare for the College Entrance Exam next year. Xifeng is aware of this and so puts forth a lot of effort in her studies and makes sure she understands the material

thoroughly. If she has questions, she does not hesitate to ask her teacher or her classmates for help. Xifeng bikes to school every day and returns to her own dorm room in the orphanage when her classes are over.



- c) Met with our ten foster children and their families. We have some new children in care since four of our previously sponsored children have been adopted (one to the US in July, two to the US in October, and one to Norway in November). An individual report on each child will be sent to their sponsor but here are a few of our foster kids:



On the left a five month old who was initially malnourished but is now gaining weight with her foster mother's attentive care. And on the right a nine year old with low IQ who attends kindergarten where she is very helpful in class, gets along well with classmates and her teachers all like her.



18 month old girl with congenital heart disease, initially with some delays but now starting to say some simple phrases.



On the left a seven month old girl who had surgery for her cleft lip and palate four months ago. And on the right a 13 year old girl with some eye problems and other special needs who attends Shanggao Special Education School where she is active in school groups. Her foster mother makes sure she does her homework each day before she goes out to play.

- d) Needs: The New Year is fast approaching and the Shanggao SWI is applying for US \$317 to purchase new clothes as a gift for ten foster children and one school children under sponsorship.