

## Alternative Education Institution - Foundation for Children (FFC)

### Moo Baan Dek

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#### Prologue

Moo Baan Dek has been established to implement an education different from the mainstream one which tends to emphasize class study and to encourage students to compete and exploit each other.

Moo Baan Dek is perhaps one of the first schools to adopt alternative education in modern time Thailand. Initially, it was operated based on the pedagogy adopted at the UK's Summer Hill School whose emphasis is placed on bestowing on students rights, freedom and self-determination. Children are not supposed to be indoctrinated by adults and the child's emotion, imagination and play is more important than studying in classroom. It was quite a novel idea in those days and has stirred up debate and argument.

It has led to the increasing realization of the rights of the child as to how much intervention into the child's life can be made by their parents and how much a child can determine their own fate. Apart from other fundamental rights of the child (including the use of violence against a child, child labor, and the right to basic education, all children should be entitled to protection of their four basic necessities including three meals of food per day, healthcare, and safety care.

Work by Moo Baan Dek and other projects under the Foundation for Children (FFC) has raised public awareness about issues concerning children and public policies geared toward addressing the needs of the children in the end. For example, in 1982, a national policy was issued to address child malnutrition (as mentioned in Ban Tantanwan's report), in 1991, it has led to a national policy on the rights of the child, in 1992, it has led to the Act for Student Lunch Program and in 2003, the Child Protection Act.

Key to the mission of Moo Baan Dek is an advocacy for alternative education in Thailand upheld by the constitution and other legal provisions, for example, the inclusion of informal education in the 1997 Constitution, the promulgation of the National Education Act 1999 (to recognize home school), the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand 2007 which incorporated alternative education and lately the Constitution 2017 on education reform.

The implementation of Moo Baan Dek in the beginning can be divided into three components;

1. Relief work for orphans and poor children
2. Alternative education for marginalized children

3. Advocacy on children and alternative education(homeschool= parents having the right to manage the education of their children)

To advance the implementation by Moo Baan Dek, in its new strategies, the Foundation for Children (FFC) wants to develop Moo Baan Dek into a resource center for education and teacher training to ensure marginalized and vulnerable children have access to alternative education based on Summer Hill's pedagogy, Buddhist education and psychoanalysis. An emphasis shall be placed on freedom of the child and the involvement of the child and the community to develop the kind of education that responds to the child's emotion, mental and intellectual development.

It is also expected that Moo Baan Dek will become a community of education that advocates self-reliance and helps human being live harmoniously with nature. People can learn to grow their own food using natural farming to produce safe food and to generate alternative energy which is clean, economical, and dependable including solar energy.

Therefore, Moo Baan Dek aims to become a resource center to promote learning and personnel development to provide alternative education and self-reliant community and such achievement shall be further expanded into the community and ASEAN later.

To achieve the strategies and actions plan in 2018, Moo Baan Dek has planned the following activities;

1. **Primary education** An effort shall be made to rehabilitate and develop special need children, as many as 80 of them, to help them cope with their emotional instability and to address their lack of ability such the artificial LD children (who are not able to learn) will receive the new kind of learning process that focusses on helping them to read and write. And for the authentic LD children who suffer from brain damage, they shall receive treatment from neurologists to ensure they can help themselves and do not become burden to society.
2. Normal children: The children will be encouraged to learn from hand-on experience and to explore solutions using internet based media.
3. Teacher recruitment: The teachers shall be recruited based on their language skills apart from Thai language and their being able to become life coach.
4. Teacher training to enable the teachers to become facilitators with self-criticism to capitalize on Buddhist education, in conjunction with farming, school council, sociology, math and language.
5. **Highschool** A highschool alternative education will be opened with its own curriculum emphasizing experiential education including craftsmanship, (furniture making to make book cabinets for a project under FFC, children's story trolley), manufacturing of food (to supply Ban Tantanwan and the Children's HomeKIndergarten), childcare, social work, hospitality and cooking.

6. **Science** with an emphasis on exploration, practice, integrated with agriculture, i.e., how to measure acidity and basicity of soil, and how each type of soil is suitable for different plants, the exploration of the origin of each plant and the exploration of culture in such countries, how to calculate the area suitable for horizontal and vertical farming.
7. **Life Science** Children will be divided into groups to exchange their problems and brainstorm on how to salvage themselves and the children shall get trained to become youth leaders and live with ethnic children. Youth camp will be organized to help them learn to respect rights, discipline, group work and to collaborate in different occasions.
8. Training teachers and occupational teachers to conduct Mind Map to help the children organize their thinking and how they store information and how to understand neurochemicals that may help brain to function better.
9. After highschool, the children will be encouraged to further their education at the tertiary level. They will have a chance to meet with people who have been successful in their study and their career in collaboration with the academic division of the Foundation for Children (FFC).

Rajani Dhongchai

Director, Moo Baan Dek – Foundation for Children (FFC)

16 January 2019

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### Ban Tantawan

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Ban Tantawan, the second home of a young child when their lives begin.

Ban Tantawan was founded in 1978 by Ms. Siriporn Skrobaneek who realized acute malnutrition among children from newborn to three years old in Thailand. Such malnutrition was prevalent among children in rural and urban area including in slum area. They were poor children with their parents eking out their living from hand to mouth. Having to earn enough just to buy food, they could not care much about how nutritious such food for children.

Ban Tantawan has thus been established to offer rehabilitation for malnourished children referred from hospital. We have found then a lot of them who suffered acute malnutrition and they have been referred to Ban Tantawan for rehabilitation. There was not much information about the overall picture of malnutrition crisis in Thailand then. When Moo Baan Dek was founded in 1979, it helped to dawn on the public that malnutrition could really affect the child's academic performance.

From 1978-1997, Ban Tantawan has found the number of fatal malnutrition has been on a decline. Still, many suffer from malnutrition which has made them become disabled. Other problems start to impact preschool children including health problems, their being abandoned by their families, their being subject to physical and mental abuse by their families, negligence that has left them unattended and lack proper care. Meanwhile, more children are born from mother who use drug during their pregnancy. Most of the mothers lack an education being unable to find jobs, they have decided to get involved with drug dealing or they themselves have become drug users. Their children have to suffer delays in their development, physically, mentally, emotionally and intellectually and have become children with special needs.

From 1997 until now, Ban Tantawan has expanded our services to reach out to more children who have been subject to abuse, abandonment, unwanted pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, drug use and imprisonment. Their elder relatives have increasingly sought for help from the authorities and FFC's Ban Tantawan.

Implementation: To implement our strategic plan and action plan, we have done the following in the first half of 2018.

1. Our care has been delivered based on the principles of eating, hugging, massaging, yoga, playing, storytelling, and sleeping;

Eating= Consuming nutritious food for three meals per day including supplementary such as juice, fruit and sweet

Children from newborn to six years old are fed with power milk whereas from six months to one and a half years are offered soft diet and juice.

Hugging= to bestow on them love, warmth, hug when they play, hug when they read and hug when they sing.

Massaging= Massage to stimulate small muscles and large muscles, 30 minutes every morning, to help them grow up strong

Their strength is assessed by having them using their fingers to lift an object and to let them walk and see how that fits their age.

Yoga= Relaxing yoga to help reduce stress for a child from two and a half years upward, they shall have yoga twice a week.

Playing= Interacting with a child through peek a boo play, chatting, learning to pronounce word, and catch-up

Storytelling= Reading stories from pictorial books, musicals, filling in the afternoon timetable.

Sleeping=At least 12hours per day, two during daytime, ten nighttime since sleeping help to stimulate the child's growth hormone

## 2. Transform Ban Tantanwan from a shelter to a "Children's Home"

Adult-child relationship is more like "mother and child".

Preschool children (newborn to 1 years and 6 months): 16

6.00-7.30 Wake up, hugging each other, morning greeting, bathing, drinking milk

7.30-8.30 Massage to stimulate growth, hugging, looking in the eye when talking

8.30-10.30 Break into small groups, play freely, sculpture, drawing, running, word-by-word teaching to help the child convey meaning

There are special need children in this groups, one with autism, one with down syndrome, and two others with emotional trauma, they need rehabilitation and have to be monitored and evaluated every 6 months.

10.30-11.00 Drinking milk, napping

Note: Children under one year have different times for their eating and napping. Not all eat and sleep at the same time. It depends of each child's need.

A one-year-old child is fed with supplementary food and soft diet, and then milk.

They can wake up at different times.

About 14.00, children under 1 year and 2 months learn to crawl and trot and play with toys in their room. Staffers in other position need to help raise the children during their free time, about one or two hours per day.

1 year-3-month children play with older children in the field until 15.30 they will be rounded up and continue to play indoor.

17.30 Bathing, resting in their room, free play

19.00 Sleeping

Change from sleeping on bunk bed with the child sleeping on top and adult below, to sleeping side by side and to hug each other, to chat and kid to stimulate the brain and joy.

Older children (1 year and 6 months to 3 years and 6 months): 24

6.00-6.45 Bathing, tooth brushing

7.00-7.45 Breakfast

8.00-9.00 Storytelling, learn to speak short sentences

9.00-9.30 Snack, milk and fruit

9.30-11.00 Activities to stimulate five sensorial experiences and dexterity, practice rhythm movement, activities to stimulate small muscles including picking, holding, pouring, manipulating small to large object, learning about organs and self-care, learning names of utensils, food, fruit found in daily life, Identify objects with seven colors, objects, short and long, large and small

11.00-12.00 Lunch and bathing

12.00-14.00 Siesta

14.00-15.30 Free play

15.30-16.00 Snack

16.00-17.00 Playing using large and small muscles to stimulate sensorial experiences, group play in playground

17.00-17.30 Supper

17.30-18.30 Free play

18.30-19.30 Bathing, bedtime

19.30-20.00 Yoga, massage and hugging before bedtime

20.00-6.00 Night sleep

Note: There are four special need children in this groups including two with delays in all aspects, two with ADHD and aggressiveness. Others have to be subject to evaluation every six months.

3. Adults have to come to term with natural growth at different ages of the child

Ban Tantawan has signed an MOU with Mahidol's National Institute Development of Children and Families to train our staff and to have regular assessment including medical checkup of all staffers.

4. Special need children are screened for rehabilitation services offered by rehabilitation experts and pediatricians from Mahidol University, psychologist and psychiatrist from the Mahidol's National Institute Development of Children and Families and Ramathibodi Hospital's Child and Adolescent Mental Health Rajanagarindra Institute.
5. Training teachers to learn to use board games and to use a special room equipped with tools to help develop the child's mind and brain development in all aspects to get them prepared before preschool study. This part is run by the Foundation for Children (FFC) to prepare them for Moo Baan Dek's primary school.

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16 January 2562