


## Little Creators Festival ～ WA



Report

March 2022

Grant:  **EXPO'70 FUND**  
(公財) 関西・大阪21世紀協会

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**Little Creators**

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## About Little Creators

Little Creators provides children who grow up in disadvantaged environments, especially those who have to live in foster homes, with opportunities to express themselves and meet and interact with people from various backgrounds. We use art (expressive activities) to help them develop dreams, wisdom, and strength to overcome invisible obstacles and live in society.

Until the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, art workshops at foster homes were the base of our activities. As an extension of these workshops, we had provided opportunities to interact with children overseas, travel to foreign countries, and present the artwork created in the workshops. The “ChildAid Asia” concert series, held once every two years, consisted of children from foster homes, children with musical talents selected by audition, and children from overseas. It was a concert of cooperation between children who met for the first time, overcoming differences in language, age, and environment. Considering that it became a regular occurrence that many performers volunteered to work behind the scenes at the next concert, the process of concert production was meaningful, or at least memorable, for the children.



Since the pandemic, concerts and daily art workshops at the foster homes have been challenging to organize. Not giving up, we presented the “ChildAid International 2020 Virtual” in May 2020 and the “ChildAid Asia Christmas Edition ‘Spirit of Giving’ ” with related organizations in Asia in December of the same year. These events received a great response, raised donations, and supported the development of IT environments in foster homes. Still, for various reasons, we were unable to include children in foster homes much. Therefore, the “Little Creators Festival - WA” was planned and implemented throughout FY2021 with the children in foster homes as the primary focus. As usual, physical activities were challenging, but the festival turned out to be fun.

## Little Creators Festival ~ WA

“The Little Creators Festival – WA” was based on the idea that children, the bearers of the future, should realize that they have equal opportunities and are equally important to society, no matter their current environment. In planning it, we hoped to help children become familiar with the digital world, even if only gradually, while still valuing the work at hand.

Title: Little Creators Festival – WA

Theme: WA

When we hear the sound “WA” in Japanese, various feelings come to mind, such as “circle,” “harmony,” and “self”. In this day and age, when people need to live individually or in isolation, we explored the theme of “WA” to connect with others.

Objective: To use art (expressive activities) to bring together children (under 18 years old) from various living environments in Japan and abroad and disseminate their works as an online cultural festival.

Outline: This online cultural festival was organized to bring together children from diverse backgrounds, including foster homes, ordinary families, and overseas. Since it was difficult to physically meet in one place due to the spread of COVID-19, online conference systems such as Zoom were used to create opportunities for participants from Japan and overseas to interact with each other. The festival promoted mutual understanding by encouraging exchanges through the living culture of each country and artwork created by the children and made them realize the value of using IT technology as a tool.

The festival had the five pillars of art, dance, music, food culture, and interviews, and we presented the works and production process on the website. 7,609 people accessed the website, far exceeding the initial target of 3,000.

Thank you, participants and cooperators, for your collaboration and kind thoughts.  
Your support means a lot to needy children and us!

Period: Activity period May-January 2021  
Distribution period February 11-March 21, 2022

URL:	<a href="https://online.childdaidasia.com/">https://online.childdaidasia.com/</a>
Participants:	123 participants from 7 countries (Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Mexico, Japan)
Fee:	Free of charge to participate and to view the festival
Cooperated by	Misono Kodomo-no-ie foster home Tokyo Shakujii Gakuen foster home Little Arts Academy (Singapore) CHIJ Kellock Primary School (Singapore) Barnabas Home (Malaysia, foster home) Embassy of the Republic of Singapore in Japan Embassy of the Republic of Liberia in Japan
Supported by	The RICE Co., Ltd. (Singapore) NPO The Smiles (Malaysia) Yayasan Asa Sehati Indonesia (Indonesia)
Oversea Producers:	Guru Simmar (Singapore) Shazna Sim (Singapore) Ralph Lim (Malaysia) Ferdinand Marsa (Indonesia) May Parichat (Thailand) Wishwani Amarakoon (Sri Lanka)
Web Designed by	Takuhito Fujita, Ikuo Murahara (RITA LLC)
Grant:	The Commemorative Fund for the Japan World Exposition
Special Sponsor:	Suntory Beverage & Food APAC (Singapore)
Presented by	NPO Little Creators

## Little Creators Festival Visual Art

### ■ Misono Kodomo-no-le foster home

Little Creators holds monthly creative workshops for elementary school students at Misono Kodomo-no-le foster home. 2021 saw many months when we could not conduct the workshops due to COVID-19, but the children still created many works. In the first half of the year, the “Singapore-Japan Digital Art Exchange” (supported by the Japanese Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Singapore) was held in three sessions with children from Little Arts Academy in Singapore. The children’s drawings were digitized and viewed in the form of a virtual exhibition. The latter half of the program included a target game made of cardboard, a surprise greeting card, and a snow globe made of paper plates. Participants experienced the digital and analogue worlds.



### ■ Scroll

Even though we live in same Asia, the sea is not the only thing separating us now. While the spread of COVID-19 has made it challenging to communicate with children overseas, we planned this picture scroll project to stay connected through a warm analogue connection. Children from Singapore, Malaysia, and Japan painted various scenes of each country’s landmarks, costumes, food culture, and lifestyle along an ocean-like light blue line in a 10-meter scroll. The picture scrolls presented on video were viewed 114 times. During the festival, children from the three countries interacted online. After participants introduced their names and favourite colour in English, they viewed the completed works together and introduced pictures from their homelands.



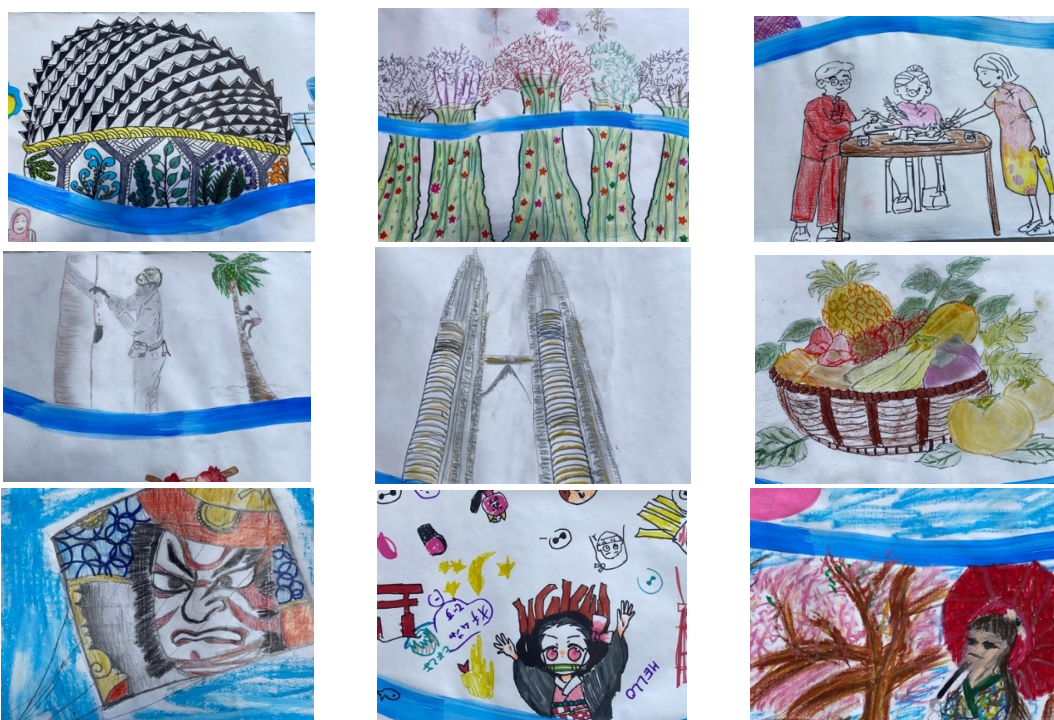


Participants:

〈Singapore〉 Riyan Satria Bin Mohamad Rizal, Toh Li Ting, Ang Jing Zhi Cherry, Putri Arissa Binte Mohamed Khairul Anwar, Joshua Wang Xi Yue, Angela Tuang, Khoo Kang Zhe Eugene, Art Benito Wan, Akil Ashadeen Bin Mohammad Rahiddeer, Thum Tien Yu Ryo (Little Arts Academy)

〈Malaysia〉 Abed, Vekines, Dineswar, Darwin, Ezecheil, Shadrach, Nivitha, Joel, Kirtina (Barnabas Home)

〈Japan〉 Tae, Mei, Yuzuka, Megumi, Karen, Chikako, Sakura, Suzu, Nanami, Karen, Shouki, Mao (Misono Kodomo-no-le)



■ Visual Image of the Festival (Creation: Yuna Direction: Keiko Motonaga)

“For me, art is about self-expression and being alive, itself.”

The main visual for the Little Creators Festival, which is on the cover of this report, was created by Yuna, who had spent a short stay in Singapore with the Little Creators program when she was in the first grade of junior high school. The competition’s winner is to draw a picture on a transparent umbrella. Since that time, she has been interested in art and continues to create in her way.

She thinks “that the world began to look for a different kind of PEACE than the peace that existed before the pandemic of COVID-19 started. The energetic trunk that lives for hundreds and thousands of years, the merged splendor of the leaves and wind colliding and swaying, and the world with less connection. I drew this picture with the idea of reaffirming WA.”

## Little Creators Festival Dance

The dance was a four-country collaboration. Children from Singapore, Malaysia, and Japan danced together to “Feel the Beat,” a song composed and performed by Indonesian children, with choreography by children from each country. Indonesia provided the music in July, but due to the different situations of the spread of the new coronavirus in each country, the three countries couldn’t practice simultaneously, and they had to give up the exchange in the production process. Instead, we asked the following three questions to the participants and listed the answers during the festival.

1. how do you feel when you are dancing?
2. what were the areas in which you worked hard and devised this dance?
3. what do you want to convey to the audience?

The dance videos were mixed and presented, and the dance videos made in each country were also made available for viewing and were viewed a total of 500 times during the festival.



During the festival, dancers from the three countries had an online exchange session. After they gave their names and reasons why they liked to dance, they introduced each other’s dances in the following sections.

1. how many days and hours of practice did you have before recording? Was the new coronavirus affecting practice?
2. the Malaysian team seems to dance in the traditional style with traditional costumes, so please explain.
3. please tell us where the Japanese team recorded the dance and explain the site.

4. the Singapore team seems to have great chemistry in dance; how long have they been dancing together?
5. what did you think of the dances of the teams from other countries?
6. if you had such a chance again, what would you like to try?

In response to question 6, some said they would like to meet physically next time and create a dance together after learning the dances of each other's countries.

Participants:

<Indonesia> composed by Ricardo Wayong,  
Performed by Alicia Callista, Fanuel  
Graciello Sidharta, Kalonica Nicx

<Singapore> choreographed by Subastian  
Tan, performed by Bazil Khalaf Bin Basir,

Marsya Nashmia Bte Muhd Sateria, Maya Nabilah Binte Muhammad Sateria, Obi Bonarr  
Chukwuma Jnr, Vaishnavi (Divers 10)

<Malaysia> choreographed by Sandhya, Amiesha, Sheela Raghavan, Performed by  
Sandhya, Amiesha, Shavena, Tinithra, Swetha, Gopika, Pooveneswary, Manisha,  
Ashrita (Mahavidya Dance Theatre)

<Japan> choreographed by Minako Niikura, Asaha Saito, performed by Shakuji Gakuen  
Dance Team





## Little Creators Festival Music

Children who won auditions in Japan and children selected by the producers of related organizations overseas performed "Snow," "Canon," and "Wind (original piece)" with Asuto Kitamura, who once performed in "ChildAid Asia" presented by Little Creators as music director. Each child recorded their performance, and Little Creators edited and presented it online. The total number of views was 536. In addition, "Bridge across the Sea" (theme song for "ChildAid Asia"), recorded in 2019 to commemorate the 10th anniversary of Little Creators, was also distributed.

Due to COVID-19, they had to give up online rehearsals during the production process, and the recording had to be done at different timing from country to country. Instead, we asked the participants to respond to the following questionnaire and presented their answers during the festival.

1. what areas were you worked hard on and devised in this performance?
2. what do you want to convey to the audience?
3. how do you feel when you are performing?



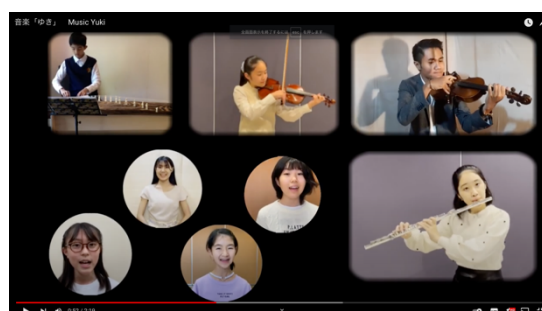
The young musicians met each other during the festival at an online exchange. They introduced their names and favourite composers and then watched the three video works to confirm the difficulties and joys they experienced during the recording process. Typical comments were: "I realized how difficult it was not to be able to play

while feeling each other," and "I was looking forward to editing to see how the piece would turn out and was thrilled to see the finished product. If given the same opportunity again in the future, some said they would "like to try more famous songs, pop songs, or musical songs," and "would like to try traditional music from other countries.

### ■ YUKI - Snow

Arranged by Asuto Kitamura

Sung by  
    <Sri Lanka> Mishane Nimneth  
    <Japan> Yurara Ohno, Kazuki Otake, Momoko Shikino, Nami Koike, Mio Negishi



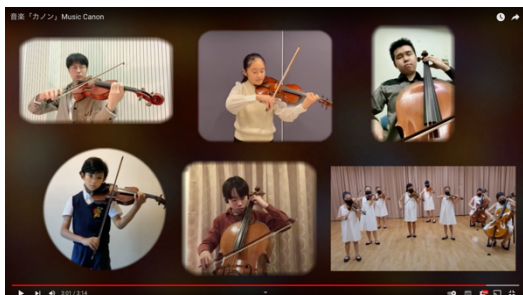
Performed by <Indonesia> Fakhri Pratama  
<Japan> Yuko Akashi, Kotoko Akashi, Cyrus Duarah

### ■Canon

Composed by Johann Pachelbel

Arranged by Asuto Kitamura

Performed by <Singapore> CHIJ Kellock String Ensemble (Abigail Lau, Kishea Chua, Maya Go, Larissa Lim, Janelle Tan, Janaelia Shim, Tara Neo Lai, Marissa Wong)  
<Malaysia> Goh Wen Chih  
<Indonesia> Ariel Judarta  
<Japan> Aadi SUarah, Kotoko Akashi, Kanchi Yamamoto



### ■KAZE - Wind

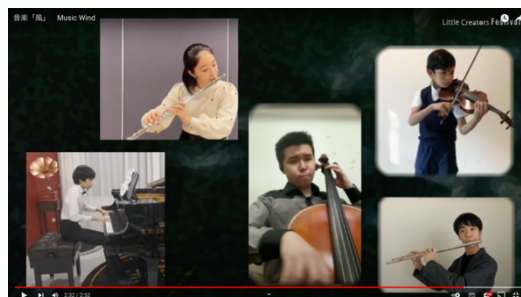
“Wind” is an original work arranged by Asuto Kitamura based on four melodies selected from the eight or sixteen bars of melodies that were publicly solicited for the festival.

Melody creation: Sakurako Kitayama, Hinata Takahashi, Hitomi Fujita, Uki Mino

Arranged by Asuto Kitamura

Performed by <Malaysia> Goh Wen Chih  
<from China living in Thailand> Yuqiao Chen  
<Japan> Yuko Akashi, Aadi Duarah, Yoshiaki Suzuki

Yuqiao Chih wanted his friends and relatives in China to see this video. Still, even on a virtual level, the border wall is high, and the Little Creators website and YouTube in Japan do not allow viewing in China. So, Yuqiao Chih’s mother put it on SNS, viewed it 1,433 times in China.

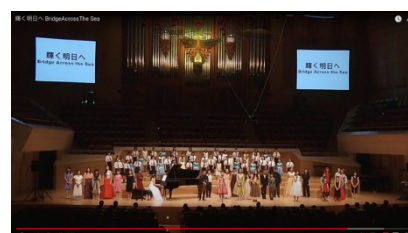


### ■Bridge across the Sea (ChildAid Asia theme song recorded in 2019)

Composed by Shigeru Yawata

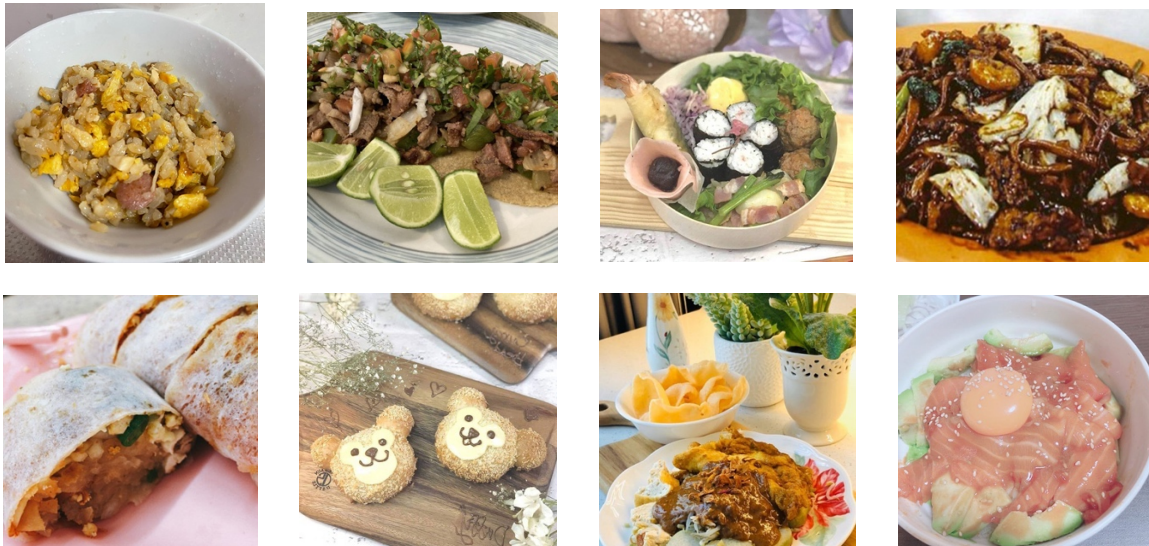
Lyrics: Izumi Miyamoto, Brian Magrudar

Sung by <Singapore> CHIJ Kellock Primary School Choir  
<Japan> ChildAid Asia Alumni



## Little Creators Festival Food Culture

The plan was to introduce “dishes to be proud of” by children from different countries. Initially, the goal was to conduct cooking workshops at foster homes in Singapore, Malaysia, and Japan and organize an online exchange by actually cooking the dishes. We had to abandon our original plan because it was not safe to gather children to cook together due to COVID-19, and the timing of the spread differed from country to country. Instead, we asked young people who have related to Little Creators to send in “dishes to be proud of” and continued to receive submissions throughout the festival. 6 people from Mexico, Malaysia, and Japan entered with 8 dishes. We asked them to provide the dish’s name, ingredients, what they would be proud to introduce to children in other countries and their innovations for each entry.



Participants:

<Malaysia> Siew Fun

<Indonesia> Alicia Callista

<Mexico> Susana Jano

<Japan> Yuta, Emiri, Natsumi

## Little Creators Festival Interview

A program to visit embassies in Japan was to help children from foster homes broaden their horizons. Children from Misono Kodomo-no-le foster homes visited the Embassy of the Republic of Singapore in Japan, while children from Shakuji Gakuen foster home visited the Embassy of the Republic of Liberia in Japan. The visits were presented in a short video at the festival, which was viewed 131 times.

### ■ Misono Kodomo-no-le



H.E. Mr Peter Tan Hai Chuan, Ambassador of the Embassy of the Republic of Singapore in Japan, together with Secretary Nicholas Quah and Ms Asako Harasawa, invited 21 people, mostly elementary school students from Misono Kodomo-no-le, on Christmas Eve. After Mr Quah's presentation in Japanese, 4 representatives asked questions to His Excellency in Japanese, and His Excellency answered in Japanese. The children

listened intently to His Excellency talk about how hard he had studied Japanese and how happy he was to be in Japan and work for the benefit of both countries. The children gave them a Christmas ornament made by themselves to show their appreciation, and the Embassy gave them an even bigger souvenir. After asking everyone for their business cards, the children headed back home.

“Little Creators invited us to visit the Embassy of the Republic of Singapore with 21 children. This Embassy visit made us get a feel for the country of Singapore and learn about the workings of the Embassy. On the day of the visit, the children looked nervous. But they were warmly welcomed by H.E. Ambassador and listened to his talk with smiles on their faces. The Embassy staff spoke in Japanese and were easy to understand. The children were delighted to hear about Japanese anime and receive the embassy staff's business cards and souvenirs. We were able to ask questions about food in Singapore and the children's daily lives. It was a fun time of learning. Seeing the diplomacy work of connecting countries, some children set their dreams for the future. Thank you very much for this valuable experience.”

Ryosuke Nogiwa, Misono Kodomo-no-le Staff



## ■Shakuji Gakuen

2 third-year junior high school students from Shakuji Gakuen first visited the special exhibition held at JICA Chikyu Hiroba to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between the Republic of Liberia and Japan. Then, they visited the embassy, and were welcomed by H.E.



Ambassador Mr Blamoh Nelson, Mr Zakore Kongo, Ms Josephine Alade and Mrs Tasha Jackson. The children asked six questions about Liberia in English, which they had practiced, and His Excellency answered in English. They left the embassy feeling very familiar with a country they had never heard of and were eager to become goodwill ambassadors for Liberia, receiving many souvenirs and materials about Liberia.

“I learned a lot of amazing things in one day today. At first, I had never heard of the country, so I thought, “Liberia?” But I am very excited to learn about the Republic of Liberia in one day. I realized that it is a much more advanced country than I imagined. When I saw the pictures and videos, I found out that it is full of beautiful nature. I would love to visit there even now.

The more I read about Liberia, the more I get interested. I want to know more and more about Liberia. I keep reading leaflets after I came back.

Thank you for a lot of gifts such as the globe. It turned out to be a wonderful day.”

Ramu

“I went to the Liberian Embassy for the first time and learned a lot. I had never heard much about Liberia, and I didn’t know what it is like. However, after visiting Liberia for the first time, I learned a lot about the country. I learned that Liberia is close to the equator. The average temperature is 27 degrees Celsius, which is hot and humid. It means a little cooler than our summer, so I thought it would be nice to live there. There are two seasons: rainy and dry seasons. When it rains, there are no clothes dryers like in Japan. It must be inconvenient.

There are two things that I think are the most difficult.

The first is that the amount of water per person is small. Unlike in Japan, water is not readily available anytime, anywhere. In Liberia, water is so scarce that each person can only have two tablespoons of water. It is impressive knowing that they use this small amount of water so carefully. I also learned about this and decided to conserve water and use it carefully.

The second is the problem of malaria infection. In Liberia, the epidemic of Ebola virus disease is under control, but chronic malaria is still a big problem.

Malaria is transmitted to humans by bites of mosquitoes carrying the parasite *Plasmodium falciparum*. Approx. 1.26 million people, mainly young children, are affected by malaria in Liberia every year.

Now, a new type of coronavirus is also infecting the world. Even in such a situation, the people of Liberia are fighting corona and malaria. I wish to bring a lot of smiles and energy to these people.

I learned a lot of things from my visit to the Liberian Embassy. I was able to talk to Liberian people and ask them questions in English. I will apply what I learned in my future life.”

Tomomi

“ “Where is Liberia?” The children reacted like this when I told them that we would visit the Liberian Embassy. However, on the way back from the embassy visit, the children said, “I like Liberia now.” “I want to go to Liberia someday.” I am happy to know that this visit to the Embassy has given the children a chance to experience and learn about different cultures.

Thank you very much for giving us such a precious opportunity.”

Oikawa, Shakuji Gakuen Staff

## Fundraising

We all recognize the widening educational gap caused by the spread of COVID-19, and having or not having an IT environment threatens a child's right to education. This time, we especially appealed to viewers to donate through the "Little Creators Festival" for children leaving foster homes. Some are turning 18 and leaving a foster home to be independent. Some are returning to their parents, and some are being taken in by foster parents. In many cases, they will continue to need some support, not limited to the IT environment.

The total donation was 154,483 JYN. Little Creators delivered 7 tablets to those leaving the Misono Kodomo-no-le foster home. The shortfall was allocated from our funds (donations received for Little Creators' activities).

Gift of Money from...

Naofumi Tsutsumi	Junji Miyawaki	Atsushi Yamazaki
Seiko Ishiga	Satoru Ariyama	Hiromi Tomita
Kanae Osanai	Yuko Suzuki	Jacki Elgar and others

(Settlement)

Total Donation	154,483JYN
Little Creators	71,127JYN

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Our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to all the contributors whose kind thoughts brought a smile to needy children.