

THE
MESSSAGE

News Report



17th of September 2010

Gift A Smile

The patients of Randwick Children's Hospital were given some unexpected news on Sunday the 12th of September 2010 - not the type of news that they would anticipate and not the type of news their parents would have been expecting either. It wasn't an update on their health, or news of another injection being required, but news that this day was going to be different. This day was going to be special.

And boy was it special.

Under the banner of Mercy for Humanity (A United Muslims of Australia - UMA initiative) "Gift a Smile" was born, an idea brought by Walid Khalil, an active UMA member who has a sick child (Khaled) in Randwick children's hospital. This idea stemmed from the Hadith where our beloved Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, "Giving a smile is a charity."

This initiative involved providing toys for the children at Randwick. They were received that day with open arms and glad tidings from staff, parents and children. Khaled accompanied the Gift a Smile crew as they travelled in and out of wards, visiting all the wonderful people that have nursed him since he was born.

Raising thousands of dollars to purchase the gifts, the organisers of Gift a Smile did not anticipate such a response from the community:

"Donations were coming from everywhere" – Brother Masen, Gift a Smile organiser.

That weekend was significant in more ways than one, with Muslims all over the world celebrating Eid, a day marking the end of Ramadan.

"Eid is an occasion when Muslims take the time to consider others less fortunate than them. Gift a Smile was about just that -handing out gifts to the patients of the Randwick Children's Hospital. There were also balloons given to the patients and visitors. Maamul (Lebanese sweets) were given to the nurses of each ward to thank them and show appreciation for their efforts. It was definitely the most rewarding experience which we intend on continuing every Eid, InshAllah (God willing)." Sister Eman, Gift a Smile

The children's joy and laughter made the day all the worthwhile; even the parents' reactions were as pleasing to see.

United Muslims of Australia (UMA)

Centre Address: 69 Croydon Street Lakemba NSW 2195

Postal Address: P.O. Box 145 Lakemba NSW 2195 Australia

Website: www.uma.org.au

Email: info@uma.org.au

Phone: (61) 1300 730 693 Fax: (612) 9759 4455 Mobile: 0416 000 862 - 0416 000 (UMA)



Speaking with some of the attendees that day, it was clear that their presence was well received:

“A father of a ten day old gorgeous baby girl took out his camera and asked if he could take a photo of us with his daughter to show her this moment of kindness when she is older. That was a very touching moment from a very proud new father.” - Gift a smile member

Asking how the parents felt, one of the visitors said:

“Some parents were shocked that people would just come in and visit their children with a gift. A mother asked if it was a toy for her son to borrow - that was definitely not the case; the Cars art display sketch pack he chose was for him to enjoy. Some parents were just happy to have visitors to talk to. To have some support or to be given a balloon was a great moment for them. Visiting the sick is something our community lacks and we hope to continue these visits on a regular basis.”

It was a fantastic day for all involved, a great example of our community getting involved and making a difference.

On behalf of the team of Gift a Smile, I would like to express our utmost appreciation to all the wonderful staff and volunteers at Randwick Children’s hospital who perform great acts of charity and kindness to these children every day.

A big thank you must also go to the UMA for taking on this initiative, as well as all the volunteers and kind people who donated and purchased gifts for the children.

Most importantly, Gift a Smile would like to thank young Khaled who has taught us to think of these less fortunate children and to be thankful for everything Allah (SWT) has gifted us with. The strength and kindness that emanated from him created a positive atmosphere for all.

This is truly an amazing initiative of a simple idea that blossomed into a beautiful day with many more to come, Allah’s willing.

**These kind men & women have presented the children at Randwick Hospital with gifts and a chance to forget about their illness for a day. However they received something much more special in return:
A smiling child.**

For more information on upcoming events, please visit the UMA website at www.uma.org.au.

Stay tuned for more reports and various UMA events and news in the near future.

**Peace,
Brother Omar Sanoussi
The Message News Report.**

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