

2024



Annual Report



The year 2023/2024 has been a wonderful year for Open Arms. After some difficult years with COVID where we had to pivot and alter our entire operations, it is great to be back at full strength.

Open Arms is a small organisation with a big promise. This year we have delivered inspiring and educational sessions every week for 77 children living in 4 different welfare homes. The children can count on Open Arms and we show up with positive energy and exciting programs to make each session a special memory for the children.

In the year that passed our toddlers graduated and are now part of our Early Years program. At the same time we developed new programs for our oldest children who are now pre-teens. It is amazing to watch the organisation develop and grow with the children.

It has also been a year of development with exciting new partnerships making it possible to conduct sessions at some of Seoul's best international schools. And to welcome our favourite guest teachers from Fur all Dogs.

Finally, this has also been the year where special events could reopen making it possible to create fun and memorable days for the children.

Thank you to all of our donors who support our work making all of this possible. Thank you to our partners for making new opportunities grow. Thank you to the welfare homes for trusting us with the children. And a special thank you to all of our volunteers working both with the kids and behind the scenes - you are the heart and soul of Open Arms.

Inger Winther Johannsen, Executive Director

What's Inside

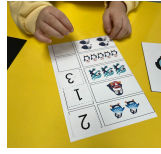
Who We Are



What We Achieved



OA by numbers



What We Envision



Contact Us



Who We Are

Open Arms provides regular play-based English programs in a caring learning environment at partner welfare homes in Seoul. In addition to the curriculum and games, the children experience positive interactions with our teachers and volunteers who make them feel valued. Our continuous and long-term program began with Toddlers and has expanded to serve Early Years, Primary and Young Teens as the children grow. We are a volunteer-run organization that welcomes the support of like-minded individuals who wish to improve the future of children living in South Korean welfare homes.

Our Mission

Guided by the belief that all children have equal value, Open Arms provides English education to children in South Korean welfare homes.

Our strong community of support empowers them to realise their self-worth and reach their potential socially, emotionally and academically. In addition to providing a personalised learning program throughout their childhood, our dedicated team of diverse volunteers also connects the children to a more global world view.

Our Vision

Our vision is a community where children are accepted, valued and unconditionally loved so they can grow into adults who will contribute positively to our society.

Our management team



Barbara Bai
Founder



Alicia Chung
Representative Director | Korean Canadian



Inger Winther Johanssen
Executive Director | Danish



Katy Freeman
Educational Director | British



Kathrine Nielson
Welfare Home Liaison | Danish



Erika
Finance Director | Hungarian



Justin Im
Communication & Fundraising | Canadian



Colleen Allan
Communication & Fundraising | American



Amethyst Etessam
Volunteer Director | Canadian



James Loft
Academic Team Lead | British

What We Achieved

Our Programs

We meet the children as toddlers because we know early childhood education gives children the best start in life. Then we grow with the children following their life journey learning English. The ambition is to follow the kids even as they move away from the welfare homes and into young adulthood.

In 2024/2025 we have the following programs:

Toddlers

Ages: 0-3

Prepare toddlers for preschool through purposeful activities and play that encourage language, social, sensory, and motor skills development.

Early Years

Ages: 4-6

Support children and their language development through play and engaging activities. Verbal and non-verbal communication are key concepts.

Primary

Ages: 7-10

Engage with kids to help boost their confidence in English through practical and fun activities focusing on conversation and sentence construction.

Early Teens

Ages: 11-12

Work with early teenagers to help develop their English skills through creative lessons that focus on reading, writing, and speaking.

In the past year our toddlers have “graduated” and are now part of our Early Years group. This is because they started in pre-school so now they are busy on weekdays. We are happy to follow them as they grow in our evening programs. We also opened up our Early Teens program to grow with the kids who are now already 11 and 12 years old and to honor the wish of 5 dedicated children at Shinmanwong Welfare Center who wanted to learn English.



Inspiring partnerships

We work with inspiring partners to create beautiful memories for the children. These partnerships make it possible for the children to:

- Visit, learn and play at the big international schools in Seoul at Seoul Foreign School British School and Dulwich College
- Get personal gifts for birthday and Christmas thanks to Dulwich parents and teachers
- Meet and interact with our favourite furry teachers from Fur all Dogs
- Give back to others with Korea Legacy

A big and heartfelt thank you to all of our partners.



Open Arms in Numbers

4 Welfare
homes

We work at Dream Tree, Chungwon, Myeongjin and Shinmanwong

Open Arms children are between 3 and 14 years old

3-14 years

77 kids are
currently enrolled in our
programs

77 children get personalised and inspiring English Education through Open Arms. We work with a 1:1 ratio between children and volunteers creating the opportunity for every child to feel seen and cherished.

Open Arms has 62 volunteers that together represent 24 different countries. Our longest serving volunteer has been with us from the very beginning - 7 years!

1575
volunteer hours were spent
with the children

218
personalized
christmas presents

Each present personally chosen and wrapped to give the kids exactly what they wished for. 68 birthday presents were given.

Van's shoes donated 490 pairs of shoes to our volunteers and the children

490 sneakers
were given



What we envision

Open Arms is a small organisation with an important mission. We made a promise to the children to follow them as they grow and continue to be there with knowledge, support and inspiration. Therefore, sustainability is a key priority for Open Arms in the coming year. In line with this our biggest goal is to develop and document our curriculum. As a part of this we are also investing further in learning programs, materials and crafts.

Since our toddlers graduated in the past year we wish to establish a new toddler group at one of our existing welfare centers. To keep growing with our children we need to start developing a regular teenage program.

We are looking forward for an inspiring year!



Implement the new structure



Open up a new toddler program

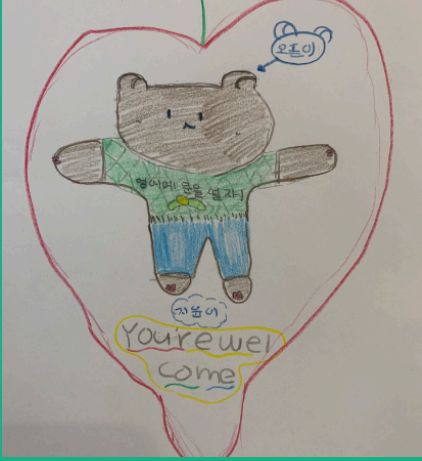


Further develop teenage program



Develop a framework for a curriculum to ensure sustainability and scalability





"Open Arms is like a sweet and strong bear with Open Arms"

Open Arms child



"What I love the most is seeing the engagement, enthusiasm and joy of the children in the sessions grow over time, going from a chaotic to focused learning space."

James, group coordinator MJ

Contact Us

For further information, please reach out to us at info@theopenarms.org.

Open Arms

Website: www.theopenarms.org

Instagram: [@openarms_kr](https://www.instagram.com/openarms_kr)