OUR MISSION

TO IMPROVE THE EDUCATION AND GENERAL WELFARE OF DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN IN CHINA
2018 was a superb year for Stepping Stones. All of our regular programs ran smoothly and experienced healthy and sustainable growth and development, thanks to our professional staff and hundreds of committed volunteers. The continued loyal support of all our regular key donors, as well as strategic fee-earning activities, reduced the amount of time we needed to spend on fundraising, and we continued to be encouraged by the enthusiastic feedback from our students, volunteers and teachers alike, as well as by the positive output from our impact assessment work. I hope you will be as touched as I am to read more about all of this in the following pages.

Of course, the year was not without its challenges. For nine years, we had been very fortunate to have office space and a training room provided for free by Huaqiao Foundation and Guofeng Foundation in the Astonics Building in Changning District, but all good things eventually come to an end, and in November we had to find ourselves a new office. Luckily for us, it seems we can always find warm-hearted people in Shanghai who are willing to step in to help, and in this case it was Sandbox Community, a co-working space in Changyang Creative Park in Yangpu District, that offered Stepping Stones a cool and cozy new home.

We also lost five staff members in 2018: Kelly Kuang, who had been providing invaluable financial and legal assistance, and Selena Xu, who had been coordinating our Tutoring Program, both left in the summer. Gloria Han, our longest-serving staff member, who during six years with us had been involved in every aspect of our organisation, left us in the autumn, and Morgan Banaszek and Zhang Xuejuan left us at the year end. Morgan joined us in 2013 to coordinate our English teaching program in Shanghai, and more recently turned her capable hands to managing our rural volunteering programs. Zhang Xuejuan was responsible for the marked improvement in the quality of our communications over the last year. We miss them all, but are happy to have been able to find well qualified replacements, and have proved ourselves to be resilient in the face of such challenges.

The biggest surprise in the year came from the British Consulate General in Shanghai, who contacted me in early May to say that I had been nominated for the British Empire Medal in Queen Elizabeth II's Birthday Honours' List, for services to education and disadvantaged children in China! It is of course a huge honour to be recognised in this way, though it goes without saying that the credit is really due to the many thousands of volunteers, interns, staff, donors and other supporters whose combined efforts have provided a better education to tens of thousands of Chinese children over the last 12 years.

Thank you to all of those people who have done their bit to make Stepping Stones into the incredible organisation that it is today, and here’s to another great year of volunteering in 2019.

Corinne Richeux Hua,
Executive Director
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

has been pleased to confer
The British Empire Medal (Civil Division)
upon

Ms. Corinne Richeux Hua

Regnant
The Order of the British Empire
During 2018:

More than 1,500 Stepping Stones volunteers delivered 5,946 English lessons to 12,514 disadvantaged children at more than 45 project sites in Shanghai and 9 provinces.

Our Stepping Up program provided 900 digital literacy lessons to 873 students in Zhejiang Province (Jiaxing), Jiangsu Province (Qidong) and Shanghai.

We supplied professional training to 104 English teachers.

Our I Care Program donated spectacles to 256 children.
ABOUT STEPPING STONES

Our Mission

To improve the education and general welfare of disadvantaged children in China.

Our Vision

Equal access to a quality education and general welfare for all children in China.

Our Objectives

1. To increase students' confidence and self-esteem;
2. To optimise students' access to better quality education and work opportunities in the future;
3. To connect communities and promote inter-cultural understanding;
4. To promote responsible and high-impact volunteering.

Legal Status

In December 2013, Stepping Stones was officially registered in Minhang, Shanghai as a private non-enterprise organisation. Stepping Stones' official Chinese name is 上海闵行区华漕镇石青青少年发展中心 (Shanghai Minhang District Huacao Pulushi Youth Development Centre).

Stepping Stones is subject to the laws of the People's Republic of China. Stepping Stones is strictly non-political and non-religious.

Stepping Stones is a non-profit organisation registered in Shanghai, China. We have been recruiting and training volunteers to teach English to disadvantaged children in China since 2006.
Volunteers

Stepping Stones' greatest asset is its large community of volunteers, who are eager for high-impact volunteering opportunities in China.

Stepping Stones' task is to recruit, train, support and resource volunteers to provide services needed by our beneficiaries.

Our volunteers come from 36 different countries and from all walks of life, including high school students, university students, company employees and retirees.
Our Beneficiaries

Stepping Stones’ main beneficiaries are children whose education has been negatively impacted by rural-urban migration in China. Some of these children have moved with their parents to cities where they do not have access to regular public schools due to residence issues, and are enrolled in schools for the children of migrant workers, whose educational standards fall behind the urban public schools. Others are enrolled in public schools, but need extra help with their schoolwork, which their parents are often unable to provide.

Arguably the most disadvantaged of our beneficiaries are the children who are unable to go with their parents to the cities, and who are left behind in rural boarding schools or living with other family members. The educational standards in rural primary schools lag significantly behind urban schools, and these “left-behind” children also lack parental support. Mobilising more resources to improve the education of these left-behind children is our most important strategic direction.
teachers' office
classroom
Our staff team increased from 16 to 18, with the addition of two essential new positions: a Communications Manager Zhang Xuejuan, who allowed Wang Cui to focus on fundraising when she returned from maternity leave in the autumn. We were also able to hire Claire Ding as Volunteer Training Manager, thanks to a new grant from Porsche, which allowed Training Director Ross Pitcairn to devote more time to curriculum development.

Naya Wang took over from Kelly Kuang as Finance Officer, working for long-term Finance Manager Eva Hua, and Lucy Lu joined the finance team at the end of the year. Dóra Havassy continued as part-time HR Manager, Founder and Executive Director Corinne Hua continued to lead the operations and partner-relations work.

Selena Xu's departure in May led us to reconsider how to structure our Shanghai English teaching programs, and we decided to combine the former Tutoring Program with the Classroom Teaching Program with Sally Wangsawijaya as Program Manager, hiring Julie Li to assist Sally with the site liaison work.

Volunteer Manager Morgan Banaszek managed all our rural volunteers (both individual placements and group tours), with Sherry Jia managing all the rural school liaison work, including assisting Ross with the Videolink English teaching and Videolink Teacher Training programs. Désirée Nieto was our main teacher trainer, including in the Shanghai Teacher Training program, supported by Gao Xiaolan.

For the first half of the year, Gloria Han provided maternity cover for Xiaolan and Wang Cui consecutively, as well as assisting Program Director Sebastien Carrier with corporate events and the I Care program. Teddy Shi and Ben Hu continued to run our Stepping Up Digital Literacy Program, also supervised by Sebastien. Sebastien continued to be in charge of program monitoring and evaluation, allowing us to measure the impact of our programs.

From left to right
Second row: Amy, Xiaolan, Dóra, Sherry, Ben, Claire, Julie, Teddy, Eva, Naya, Sally, Lucy
First row: Dési, Ross, Corinne, Sebastien, Cui
English Teaching

English is one of the three core subjects in the Chinese school curriculum, and the one that poses most challenges to rural and other disadvantaged children. English ability is the biggest differentiator between urban and rural Chinese children, perpetuating the gap in educational and employment opportunities. Stepping Stones’ work began in response to requests from the principals of migrant schools in Shanghai and rural Chinese schools to teach English to their students.

Shanghai English Teaching

Stepping Stones’ pioneer program recruits and trains volunteers to teach oral English in a creative and engaging way to disadvantaged students in Shanghai and Zhejiang. This year, our focus was on increasing the quality of English teaching. More support was given to volunteers through the introduction of 120 professional lesson plans for Grade 1-5 students that volunteers can use and adapt in schools and community centres.

Adults and high school volunteers were combined under the Shanghai English Teaching Program to streamline the program coordination work and enable a smooth roll-out of our new teaching materials. Our new Volunteer Training Manager Claire Ding delivered interactive trainings and workshops focused on improving volunteers’ teaching techniques.
Stepping Stones started programs at five new sites in Shanghai in 2018, including one school, plus K-Foundation, KuaiLe Jiayuan, Vibrant Communities and Jiullting Community Centres. As well as continuing to sponsor our high schoolers’ weekend volunteer teaching program in six community centres, Shanghai United Foundation also helped us to launch a new pilot collaboration with a non-profit partner, Shixingzhe Community Centre in Zhejiang Province, allowing us to provide more lessons to students outside of Shanghai. Through the sharing of Stepping Stones expertise in English teaching and volunteer management and the collaboration with local partners in other provinces, Stepping Stones aims to teach English to more and more students in China.

We are grateful to Teaching Nomad, Disney English, Tiny Tots and Giraffe English for sending professional teachers to teach at our schools and community centres in Shanghai. Blockchain was also generous in providing us with space for our volunteer trainings.

We continued to work together with Educating Girls of Rural China (EGRRC) and Shanghai Young Bakers (SYB) to teach conversational English to mature students, and maintained relationships with most of our other school and community centre partners.

An especially big thank-you goes to Shanghai Soong Ching Ling Foundation for sponsoring our Shanghai English Teaching program every year since 2012.

I’ve never done any volunteering nor teaching before so I felt a bit apprehensive when I was considering it. But after doing it for the last 8 months, all I can say is I wish I had done it sooner. It has been a real pleasure and rewarding working with other volunteer teachers, the “real” teachers in the schools and above all the students.

I volunteered (and am still volunteering) to teach English in 2 schools, a primary school for kids of migrant workers and a vocational school for young adults in Shanghai. Stepping Stone provided training in the beginning before I started and they also provide continuous support during the period. They set the curriculum and furnish the teaching materials but we also have a lot of flexibility. If you are still thinking of doing some volunteering, I would wholeheartedly recommend it and Stepping Stones can be your first “stepping stone” toward a rewarding experience.

- Stephen Pinfu, volunteer for two semesters
Rural Volunteering - Individuals

2,054 Students
18 Volunteers
10 Rural School & Centers
591 English Lessons

Our Rural Individual Volunteering Program involves sending individual volunteers to teach English to children in rural China for three weeks or more.

Thanks to fundraising via Tencent 99 Charity Day in 2017 and donations from the German and French schools and St. James Place, this year the program grew further, with four new locations in four different provinces (Henan, Hunan, Zhejiang, and Sichuan). Increased funding allowed more staff visits to project sites to ensure the quality of teaching and provide more support to the volunteers.

“I think this trip exceeded my expectations, and definitely expanded my views on what is considered “rural,” in China, and also opened my eyes to the education system in rural areas. Honestly, before leaving on the trip, I was apprehensive about the environment and what awaited me in Taohuajiang. What did I get myself into, signing up for rural volunteering? What would the kids be like? What were their English levels? What were the teachers like?

By the end of my first week in Taohuajiang, I felt more comfortable both in the town and at the school, which was aided by the wonderful teachers and students at the school. Furthermore, my experience really opened my eyes to the differences between the education systems between more urban and rural areas, allowing me to see how much more support those in rural areas need.”

- Connie Yuan
Volunteer - Taojiang County, Hunan
Autumn 2018

“Learning through playing improved the students’ enthusiasm for English learning. In addition the flexible teaching methods made students develop in a well-rounded way.”

- an English Teacher
- Luyi County, Henan - June 2018
Rural Volunteering - Groups

2,503 Students
170 Volunteers
674 English Lessons
8 Tours

Stepping Stones has been leading volunteer groups to teach oral English lessons to children in rural China over a weekend or for a full week since 2007. In 2018, we took groups from PricewaterhouseCoopers, Bollore Logistics, St. Paul American School Shanghai, and the Shanghai French and German Schools to teach children in Henan, Anhui, Zhejiang and Jiangsu.

“This trip exceeded my expectation and changed my perspective. Previously I thought we need to teach in rural areas because the areas are poor, but I can see the situation is already changing. What the rural children really lack is love and care.”

- A volunteer from Bollore Logistics
Dengfeng, Henan - Oct 2018
Our main aim for the Videolink Program for 2018 was to scale up sustainably and creatively. Adding new schools to our roster takes a significant investment in terms of hardware, software, time and human resources, so partnerships must be chosen carefully.

One way we explored in 2018 of scaling up in a cost-efficient manner was to partner with organisations who already had infrastructure installed at a rural site; an example of this is our fruitful partnership with the Chi Heng Foundation, with whom we now run a videolink program in Nandawu, Henan province. We also capitalised on existing relationships with rural partners, for example starting a new videolink program at Taohuajiang Primary School, Hunan province, where we had already done rural tours. As ever, we must also say a big thank-you to Bloomberg for their continued support, both in terms of donations and volunteers.

Our aims for the coming year are: (1) to continue to explore different ways to start new videolink programs; (2) to start at least 2-3 new programs at rural sites; (3) to do a complete overhaul of our teaching and training materials, thanks to a generous grant from Porsche; by the autumn of 2019, we will have 120 bright and colourful new videolink PPTs in line with our new Stepping Stones curriculum, plus redesigned training materials to support these new lessons.
Curriculum

In 2018, we took two very big steps towards developing a bespoke curriculum that we can use across all our English teaching programs. Firstly, our Training & Curriculum Director Ross PicaIam built a syllabus for grades 1-5, consisting of 120 lesson outlines, which will act as the foundation for all future materials for these grades. Secondly, our teacher trainer Dési Nieto, and volunteers Karen Allmen Chow and Carrie Ferro worked with Ross to prepare 120 40-minute lesson plans, plus flashcards and materials, for grades 1-5 of the Shanghai English Teaching Program, rolling these out in the fall of 2018.

In 2019, we will continue our curriculum development, in particular developing the 120 videolink PPTs as mentioned above, as well as adapting the 40-minute lesson plans so they can be used for 90-minute classes, thus helping our weekend and summer volunteers teach English more effectively.

We'd like to express our sincere gratitude to the British Consulate General team who raised money for the syllabus development in the 2017 E.G.G. Walkathon, the 2018 E.G.G. Walkathon teams, who are funding the development of our weekend and summer lesson plans, and to Porsche, for the generous grant funding the creation of the 40-minute lesson plans and videolink PPTs. Our aim is to provide all our English-teaching volunteers with professional-grade materials that are appropriate for their teaching context, and this could not be done without their kind support.
Teacher Training

Shanghai Teacher Training

- Trainers: 2
- Teachers Trained: 78
- Teachers’ English Corners: 7
- Training Sessions: 32
- Training Sites: 9

In June 2018, we successfully completed the second full school year of our Teacher Training Program at three Shanghai primary schools, while continuing to support teachers at the three schools that were involved in the first year of this program through Champions Training. In the Champions Training, we train high-achievers from the previous year’s training in how to observe, give feedback and identify the needs of their teaching groups, allowing us to keep in touch with our former trainees and return to their schools for ‘just-in-time’ training sessions based on the teaching group’s needs.

In September 2018, continued funding from Shanghai Charity Foundation allowed us to begin our third year of teacher training at three more schools. As always, we carried out a thorough needs analysis, made a bespoke plan of study for each group, and worked hard in conjunction with our new trainees to improve their teaching knowledge, confidence and use of English.

Our first ever Teachers’ Appreciation Party, held at our office in June 2018 was a great success; over 50 people attended, and the celebratory atmosphere testified to how much the teachers loved and appreciated our training and our trainers.
In the spring semester of 2018, we continued our good work of the previous term by running two more Teacher Training courses through videolink for teachers in rural China, six sessions for lower-level English speaking teachers, six for higher-level. The teachers joined us for online classes from all around China, including Henan, Hunan, Sichuan, Jiangxi, Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces. We also made a big effort to update and improve our training materials, for example adding a new session on using games in the classroom. During the semester, volunteers helped teachers to improve their spoken English confidence and ability through online Teachers’ English Corners.

In the autumn semester, we were honoured to be given a grant by the British Chamber of Commerce Shanghai to provide a pilot Teacher Training course to teachers in Lixin County, Anhui Province through videolink. Britcham have been running CSR projects in Lixin County for some years, and recognised the need for English teacher training in the schools they were helping. This grant allowed us to continue this important program, helping thousands more students by training their English teachers to become more confident and effective. We are grateful that Britcham are keen to continue sponsoring this program in 2019, and we hope to find funding to support teachers in other provinces as well.
Summer Camps

After successfully running one full-time two-month summer camp for Huacao Youth League in 2017, the Huacao town government asked us to run two of their three summer camps in 2018. Two outstanding teachers who participated in our teacher training program gave up their summer holidays to run the camps, and our super team of volunteers rose to the challenge of helping the classroom teachers keep two groups of 30 primary school students occupied throughout the long, hot Shanghai summer.

As well as delivering our classic English and digital literacy lessons to the children, our summer interns developed and taught a whole range of new classes, including arts and crafts, reading, music, drama, dance, environment and board games, providing a very enriching experience for the children. This year for the first time, volunteers from Google, Target and Porsche joined us to teach arts and crafts to the children, and employees of the Bank of Communications and Prudential taught the children the basics of personal financial management through fun board games. Teaching Nomad and Disney English continued to provide our students with fun English lessons throughout the summer months, Aboro Academy and Fitness Monster gave the children essential and fun physical exercise, and Yakult treated the kids to an outing to their factory.

At the end of the camps, parents told us that they saw an improvement in their children, not only academically but also socially. And all the teachers, interns and volunteers were amply rewarded with big smiles and hugs from the happy children!
Stepping Up Digital Literacy

We are also grateful to Irish Aid for providing us with a grant to allow us to conduct a study of junior middle school leavers in Jiashan to assess the specific challenges they face when leaving full-time schooling at the age of 16. Our findings will be used to help refine our training to better address the specific needs of this population.

We aim to continue teaching disadvantaged students at both elementary and middle schools in 2019, and to provide more lessons to them through the mobilization of an increased number of well-trained volunteers.

Digital literacy is basic for survival in the modern world. Unfortunately, many rural Chinese children have no computers at home or school, and no computer lessons, so their digital literacy skills are very poor. This contributes to a low rate of high school or vocational school enrollment, and the risk of exploitation, abuse and disadvantage when they enter the workplace from junior middle school.

By providing the schools with the necessary hardware, along with a carefully planned curriculum and properly trained teachers and volunteers, our “Stepping Up” program helps children develop the life skills and digital literacy skills they need to meet the challenges of a tech-focused future.

In 2018, thanks to the continued support of Transparent Fish Fund and The Chao Foundation, we were able to provide regular computer/life skills lessons to more than 870 primary and middle school students at six teaching sites in Shanghai, Zhejiang and Jiangsu.
In 2018, Stepping Stones arranged one-day projects for volunteers from various corporate, high school and university groups to engage in inter-cultural exchanges and learning activities with disadvantaged primary school and kindergarten children. These volunteers took children on outings or taught them English, arts and crafts, environmental education, sports, life skills or technology.

Volunteers came from New York University, Duke University, Georgia Institute of Technology, Colorado State University, Think Global School, Learning Leaders, Target, Christie’s, Hasbro, GAP, Google, Porsche, Jiaotong Bank, Prudential & Club Med.

“We just landed in Shanghai yesterday and of course we had a totally different impression of the place. All the skyscrapers are unbelievable. This volunteering experience is wonderful in which we have seen a rural side of the city and the students were so lovely. Thanks for organising!! Corinne’s talk was very delightfully inspiring, and the curriculum was great and fun!”

-One volunteer from Duke University
In 2018, we were grateful as ever to all of our regular sponsors for continuously funding Stepping Stones’ core programs. We were delighted to win three new grants, the first from Porsche through Shanghai Soong Ching Ling Foundation to help us to build a new Volunteer Management System and further develop our curriculum, the second from the British Chamber of Commerce Shanghai to take our Videolink Teacher Training Program to their CSR base in Anhui Lixin, and the third from UPS to provide extra activities for our 2019 summer camps. Google Inc and Bartra Wealth also made generous donations to Stepping Stones for the first time, and the German and French School continued to support our Rural Individual Volunteering program.

Stepping Stones actively participated for the third year running in one of Shanghai’s most well-known fundraising campaigns, Shanghai United Foundation’s E.G.G. Walkathon.

On 12 May, two teams set out for the challenge in Pudong District. Mingdao, who have been providing pro bono online office management solutions for us, provided one team. The other team, Triple Stones, was made up of staff from Save the Children, St. James Place and Stepping Stones. Twelve intrepid volunteers walked a total of 501 kilometers and raised RMB49,110 between them to support curriculum development for our English teaching programs.
In 2018, Stepping Stones' revenue was RMB 3,121,297.39, and expenses were RMB 2,681,661.88, making a net gain of RMB 439,635.51. The opening balance was RMB 1,437,069.27 and the closing balance was RMB 1,876,704.78.

This includes all foreign currency revenue and expenses at the exchange rate at the year end.

Stepping Stones' accounts are audited annually by an independent accountant.

**Revenue**

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<td>Service Fees</td>
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**Expenses**

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<td>Accommodation</td>
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<td>Donations &amp; Other Third-Party Fees</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Net gain</strong></td>
<td><strong>439,635.51</strong></td>
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**NOTES:**

1. For glasses for our I Care project.
2. Communications & Delivery, Printing, Small Office Equipment and Office Supplies.
3. Including audit fees, legal expenses, insurance, meeting fees.
Stepping Stones is grateful to all its many generous donors, in particular the following organisations who provided the majority of our funding in 2018:

1. Shanghai Guofeng Charity Foundation
2. Shanghai Soong Ching Ling Foundation
3. Porsche Centre Shanghai Minhang & Porsche Centre Shanghai Puxi
4. Ping and Amy Chao Family Foundation through Transparent Fish Fund
5. Shanghai United Foundation
6. Shanghai Charity Foundation
7. Bloomberg
8. CAF America on behalf of the generosity of Target Corporation
9. British Chamber of Commerce Shanghai
A special thank you to the following service providers, who generously provided high quality professional services to us for free, thus helping us to significantly reduce our operational costs and improve the quality of our programs:

Blockchain for providing us with a great central space to hold our volunteer training.

Camel Hospitality Group, Epermarket, Gemma, Homeslice Pizza and Nelboo, who all generously hosted volunteer appreciation parties and provided food & beverage for staff and board meetings and volunteer trainings throughout the year.

Disney English, Giraffe English, Teaching Nomad & Tiny Tots for providing professional English lessons to our students.

I.D. Creations for continuing to produce high quality videos for us.

Mingdao for providing an office management solutions platform.

Nissel Well for providing free printing services.

O’Melveny & Myers for professional legal advice.

Roedl & Partners for professional financial accounting services.
Stepping Stones is proud to have partnerships with many well-respected community organisations, as follows:

- Aboro Foundation
- A Dream Foundation
- A Pleines Mains
- Chi Heng Foundation
- Children’s Helpers Worldwide
- Educating Girls of Rural China
- Firefly Castle
- Jiuqian Community Centre
- K-Foundation, Mingde
- New Citizen Life Centre
- Shanghai Hua Ai Charity Foundation
- Shanghai Young Bakers
- Shixingzhe
- Sunflower Education Program
- Vibrant Communities

NON-PROFIT PARTNERS
**LOOKING FORWARD**

**New Challenges**

In 2019, we hope to complete the registration of the representative office of our Hong Kong charitable association, and we also have ambitious plans to establish a foundation, which will help to ensure the sustainable future of Stepping Stones.

To this end, we are embarking on a fundraising campaign with an aim to raise the RMB 2 million required to register a foundation within the first few months of the year.

At the end of 2018, we are also on the look out for new office space, as our lease with Sandbox in Yangou will end in 2019.

**New Opportunities**

Building on our successful collaboration with Shixingzhe in Jiaxing, we are looking out for new partners with whom we can share our teaching resources and volunteer management best practices to enable us to scale up our impact and help more children.

Our new grant from Porsche will help us build a new state-of-the-art volunteer management system, which will streamline our volunteer management processes and allow more efficient growth. The same grant will allow us to further build on our new curriculum so as to be able to provide bespoke teaching resources tailored to the unique needs of all our different programs.

As our staff team grows and changes, we plan some team development and training activities in the new year. And as English teaching improves in the schools for migrants in Shanghai, as well as directing our resources towards the children left-behind in rural schools, we are also considering gradually shifting some of our Shanghai resources towards areas of more acute need, including early childhood development and special educational needs.
To assess the value and impact of our programs on our beneficiaries, evaluations were conducted at 18 program sites in 2018, distributing ‘pre-program’ (or baseline) and ‘post-program’ (or follow-up) survey questionnaires to a total of 1,461 beneficiaries. We asked a variety of questions to assess, for example, students’ confidence and interest in English and other subjects, or teachers’ perceptions of the improvement in their teaching skills.

**Impacting students’ attitude towards English**

Stepping Stones has been running English teaching programs in China for more than 13 years, serving thousands of children every week. While some of them attend our programs for many years, most of them are enrolled for a period of only one year. Based on data gathered during the 2017-2018 school year, the figure below outlines the impact of our volunteer English teaching programs on a sample of “new” students (n = 801) - all of which are enrolled in our Shanghai English Teaching, Rural Individual Volunteering or Videolink Program - by comparing their attitude towards English with their attitude towards other subjects and school in general.

The figure below clearly shows that, by the end of the program, the percentage of new students finding English ‘easy’ rose (1.58% increase), while the percentage of them finding Chinese or mathematics ‘easy’ decreased by 1.90% and 11.30% respectively.

These perceptions towards core subjects are also reflected in the students’ confidence to complete homework and improve grades. As can be seen from Figure 1, the percentage of students feeling confident in English increased more than the percentage of students feeling confident in both Chinese and mathematics. A noteworthy comparison is between the number of students feeling confident to improve grades in English with the number of students feeling confident to improve grades in mathematics, which rose by 4.80% and decreased by 2.93% respectively.

Another highlight of the study is the proportion of students reporting liking English, which rose by 2.03% in the post-survey, compared with a decrease of 0.12% in the number of students liking school.
These results suggest that a majority of students who receive English lessons from our volunteers become quickly more and more confident and interested in English, despite experiencing an average decrease in motivation and confidence in school and other core subjects.

**Enhancing students’ English speaking confidence**

Stepping Stones’ English curriculum is designed to place emphasis upon teaching English through speaking and listening activities. Our volunteers and teachers are trained to provide fun and interactive oral English lessons which motivate and engage students by using only English in the classroom. Our main objectives are to improve students’ motivation and confidence in speaking English, which are two key dimensions of learning a second language.

As can be seen from the figure below, two questions were asked to assess the impact of our program on the students’ confidence in speaking English. As was the case in previous years, the results of our evaluation indicate a rise between the baseline and the follow-up surveys in the number of students feeling ‘confident’ to use English in class (6.06% increase) and to speak English with foreigners (27.67% increase). These increases suggest that students in our program become more prepared and confident to engage in English-speaking situations.
Enriching students’ experiences over the summer

While most elementary school-aged children in urban China are enrolled in after-school and summer programs, migrant and rural children have limited or no access to extracurricular activities due to lack of resources. In order to provide a safe place and academic stimulation to disadvantaged children while exploring new hobbies and activities during the summer, Stepping Stones has run two full-time daily summer camps in Shanghai. More than 100 children attended our camps in 2018.

In addition to English, Stepping Stones’ summer camps offered a variety of lessons and classes, which are all important for children’s all-round development and well-being, but generally lacking in the children’s regular school curriculum, such as arts and crafts, drama, music, fitness, book reading, computer and dance.

The figure below outlines the relative changes in students’ interest in extracurricular activities between the beginning and the end of the camps. As can be seen from the Figure below, students’ interest in most of the provided activities have increased significantly by the end of the program. The most noteworthy increase is the percentage of students liking drama, which rose by 70.59%. Drama was a new subject for almost all of the students. During the classes, they learned the process of staging a play, and delivered a wonderful performance for teachers, parents and volunteers at the end of the summer.
Improving English teachers' confidence and ability

Building on the success of our English teaching programs, and motivated by a desire to make a long-term and sustainable impact on rural and migrant students' academic achievement, Stepping Stones started a Teacher Training Program in 2016 to train English teachers in Shanghai's migrant schools, as well as in rural areas through the Internet. In 2018, 106 teachers have benefited from this program.

As can be seen from the figure below, a variety of questions were asked to a sample of trainees (n = 42) to assess the impact of the program on their confidence and ability to teach English. Three of the most notable findings of the impact evaluation were that by the end of the program, 68% more teachers (Ts) were using English in class, 15% more teachers felt confident to speak English in class, and 36.7% more teachers felt able to get their students (Ss) to speak English in class. These extremely significant increases highlight one of the many important goals of Stepping Stones' Teacher Training Program, which is to help teachers provide an enriched English learning environment for their students.

Another highlight of the impact evaluation is the proportion of teachers reporting an increase in their students' English level at the end of the program. The number of teachers who thought their students' comprehension and general English levels were "average, high or very high" increased by 68% and 85.8% respectively.

These overarching positive results are extremely encouraging. They indicate that teachers in our program are likely to become more confident to use English in class, thus feeling more prepared for engaging their students in their English classes.
Developing students' confidence and proficiency in computers

To assess the value and impact of our Digital Literacy Program (Stepping Up) on students' confidence and attitude towards computers, impact evaluations were conducted at four program sites in 2018, distributing 'pre-program' and 'post-program' survey questionnaires to a total of 331 beneficiaries.

One of the ways that we strive to help students become more efficient in using computers is to practice typing every week. As was the case in the previous years, we are pleased to report that students have increased their typing speed over the course of the program. The number of students who thought their typing speed was either 'average' or 'fast' increased by 13.68% at the end of the program, from 64% to 72.8%.

The figure below compares the baseline and follow-up results of two questions concerning students' confidence in computers. The results indicate a significant rise between the pre-survey and the post-survey in the number of students feeling 'confident' or 'very confident' in finding information on the Internet (7.76% increase) and using Microsoft Office (9.76% increase). These increases highlight one of the many important goals of the program, which is to become more comfortable with using computers to gather information, solve problems, and communicate knowledge.
THANK YOU AND SEE YOU NEXT YEAR!