

Sweet Dreamers provide English learning program for kids from the community

“There’s always an opportunity with crises – because you can always build something beautiful out of stones that are placed in your way.”

What originally started as a marimba learning after-school program is expanding to a wonderful communal center for music and education appreciated and supported by the whole community

The ***Sweet Dreamers Marimba Band Project*** started with the aim to provide a meaningful activity as an after-school program and to earn some pocket money with playing shows. But the outbreak of COVID 19 and the associated consequences have forced the Sweet Dreamers to come up with new ideas in order to survive. During this time Danmore Kusaya, the founder of the project realized how hard it was for these kids to keep up with education when there was no equipment for any kind of online learning. This gave rise to the initiative of the Marimba Kids to use the money earned from online live shows to buy inexpensive tablets with free English learning software in order to be able to learn together in small groups.



“Many kids come and enjoy our music program, so we also care about what exactly they are doing at school. They might be good at playing the marimba, but we also care about their education. We want to see big results when they finish school and grow up”, Dan says.

Good English language skills are essential for a successful school career since all the subjects at school are taught in English up from grade 4. This is a big challenge for most of the students from the community because it is rarely spoken among their social environment.

That’s why the SD marimba coaches decided to start an education program focusing on English learning. They held a meeting with the leaders of the community who were pleased with the idea of learning support for the youngsters. They agreed to provide a community room where they could meet for their studies next to the room where they used to meet for the marimba rehearsals.



Is playing music replaced by learning English now? Not at all, says Dan. "The English language is very important for them to understand what they are studying at school. But also, the English language skill is very important for our marimba shows. Sometimes we want to incorporate the kids into interactions with the audience, to introduce themselves, to announce new songs or to lead through a show. So, they need to have English vocabulary to speak in order to communicate with the audience."

Now that schools have started to reopen it seems also possible to slowly build up the marimba after-school program again. But now when the students come back from school, one day they are playing the marimba, and another day they are studying English. In this way they improve not only their musical skills but also their English level. In that way they can focus on their education but also on music to relief their minds.



A lot of young kids are interested in the after-school program to learn to play the marimba. They are eager to learn, and they want to be good students as well but often have problems with understanding the learning tasks. The marimba coaches encourage them to study English since everything will be so much easier to learn and understand.

The English learning sessions are coached by older members of the Sweet Dreamers. "When the kids come in the afternoon, they can also bring their homework when they have problems to understand and we help them with their homework. This English study helps them a lot to understand what they are doing at school!"

It's a wonderful thing to give kids the opportunity to play music and help them with their studies. But this project is a lot more than that. "With this project we want our community to strengthen and improve. Everything comes from the community and goes back to the community!"

This project definitely deserves the highest respect and needs to be supported not only by all of us who have been pleading for more equality in this country but also by the government since it could serve as role model for so many other rural communities!



Who are the Sweet Dreamers?

Marimba Sweet Dreamers NPC

Account Number: 62875824396

Branch Code: 256405

Swift Code: FIRZAJJ

Account Type: Business Account

Branch Name: Riverside Park