

My Happiness at Present and in the Future

Sachiko Shomura(Yuai-kai)

Hello, everyone. My name is Sachiko Shomura. I am with the self-advocacy group “Yuai-kai” of Tokyo Parent’s Association for Intellectual Disabilities. Inc.

Yuai-kai is a self-advocacy group designed to develop friendship among its members, and facilitate community living through discussion and a variety of other activities. As a member of the operating committee, I participated in the Fukushima convention last year to be better informed and prepared for the National Convention of the Parent’s Association to be held in Tokyo in November this year.

The operating committee meets every second Saturday. Besides, Yuai-kai members have bus trips to further strengthen their relationships. This year, for example, some 50 members joined such a bus tour for an enjoyable visit to a hot spring resort.

Today I am going to talk about the recycling campaign of pet bottle caps by the day service that I am involved in, and what I enjoy doing now.

I live with my mother and go to the day service in the daytime, which is called “Kataguruma”. People with disabilities who are 18 years old or older can have access to the Kataguruma program offered at the Community Life Support Center of Itabashi, an area of Tokyo where I live.

We have been involved in the so-called eco-cap recycling activities as part of the day service program. Eco-caps refer to caps of beverage pet bottles. Pet bottles are recyclable waste, and caps are also recyclable. A company called Tokyo-Mokkosho takes the eco-caps that we have collected and sorted, and then crushes them into small pieces, processes the ground caps, and produce recycled products called eco-ply for construction. Last summer we were kept very busy collecting and sorting caps as the extremely hot summer pushed up the sales of pet-bottle beverages. The company sells the eco-ply to builders and donates the proceeds to a non-profit organization (NPO) named “Rocinantes”. The Rocinantes organization, which works in the African nation of Sudan, uses donations from Tokyo-Mokkosho to purchase vaccines to vaccinate Sudanese children against polio. The report from Rocinantes about their activities motivates us to further collect and sort caps. We also collect used paper to have it recycled as toilet paper and other useful goods. The use of such environmentally friendly products will enable us to create safer milieu for our future. It is a lot of fun for me to be engaged in this type of activities with my friends.

Now I would like to talk about what I do on holiday. Besides activities at the day service, I enjoy traveling with my friends and family, as well as bowling and karaoke.

I took part in the World Congress of the International Parent’s Association for Intellectual Disabilities held in Berlin, Germany, last year. At the conference, we reported about our activities undertaken at various workshops. We also exhibited a number of photos depicting activities and

products that our friends in Japan have made, together with some explanatory captions. Many people visited our exhibition. I really enjoyed the experience of meeting so many people from different countries.

When I am by myself, I like to spend tranquil time playing with Sudoku, a kind of puzzle. While I live with my mother now, I would like to work for a restaurant or fast food shop, and to live in a group home. I used to work for a KFC restaurant and I loved it.

I will do small things that I can do together with the people I like, and realize the future life that I am hoping for.