

A ball for every child



It may be hard to imagine, but not all youngster around the globe have access to a ball: myball.ch, a project for children worldwide, is seeking to change this. In the last three years it has given 18,000 kids in 20 countries their own ball – the first in their lives. Swiss WorldCargo has contributed to this exciting project by transporting some 4000 balls free of charge from Shanghai to Zurich last spring.

Every child, under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, has a right to rest and leisure and a right to engage in play and recreational activities. It was during two volunteer assignments in orphanages in Jamaica that André and Yvonne Steiner, a couple from Switzerland, realized that not all children are granted such right and decided to do something.

That ‘something’ has already given their very first ball to some 18,000 children aged between three and ten all over the globe since they founded the myball.ch project in August 2013, with the support of their daughters Katja and Laura.

Myball.ch is funded partly through donations and partly through sales of the yellow balls in Switzerland. As Laura Steiner explains: “For 20 Swiss francs – the price of one of our balls – we can make ten balls to give away.” All the money raised go into the project: every single franc is used to make new balls, and all the administrative and organizational costs are privately met.

Children in pre-schools, primary schools, orphanages and homes for the disabled along with young long-term hospital patients have all received myball.ch balls. In Sri Lanka, balls have been given to children in Kosgoda, where UNESCO has built new settlements following the tsunami. In Iraq and Syria, refugee children were brought balls by their countryfolk in Switzerland, under far-from-easy conditions. Children in Moldavia were able to keep

the balls that a group of youngsters from Switzerland had taken out for a recreational programme. And in the arid stony desert of Morocco small children were given balls to play with while their parents sold hot tea by the road.

“Every ball we give brings so much joy to a child,” the Steiners report. “Not just for them, but also for their parents, who have no money for toys.” This is also confirmed in the feedback on www.myball.ch from the organizations and the travellers who have distributed the balls in the various countries. At the moment some 2,000 balls are on their way to Jordan, to be given out to Syrian refugee children. “We hope that when they play with them, the kids can forget for a few moments the harsh realities around them,” says Yvonne.

There may be more life-essential things: food, education, medical care. But the opportunity to play should never be overlooked. “The sheer delight among the children we give a ball to is a huge motivation for us to keep going,” concludes Yvonne. “And on top of that, children unconsciously learn so much through playing that will help them in their later lives.”

Further information: www.myball.ch

Like to support the myball.ch project? Here’s how:

By making a donation: Bank: UBS AG
SWIFT: UBSWCHZH80A
IBAN: CH30 0025 8258 1053 2801 F
Beneficiary: myball.ch, CH-8965 Berikon

By buying balls: One ball costs CHF 20.00 plus postage.
To order, call the Steiner Family on
056 633 4838
or email them at info@myball.ch

By delivering balls: Will you be travelling in the near future to a Third World country where you have contacts with the locals? Then please get in touch with the Steiners using the contact details above!