



Room for kids to fill up their senses

By Ahmad Fairuz Othman

THE Ronald McDonald sensory room at the Spastics Children's Association of Johor (SCAJ) at Jalan Dato Menteri, Johor Baru, will be of great benefit to children with cerebral palsy.

The facility has equipment which will stimulate the children physically and mentally through their senses — sight, smell, taste, touch, and hearing.

The facility aims to create a calm and comfortable environment for disabled children, and using the Snoezelen method, or controlled multisensory stimulation which was developed in the United Kingdom.

Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) Malaysia vice-president, Daniel Chan said a sensory room cost RM80,000 to set up.

The facility was to help children

with special needs in the country.

"So far, we have set up sensory rooms at centres for special children in Selangor, Perak, Kuala Lumpur, Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang, and now in Johor.

"Next up, will be sensory rooms in centres in Seberang Perai Tengah, Penang, and Malacca," said Chan during the launch of the RMHC sensory room at the Spastic Children's Association of Johor last Thursday.

SCAJ patron Raja Zarith Sofiah Almarhum Sultan Idris Shah officiated the event.

Chan said the RMHC received many positive response from parents and caregivers of disabled children nationwide who have used the sensory rooms before.

He said that many were pleased with the facilities as they provided a comfortable learning environment for cerebral palsy children.

"Studies have shown that the Snoezelen approach has a significant impact on the children's mental and physical development, and improves their ability to focus," said Chan.

Raja Zarith Sofiah praised the RMHC for their efforts in setting up sensory rooms.

Meanwhile, SCAJ chairman Tunku Yan Nazihah Tunku Laxamana Nasir urged corporate-related bodies such as the Ronald McDonald House Charities to help maintain the facility, which cost about RM150,000.

The SCAJ and the Special Education School under its management helps in the rehabilitation of children with cerebral palsy.

The school at 138, Jalan Dato Menteri, Johor Baru, provides training courses for cerebral palsy patients of various ages.

For information, contact SCAJ at 07-223 5452.



The Ronald McDonald sensory room is a comfortable place for children with cerebral palsy to learn



Raja Zarith Sofiah watches a cerebral palsy child perform a task at the sensory room after the launch at the Spastic Children's Association of Johor recently. — Pictures by Zulkarnain Ahmad Tajuddin



Raja Zarith Sofiah (left) and SCAJ chairman Tunku Yan Nazihah Tunku Laxamana Nasir (centre) receiving a mock key from RMHC Malaysia vice-president Daniel Chan.



Raja Zarith Sofiah Almarhum Sultan Idris Shah with Priya Darshini Kumar 11, when visiting the Ronald McDonald sensory room during its launch at the Spastic Children's Association of Johor recently.