

Playing Volleyball, Calming the Heart of Refugees

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation
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Now the refugees are unable to continue the journey to the country of their dreams and are forced to remain in Serbia. The mood of many of them is not stable. The Tzu Chi volunteers saw that the young people had, despite their difficulties, used pieces of cloth and roots of trees to create a simple ball-playing area. So the volunteers provided a net for them, in the hope that they can ease their spirits while they wait.

On March 31, to improve the mood of the refugees, they used sports and activities to calm their hearts. They continued to provide portions of instant rice, adapting it to meet the taste of the refugees. In addition, they gave to the Syrian refugees 100 napkins, 80 sanitary pads and eight boxes of women's products; these were received by the refugee committee.



Since the mood of the refugees was not stable, the Tzu Chi volunteers specially provided a net, in the hope that, in the course of exercise, the pressure in their heart and their sense of anxiety would be eased. So the refugee committee and the volunteers together played a game of volleyball with the refugees.

In addition to organizing this game, the volunteers led the children in singing a song in English "Head and Shoulders". During the singing, the volunteers realized that the refugees had a sense of fear and anxiety. So they also led them in signing "Love and Care" in English. Although there was a language gap, through the use of sign language, they were able to narrow the gap.

In recent days, the volunteers have been preparing instant rice; they provided in addition yoghurt they had bought locally. Through observation and inquiries over several days, they discovered that the refugees like to eat rice one grain at a time. Therefore volunteer Yang Wen-Cun reduced the amount of water. So the instant rice now suits the taste of the refugees.



To reduce the amount of waste, volunteers prepared reusable bowls to served instant rice. When they were given back, one had been broken. One young refugee voluntarily stood up and said to others that everyone should cherish and love everything.

"Tzu Chi is different to other charity groups," he said. "The volunteers who come to help us do not receive any salary ... You really should not destroy this bowl. It is not easy to damage a

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plastic bowl. Tzu Chi has brought the instant rice from so far away. We should truly cherish it ..." The young man encouraged everyone to cherish material things and not waste them.

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