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Outing in the woods

EMBRACING nature and what it had to offer were but some of the wonderful memories 40 children took home recently.

The children from Rumah Amal Limpahan Kasih and Pusat Jagaan Baitul Hidayah in Puchong as well as Rumah K.I.D.S. from Subang Jaya, were part of an overnight camping experience at Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM).

The two-day activity courtesy of the Malaysian Timber Council (MTC) saw the children, aged between nine and 16 years old, learning how to pitch their own tents from FRIM rangers.

The rangers also took them on a challenging 500m hike to the Canopy Walkway and taught them about the various trees and plants that were visible on the trail.

The children were in high spirits and once they reached the walkway, they bravely crossed the 200m long bridge that was suspended approximately 30m above ground.

Up in the air, they were given the chance to observe the breathtaking view of the Kuala

Lumpur skyline.

Following their bold walk above the trees, they were challenged to an obstacle course that tested their endurance, resourcefulness, speed and teamwork.

The children also received a lesson on sustainable forest management policies from MTC Communications and Investments Division senior director Suria Zainal.

Suria said the forest has many resources which are used in everyday life such as timber which is used to make furniture and paper.

"It also acts as a natural habitat for many animals and that is why we have to carefully manage the forest to prevent any loss of endangered species or environmental damage," she said.

The highlight of the trip was the unique Night Walk experience; the children trekked through the forest to discover the mysterious and fascinating world of nocturnal animals.

"The Night Walk was the best part of the camping trip. It was a fun experience but also the most interesting and memorable

one because everything looked and felt completely different in the dark," said 12-year old Intan Liyana Abu Bakar from Rumah Amal Limpahan Kasih.

The children woke up early on the second morning in anticipation of the Treasure Hunt – the climax of their two-day adventure.

Working in groups of four or five, they competed against each other to solve puzzles and riddles, with clues to the answers found along the trails they had trekked through the previous day.

Three teams won prizes from MTC for taking the top three spots while the remaining teams were rewarded with consolation prizes that consisted of hampers.

Matthew Lee, 13, who is from Rumah K.I.D.S. described the camp as an awesome adventure and wished it could have lasted longer.

Twin brothers Mohd Airel Ezani Mohd Azhar and Mohd Airel Ezhar Mohd Azhar, nine, of Pusat Jagaan Baitul Hidayah, had fun playing outdoors and observing forest insects in their natural habitat.



A stroll in the air: The children crossing the canopy walkway at FRIM.