

For Immediate Release

MOTTAINAI! Recycle, Reduce, Reuse

A CSR community campaign initiated by Panasonic Malaysia

Subang Jaya 8 September 2009 – MOTTAINAI! Forty pre-school kids from Subang Jaya will get a taste of what it's like to Mottainai for a good cause today.

They are the first batch of young Malaysians to participate in this pilot project–“Mottainai”, a community-driven campaign to raise children's awareness of resource conservation especially in Recycling, Reducing and Reusing.

Panasonic Malaysia will give the kids of Beaconhouse Pre-School a taste of what it's like to be eco-friendly by introducing Mottainai to them.

What is Mottainai?

The expression "Mottainai!" can be uttered alone as an exclamation when something useful, such as food or time, is wasted. The word closest to Mottainai in English is "What a waste!", "Do not waste!"

The participants will be introduced to the animated character “Mottainai Grandma” from a book of the same title by Japanese author Mariko Shinju. In the drawings, Grandma looks a little stern with her hair up in a bun and cane in hand. She will appear when someone do something “Mottainai” to remind them not to waste. And there's no avoiding her eyes.

"Mottainai!" she says to her grandson, who is brushing his teeth. "One cup of water is enough!"

Throughout the whole programme, the children will be given ideas on how they can conserve water, electricity and even food. Panasonic Malaysia's key facilitator Cik Normah Nordin a renowned fine arts artist, theatre activist and child development educator takes the lead in getting the kids all jived up in the various activities planned out for them. Assisting the key facilitator is Encik Aiman Roslan a music, filming and broadcasting practitioner. A team of university students will also be on hand to assist in facilitating the program.

Panasonic Malaysia corporate communications & branding general manager Azizah Wahid said the program is part of the company's corporate social responsibility on education and environment at the grass root level targeting the pre-school children.

"It's a hands-on approach on a softer note. We will show the children how being eco-friendly is easy and at the same time interesting. Through the Mottainai approach and understanding, we hope children will find it fun and remember them through activities conducted," she said.

Azizah added that: "We will provide the kids with simple and basic introductions using the Mottainai interactive teaching materials that covers 4 areas namely, "What's Mottainai", "Is this Mottainai", "Where is Mottainai activity" and "Conclusion about Mottainai".

"All work and no play are definitely not in the books for these kids. They will have activities to keep them busy like storytelling, making recycled items from paper-mache and performing arts through singing, dancing and acting".

The participants will in the following weeks also be involved in several activities which will give them an insight into how to recycle, reduce and reuse. They will also be working on a special project using recycled items which will be showcased during the Panasonic Malaysia's Eco Ideas Experience exhibition on October 1 to October 4 2009 at Mid Valley Exhibition Centre.

About Mottainai

Mottainai is thoughtful Japanese word to think about our gifts that come from nature or persons who make our products. Mottainai is best described in English as “What a waste!” and “Do not waste!”. It refers to a situation in which something of value is being wasted or used without careful consideration or a sense of regret concerning waste when an object or resource is not properly utilized.

Kenyan environmentalist Honorable Professor Wangari Maathai of Kenya, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004, has promoted the word Mottainai as an eco-friendly word which could express 3R in English as "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle". Mottainai also includes 4th R which is Respect.

Maathai visited Japan for an event related to the Kyoto Protocol in 2005. At this time, she learned this word through coverage of the event in the Mainichi Shimbun newspaper. She was impressed by the depth of similarity between the Japanese meaning of the word and equivalent concepts in English and Swahili concerning people's responsibility to respect the earth through frugality and conservation.

Since learning the word, she has promoted its adoption in the international lexicon as a symbol of the traditional worldwide concept of respect for the environment. She has used the word in numerous speeches on a world lecture tour, and while addressing the UN Commission on the Status of Women, she led the audience in a repeated chant of Mottainai.

The concept and story of Mottainai is presented in Mariko Shinju's the author of “Mottainai Grandma”. She has sold more than 400,000 copies, reminding Japanese about the tradition of Mottainai, of not being wasteful. She wrote the book because her 4-year-old son didn't understand why it was so important to finish his food.

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