

Canada - Medical Supplies to Street Health

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation
Thursday, 23 April 2009 00:00



Over the past four years, the Tzu Chi Toronto office has been donating medical supplies regularly to Street Health, a foundation that provides care and services to the homeless. On April 23, aside from providing the regular medical supplies to Street Health, Tzu Chi volunteers also served hot meals and handed out 250 packs of daily necessities to the homeless.

To prepare the 250 packs, volunteers began checking out prices at many stores a week before the distribution. After making all the purchases, including toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo, conditioner, body lotion, razors, soap, and socks, over ten volunteers worked together to pack the supplies.

On the distribution day, a group of volunteers met up at around 6 a.m. to prepare the food to be served to the homeless. Everyone worked their best to come up with a filling and delicious meal.

Before the distribution began, some of the homeless people helped Tzu Chi volunteers unload the supplies and set up the site. Many said that the thermal blankets the volunteers had given out last year were very light and warm. Tzu Chi blankets are made from recycled PET bottles and are thus environmentally friendly.

After a donation ceremony, food was served to the homeless. The food was soon gone. Apparently the homeless greatly enjoyed it.

Then came the time for the distribution of the daily supply packs. While some volunteers were busy with the distribution work, others spent time with the homeless and chatted with them. A volunteer shared what she learned through her talk with an 82-year-old man. She said that though the elderly man had eight children, none of them was able to stay by his side to take care of him. Yet despite that, he didn't complain but instead said that nothing was more important than keeping oneself happy and being content and grateful toward life. The volunteer greatly appreciated the old man's attitude.

When some of the homeless interacted with the volunteers, and when they helped set up the site and clean it up after the distribution, it revealed that the Great Love with which the Tzu Chi volunteers gave of themselves had gradually come to take root in the hearts of the homeless.