

2017

STEPPING STONES

ANNUAL REPORT





<http://www.steppingstoneschina.net>

A person wearing a teal long-sleeved shirt and a blue wristband is writing on a whiteboard. The background is a classroom with a window showing greenery outside. The image has a teal color overlay.

OUR MISSION

**TO IMPROVE
THE EDUCATION
AND GENERAL
WELFARE OF
DISADVANTAGED
CHILDREN
IN CHINA**

DIRECTOR'S WORDS

As I look back on all our achievements in 2017, as beautifully summarised in our annual report, I feel incredibly proud. Proud of our great team, who have managed to maintain and grow nine different programs throughout the year; of our volunteers, who have taught thousands of students in Shanghai and in nine other provinces; but most of all of our students, who continue to make great strides in their studies.

It's hard to believe that it's already 12 years since all this began, when I first walked into a school for migrants in Shanghai. In that time, the schooling for migrant children in Shanghai has improved dramatically. Not only is it now provided for free, the schools are in good condition and the quality of the teaching has improved massively. In spite of these improvements, and thanks to the hard work of our staff and volunteers to continuously improve our teaching quality, the schools still highly value the English lessons provided by Stepping Stones' volunteers, as well as the professional training that we are now able to provide for their English teachers, helping them to develop in new directions.

While the education for migrant children in Shanghai continues to improve, there are increasing numbers of children who are unable to stay with their parents in the cities, and are left behind in rural schools, where they lack English teachers, and where the quality of education lags behind that in the urban schools. On the plus side, the government has invested heavily to ensure internet connectivity throughout rural China, and as a result, thanks to the generosity of increasing numbers of donors and foundations, we have gradually been able to help more and more of these children, not only by sending volunteers to teach in rural schools, but also by recruiting and training volunteers based all over the world to teach them through the internet.

Building on the success of our Shanghai Teacher Training Program, as well as our Videolink Program, we started a new program to train rural English teachers through videolink. I am very excited by the potential of technology to allow us to significantly increase the impact of our programs, as well as help teachers and students in the most remote parts of China. I am also excited to see our digital literacy program grow and develop as it moves into its third year in two middle schools for migrant children living in Jiashan.

It goes without saying that none of this would be possible without the great generosity of all our donors and volunteers, so I would like to end with a big thank you to all of those many people who helped achieve these impressive results in 2017.

- Corinne Richeux Hua,
Executive Director

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YEAR IN REVIEW

During 2017:

1,584 Stepping Stones volunteers delivered **7,241** English lessons to **10,927** disadvantaged children at more than **30** project sites in Shanghai, as well as in rural China through volunteer tours and through the internet.

Our Stepping Up program provided **562** digital literacy lessons to **489** students in Jiashan, Zhejiang Province.

We supplied professional training to **77** English teachers.

Our I Care Program donated spectacles to **270** children.



ABOUT STEPPING STONES

Stepping Stones is a non-profit organisation registered in Shanghai, China. We have been recruiting and training volunteers to teach English to disadvantaged children in China since 2006.

Our Mission

To improve the education and general welfare of disadvantaged children in China.

Our Vision

Equal access to a quality education and general welfare for all children in China.

Our Objectives

1. To increase students' confidence and self-esteem;
2. To optimise students' access to better quality education and work opportunities in the future;
3. To connect communities and to promote inter-cultural understanding;
4. To promote responsible and high-impact volunteering.

Legal Status

In December 2013, Stepping Stones was officially registered in Minhang, Shanghai as a private non-enterprise organisation. Stepping Stones' official Chinese name is 上海闵行区华漕铺路石青少年发展中心 (Shanghai Minhang District Huacao Pulushi Youth Development Centre).

Stepping Stones is subject to the laws of the People's Republic of China. Stepping Stones is strictly non-political and non-religious.





VOLUNTEERS & BENEFICIARIES

Volunteers

Stepping Stones' greatest asset is its large community of volunteers, who are eager for high-impact volunteering opportunities in China.

Stepping Stones' task is to recruit, train, support and resource volunteers to provide services needed by our beneficiaries.

Our volunteers come from all over the world and all walks of life, including high school students, university students and company employees.



Our Beneficiaries

Stepping Stones' main beneficiaries are children whose education has been negatively impacted by rural-urban migration in China. Some of these children have moved with their parents to cities where they do not have access to regular public schools due to residence issues, and are enrolled in schools for the children of migrant workers, whose educational standards fall behind the urban public schools. Others are enrolled in public schools, but need extra help with their schoolwork, which their parents are unable to provide.

Arguably the most disadvantaged of our beneficiaries are the children who are unable to go with their parents to the cities, and who are left behind in rural boarding schools or living with other family members. The educational standards in rural primary schools lag significantly behind urban schools, and these "left-behind" children also lack parental support.





STAFF TEAM

Our staff team increased from 13 to 16 in 2017, to handle our increased project scope. Founder Corinne Hua continued to lead the team, supported by Program Director Sebastien Carrier and Training Director Ross Pitcairn.

Finance and Legal Intern Kelly Kuang joined us on a part-time basis to help our Finance Manager Eva Hua to handle the increased volume of regulatory work caused by the new Charity Law and the Foreign NGO Management Law.

A grant from Shanghai Charity Foundation enabled us to hire Désirée Nieto as Teacher Training Consultant.

Selena Xu replaced Lynn Yeh as Tutoring Program Coordinator.

Program Manager Sherry Jia gradually handed over the Tutoring Program to Selena, in order to specialize in coordinating with our partner schools for our rural volunteering and videolink programs.

Projects Manager Gloria Han continued to manage our I Care Program as well as our Corporate Events.

Volunteer Manager Morgan Banaszek managed our rural volunteering tours for both individuals and groups.

Sally Wangsawijaya was promoted to Classroom Teaching Program Manager.

Wang Cui continued to manage Fundraising and Communications, and Dóra Havassy continued as part-time HR Manager.

Gao Xiaolan coordinated our Shanghai school partners for our Classroom Teaching Program and Teacher Training Program.

Ben Hu joined Teddy Shi as a second Computer Teacher for our Stepping Up Digital Literacy Program, thanks to Transparent Fish Fund and The Chao Foundation.



From left to right:

Second Row:

Ross, Dóra, Cui, Sebastien, Morgan, Xiaolan, Ben, Sherry, Sally.

First Row:

Teddy, Corinne, Désirée, Selena, Eva, Kelly, Gloria.

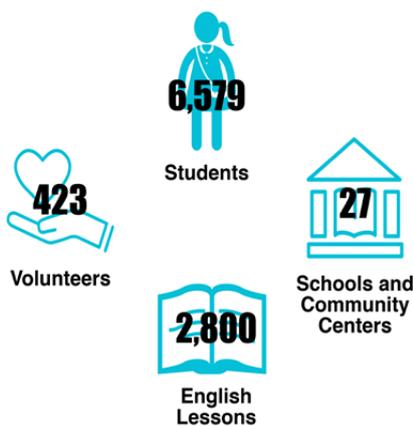


English Teaching

English is one of the three core subjects in the Chinese school curriculum, and the one that poses most challenges to rural children. English ability is the biggest differentiator between urban and rural Chinese children, perpetuating the gap in educational and employment opportunities. Stepping Stones' work began in response to requests from the principals of migrant schools in Shanghai and rural Chinese schools to teach English to their students.

Teaching Nomads and Disney English continued to send their teachers to teach with us, and we are grateful to Australian telecoms company Optus and ĪDKIDS Foundation for supporting our program in two schools for migrant children in Jiashan, Zhejiang province, helping us to provide 389 lessons to more than 1,050 students there.

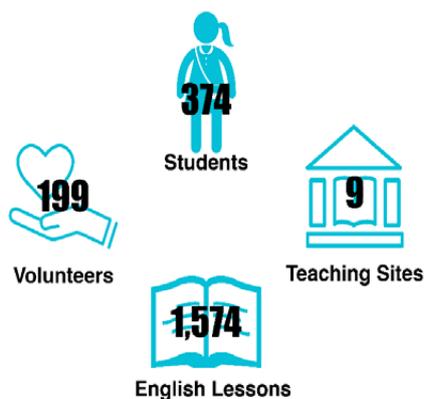
Classroom Teaching



Stepping Stones' pioneer program teaches oral English in a creative and engaging way to disadvantaged students in Shanghai and Zhejiang. In response to the increased number of volunteers who are available on the weekend, we started new weekend classes at A Dream, Agape, Firefly and Mingde Community Centres. We continued to work together with Educating Girls of Rural China (EGRC) and Shanghai Young Bakers (SYB) to teach conversational English to mature students, and maintained relationships with most of our other school and community centre partners.



Tutoring



Every Saturday in term time, Stepping Stones' high school student volunteers travel to community centres all over Shanghai to provide English tuition to children whose parents cannot afford the help.

As this program entered its fifth year, our focus was on improving teaching quality rather than scaling up. Volunteer coordinators were given extra training to enable them to evaluate team performance, and with additional support, our volunteers produced more creative lesson plans. We received excellent feedback from our students and their parents, and increased demand for enrolment.

"Thank you for your altruistic service and selfless dedication to spreading positive energy in society and allowing more students to improve their English skills efficiently."

Since our cooperation in 2012, Stepping Stones has provided English classes to our students every spring and autumn term, as well as an English summer program. This effectively solves the problem of childcare during the holidays, allowing migrant parents to work without worries. The children love the alternative teaching methods. I express sincere gratitude on behalf of the parents.

Xupu Service Management Association will continuously support Stepping Stones in the future."

*- Mr. Xu Yinwu,
Xupu Service Management Association*



Our volunteering program in Xupu was given a “Community Revival” award in 2017 by the local government.

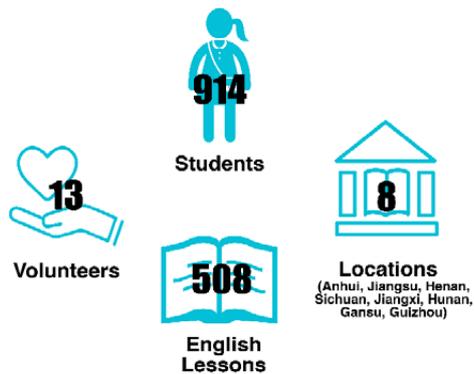


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Rural Volunteering - Individuals



Our Rural Individual Volunteering Program involves sending individual volunteers to teach English to children in rural China for three weeks or more.

Thanks to the generosity of several donors, we were able to send more volunteers to more remote and needy areas in 2017, and added two new teaching locations in Hunan and Jiangxi Provinces.

"As class representative, I took responsibility for leading the other students. Many students did not dare to talk with teachers, so I encouraged them little by little to strengthen the relationship between students and teachers.

When assisting the teacher of the younger students, I was able to consolidate my basic knowledge as well as discovering and correcting some gaps in my knowledge.

As students, we generally have a lot of repressed stress, and no time to relax in nature. This camp gave me the chance to have a break. Standing in the quiet forest, I could close my eyes and listen to the birds. Every time we came back from outdoors, I felt relaxed and happy.

Overall, I improved my oral English by talking with foreign teachers. Now when my teachers ask me to read in class, they say I have less of a Chinese accent. My grammar and listening also improved.

I have wonderful memories of this program, and I look forward to more such opportunities in the future."

*- Zhao Keyu (Woody),
Qiuzhuang Summer Program participant*

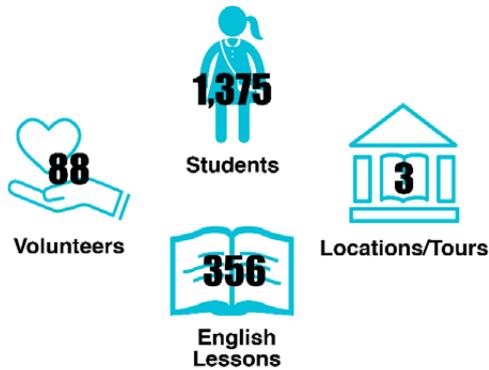
"If you are considering taking part in a volunteer placement with Stepping Stones, definitely do it! The experience will offer a completely new view on China, give you the chance to make a very real difference to the lives of ambitious students, and be one of the most rewarding and inspirational things you do."

*-Helen Roxburgh, Longxi, Gansu,
Volunteer*



Zhao Keyu (Woody)

Rural Volunteering - Groups



Since 2007, we have been taking volunteer groups to teach oral English lessons to children in rural China over a weekend or for a full week. In 2017, we took groups from PricewaterhouseCoopers, the Shanghai French School and St Paul's School Shanghai to teach children in Henan, Jiangsu and Anhui respectively.



"In class, the volunteers let students enjoy fun English conversations and interesting games to help them with English learning. The class experience greatly elevated students' confidence and interest in speaking English."

- an English teacher, Guocun, Jiangsu





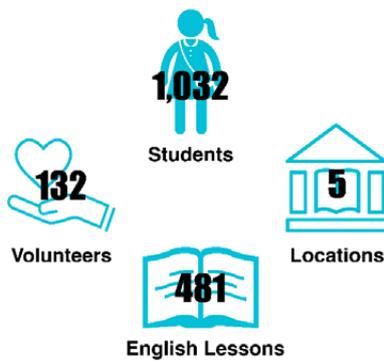
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希望文武学校

希望文武学校

Videolink



Our Videolink Program scaled up more dramatically than any of our programs in 2017. Starting from just two small pilot projects in 2016, we taught regular English classes via the internet at 5 primary schools in rural parts of Shanghai, Anhui, Henan and Sichuan. We developed and refined our training and teaching methodologies, and built a full curriculum of lesson plans for grades 1-5.

One reason we were able to scale up so quickly was thanks to Bloomberg, whose employees in their Shanghai, Beijing, Hong Kong, Singapore and Princeton offices volunteered to teach with us throughout the year. As well as providing volunteers, Bloomberg and their staff also donated the funding we needed to be able to scale up the program quickly, in what has become a very fruitful partnership.



"Bloomberg is proud to be one of Stepping Stones' first corporate partners in helping expand its innovative Videolink Program to more rural schools around China. Over 100 Bloomberg employees from four Asian cities and the U.S. volunteered as remote teachers in 2017."

- Sandi Liu, Bloomberg L.P., Philanthropy & Engagement



PROGRAMS

"Although I was excited about this new English course, I was also worried about my English skills. I had always tried to avoid speaking English in front of others. In the first class, the big smile on the teacher's face comforted me. I told myself that I was going to take this opportunity to learn and speak as much as I could."

At the end of the course, I had learned more than I expected. Not only had my communication skills improved dramatically, but also my courage to try new things. I want to thank all my videolink teachers for their efforts. Although we were a hundred miles away from each other, it felt like you were sitting in front of me. In the future, I hope my teachers could come to my school and visit us."

*- Zhang Bo, Henan,
Student*

"I have known for the longest time my passion on giving back to the community is by teaching English to left-behind children in rural areas. I was fortunate to find out about Stepping Stones' Videolink Teaching Program through my company's philanthropy event. When I started thinking about teaching English via videolink, it made me very nervous, and I wanted to give the most perfect lesson for the kids. I was wondering how can I get to know the individual kids when I'm not physically present in the classroom amongst the students. And the worry didn't just stop there: I remembered that I would be teaching in Chinese rural areas where technology isn't the greatest at all."

However, the on-boarding experience with Stepping Stones was really great. Ross helped me with training as well as teaching materials. Everything was super organized! The kids were all awesome. They are very smart and bright. And with the help of the Classroom Teacher I managed to engage all the kids in a very fun way (sing a song, play games, etc.). We learned about time, animals, places and many more things."

This teaching experience is truly the best feeling I ever had. I'm really thankful to my company and Stepping Stones for helping me along this journey."

*- Lisawaty Indayang, Singapore,
Volunteer*





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Teacher Training

Shanghai Teacher Training



Thanks to continued funding from Shanghai Charity Foundation, we continued to support English teacher trainees at our first three Shanghai schools through our Champions Training, while starting to train English teachers in three new schools.

Video production company I.D. Creations helped us to shoot a teacher-training video, starring our trainee Shirley Wu. Shirley demonstrated live on video how she has learned to teach a whole lesson almost entirely in English, and as a result, we now have a set of training movies in an authentic classroom setting.



Videolink Teacher Training



We were grateful to receive funding from the American Chamber of Commerce Shanghai to pilot our new Videolink Teacher Training Program. The aim of this program is to provide training and support to isolated English teachers in disadvantaged rural areas of China via the internet.

Our trainers' first task was to develop a methodology for developing teachers with varying levels of English online. We came up with an innovative four-stage approach: (1) Online self-study; (2) Live online class review and discussion; (3) Live online task presentation; (4) Off-line application of task activity in teachers' real-life classrooms. Teachers supported and validated each other by making short videos of their classroom activities and sharing them with their fellow trainees.

We visited five of the trainees at their schools in Henan and Sichuan, where we were able to see the beneficial effects of the training on the teachers, while addressing their individual challenges and concerns.

We aim to offer the course to 20 more teachers in the spring semester of 2018, and hope to be able to secure funding to support many more English teachers in 2019 and beyond.



"I am lucky that I had the chance to attend this program. Ross is a patient and responsible teacher. He prepared classes carefully and always encouraged us to speak English. We learnt about teaching techniques, how to do role-plays, how to teach grammar, etc. In each lesson, Ross gave many details about how to do it.

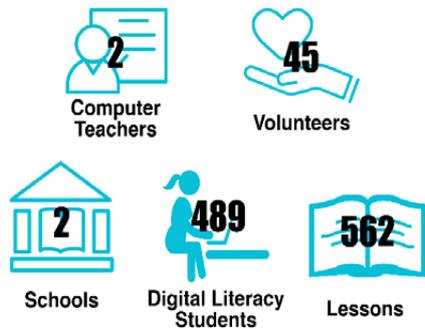
All in all, I want to say thanks to Ross and the organizers. I've learnt really useful things from the training, and I will try to apply what I have learnt, putting it into practice."

- Iris Zhang, Sichuan, Teacher

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Stepping Up Digital Literacy



Digital literacy is basic for survival in the modern world. Unfortunately, many rural Chinese children have no computers at home or school, and no computer lessons, so their digital literacy skills are very poor. This contributes to a low rate of high school or vocational school enrolment (less than 40%), and the risk of exploitation, abuse and disadvantage when they enter the workplace from junior middle school.

By providing the schools with the necessary hardware, along with a carefully planned curriculum and properly trained teachers and volunteers, we can help children develop the life skills and digital literacy skills they need to meet the challenges of a tech-focused future.

Thanks to the support of Transparent Fish Fund and The Chao Foundation, we were able to meet our goal of teaching children at one more school in Jiashan, Zhejiang province.

We also developed a new partnership with Sanda University to recruit university students as volunteers. Through this partnership, we will be able to teach more children in these two schools in 2018.



I Care



Rural Chinese children have roughly the same levels of myopia and other vision issues as urban children, but their parents rarely buy glasses or fund corrective surgery for lack of funds and medical insurance, and above all lack of understanding of the importance of correcting poor vision.

Studies show that uncorrected myopia can seriously impact a child's educational success. We have witnessed a sudden improvement in the grades of children receiving glasses through our I Care program.

In 2017, with the support of several sponsors, we provided eye-care services for children at two migrant schools in Shanghai. Eye testing was conducted by Shanghai Ai'er Eye Hospital and glasses were provided to children if needed.

Our I Care program promotes awareness of eye-care issues among parents, children and their local teachers. A donation from Wellington College International Shanghai allowed our team to develop an educational animation entitled "[I Wear Glasses](#)". With the help of our new partner, Save the Children, the animation has been seen by thousands of children in Shanghai.





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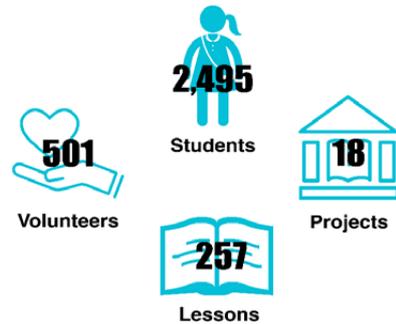


CORPORATE & UNIVERSITY EVENTS

In 2017, Stepping Stones arranged one-day projects for volunteers from various corporate and university groups to engage in inter-cultural exchanges and learning activities with migrant children. These volunteers took children on outings or taught them English, arts and crafts or eye care knowledge.

Volunteers came from London Business School, Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth, Notre Dame University, New York University, Duke University, Georgia Institute of Technology, Target, Christie's, SAP Global, Hasbro, Walmart and GAP.

During the National Day Holiday, some of our students and sponsors were very excited to be invited by Cirque du Soleil to the dress rehearsal and premier of their Kooza show in Shanghai!



马戏表演的真是太精彩了！听爸爸说，每个马戏的背后都藏着他们血与泪的付出，他们经过成百上千次的训练，才有了今天的成功。他们带给我们那么精彩的表演，我要感谢他们，也要学习他们不停努力，坚持不懈的精神！

"The circus show was eye-opening! My father told me that the amount of efforts took by the artists to achieve today's outcome is hard to measure. They would not achieve today's successes without practising continuously. I want to thank every participant for putting up this brilliant show, as well as teaching me the key to success."

-One student



FUNDRAISING

Stepping Stones participated in several local crowd-funding campaigns in 2017, not only to raise funds to support our projects, but more importantly to raise awareness.

In May, we were proud to partner with the British Consulate General Shanghai to join 2017 Egg Walkathon, Shanghai's most popular fundraising campaign initiated by Shanghai United Foundation in 2010. Millions of supporters were reached by the team live-stream and media release. Another volunteer team raised more than RMB 50,000 to provide eye care services to disadvantaged children in China.

Stepping Stones cooperated with Shanghai Soong Ching Ling Foundation and Yixun Finance Company to participate in the highly influential Tencent Charity Day from 7-9 September. Over RMB 100,000 was raised both online and offline, which will support our Rural Individual Volunteering program in 2018.

Stepping Stones also became more visible on global fundraising websites, including Global Giving and Benevity, which brought us support from overseas companies (e.g. Google, HB Fuller, Catlin).

We were delighted to continue our partnership with Bloomberg, who provided volunteers for our Videolink Program as well as matching funds to help to sustain the program.



SPONSORS

Stepping Stones is grateful to all its many generous donors, in particular the following organisations who provided the majority of our funding in 2017:

Shanghai Soong Ching Ling Foundation
 Shanghai GuoFeng Charity Foundation
 Transparent Fish Fund & The Chao Foundation
 Tu Wen She
 Shanghai United Foundation
 Bloomberg
 CAF America on behalf of the generosity of
 Target Corporation
 American Chamber of Commerce Shanghai
 Shanghai Charity Foundation
 Global Giving
 İDKIDS FOUNDATION
 EIFM
 HMYD



彭博 Bloomberg



PRO BONO SUPPORTERS

A special thank you to the following service providers, who provide high quality services to us for free, thus helping us to significantly reduce our operational costs:

Big Bamboo
Camel Hospitality Group
Disney English
Epermarket
Epsilon
Homeslice Pizza
I.D. Creations
Mingdao
Nissei Well
O'Melveny & Myers

Rödl & Partner



O'MELVENY & MYERS LLP

epsilon
international™



id creations
branded content

HOMESLICE PIZZA

@per market

Better Quality, Better Life



明道
mingdao.com



camel
hospitality
group 中国

NON-PROFIT PARTNERS

Stepping Stones is proud to have partnerships with many well-respected community organisations, as follows:

- Aboro Foundation
- A Dream Foundation
- Chi Heng Foundation
- Children's Helpers Worldwide
- Educating Girls of Rural China
- Firefly Castle
- Jiuqian Community Centre
- New Citizen Life Centre
- Save the Children
- Shanghai Hua Ai Charity Foundation
- Shanghai Young Bakers
- Sunflower Education Program



2018: LOOKING FORWARD

New Challenges

In 2018, we hope to establish a Shanghai representative office of our Hong Kong partner organisation Stepping Stones China Ltd., in line with the new Foreign NGO Management Law, which will facilitate cross-border collaboration.

We also need to open up new funding sources in order to fund the sustainable growth of our organisation.



New Opportunities

New partnerships with Chi Heng Foundation and the British Chamber of Commerce will allow us to continue to expand our videolink and teacher training programs to help more students and teachers in rural China.

By the end of 2018, with funding from Shanghai United Foundation's Egg Walkathon Challenge, and with the support of Meliora Education and our dedicated volunteer team, we aim to have our own full oral English language curriculum for Chinese primary school grades 1-5, which will help us to continue to improve the quality and consistency of our English teaching programs.



To assess the value and impact of our programs on our beneficiaries, evaluations were conducted at 18 program sites in 2017, distributing ‘pre-program’ (or baseline) and ‘post-program’ (or follow-up) survey questionnaires to a total of 2,080 beneficiaries. We asked a variety of questions to assess, for example, students’ confidence and interest in English, or teachers’ perceptions of the improvement in their teaching skills.

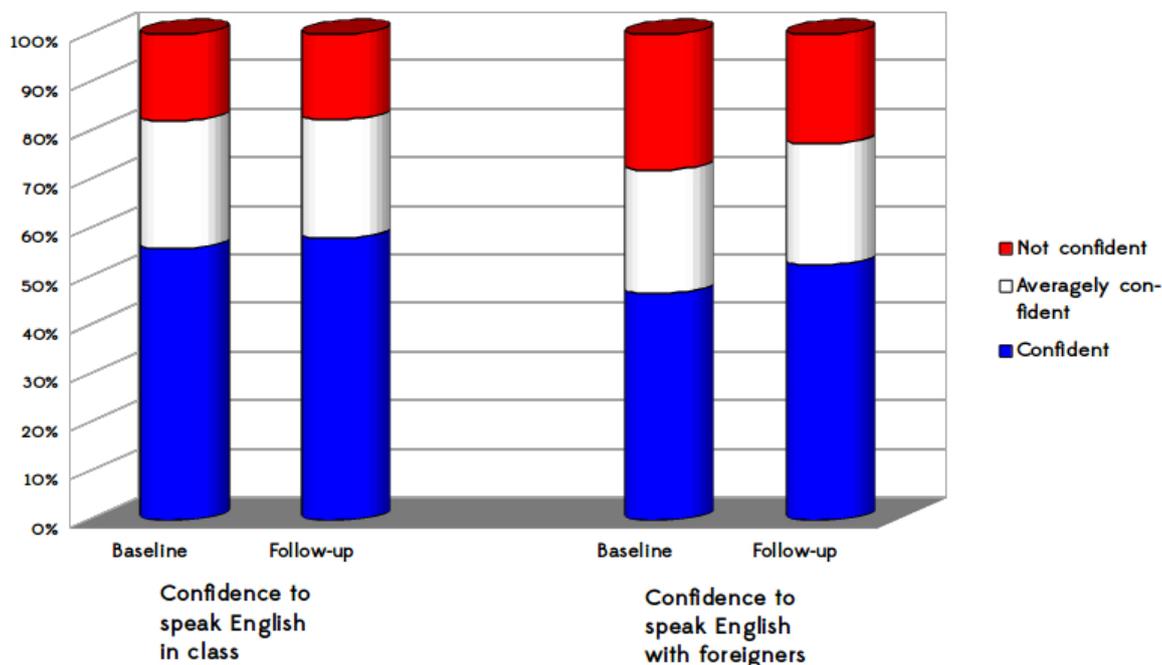
English Teaching Programs

Enhancing students’ English speaking confidence

Stepping Stones’ curriculum is designed to place emphasis upon teaching English through speaking and listening activities. Our volunteers and teachers are trained to provide and develop fun and interactive oral English lessons which motivate and engage students by using only English in the classroom. Our main objectives are to improve students’ motivation and confidence in speaking English, which are two key dimensions of learning a second language.

As can be seen from Figure 1, two questions were asked to assess the impact of our program on the students’ confidence in speaking English. The results indicate a rise between the baseline and the follow-up surveys in the number of students feeling ‘confident’ to use English in class (3.7% increase) and to speak English with foreigners (11.1% increase). These increases suggest that students under our program become more prepared and confident to engage in English-speaking situations and subsequently may be more inclined to exert effort in studying English, which can be arguably translated into an actual language ability outcome.

Figure 1: Students’ confidence to speak English - fall 2016 (baseline) vs. spring 2017 (follow-up)
Migrant students in Shanghai and Jiashan enrolled in Stepping Stones program (n = 1,264)



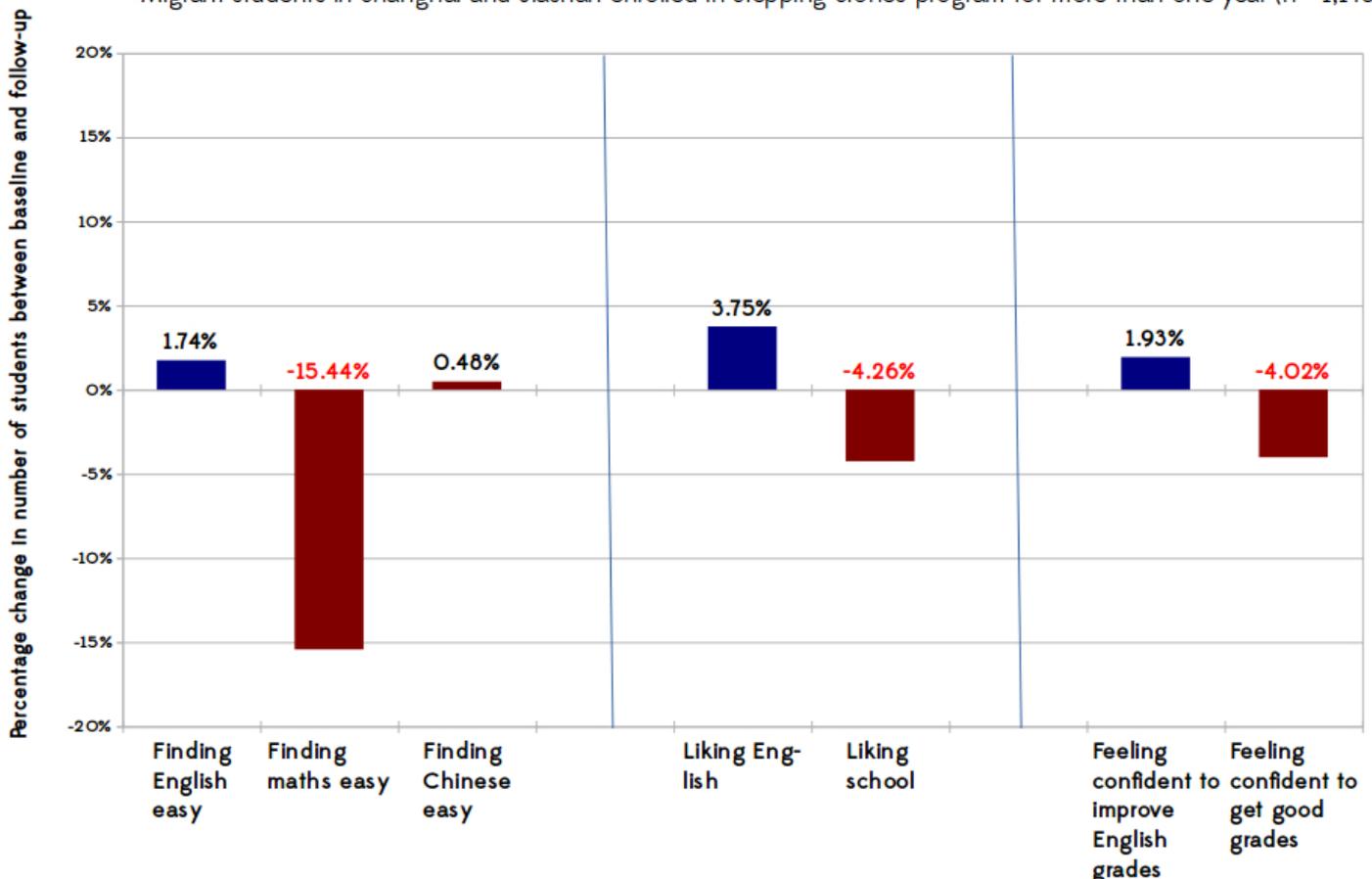
Impacting students' attitude towards English over time

Stepping Stones has been running English teaching programs in China for more than 12 years, serving thousands of children every week. While most of them attend our program for a period of one year, some are enrolled for a longer period of time, from two to five years. Based on data gathered during the 2016-2017 school year from a sample of students enrolled in our program for a second, third or fourth year (n = 1,148), Figure 2 outlines the long-term impact of our program by comparing the attitude towards English with the attitude towards other subjects and school in general.

Figure 2 clearly shows that, by the end of the school year, the percentage of students finding English 'easy' increased more than the percentage of students finding Chinese or mathematics 'easy'. A noteworthy comparison is between the number of students finding English and mathematics 'easy', which rose by 1.74% and decreased by 15.44% respectively.

Figure 2: The relative changes in students' difficulties, interest and confidence in English and other subjects - fall 2016 (baseline) vs spring 2017 (follow-up)

Migrant students in Shanghai and Jiashan enrolled in Stepping Stones' program for more than one year (n = 1,148)



Teacher Training Program

Improving English teachers' confidence and ability

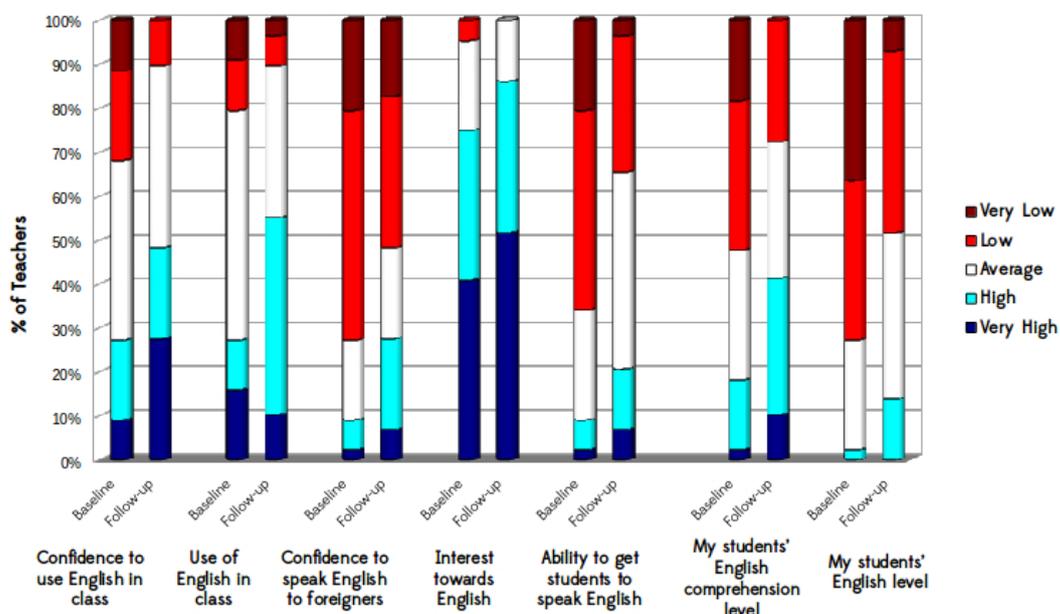
These perceptions towards core subjects are also reflected in the students' confidence to improve or get good grades. As can be seen from Figure 2, the percentage of students feeling confident to improve English grades rose at the end of the school year (1.93% increase), while the percentage of students feeling confident to get good grades decreased (4.02% decrease). Another highlight of the study is the proportion of students reporting liking English, which rose by 3.75% in the post-survey, compared with a decrease of 4.26% in the number of students liking school.

These results suggest that students who are enrolled in our program for a long period of time become more confident and interested in English as time passes, despite an average decrease in motivation and confidence in school. While these results demonstrate the benefit of our program on migrant students' English education, they also provide insight into their general attitude towards school, which seems to deteriorate over time. Further research should be conducted to better understand this problem and develop programs to address it.

In the school year 2016-2017, Stepping Stones has launched a Teacher Training Program at three migrant primary schools in Shanghai. As can be seen from Figure 3, a variety of questions were asked to the trainees to assess the impact of the program on their confidence and ability to teach English.

Three of the most notable findings of the impact evaluation were that by the end of the school year, 102% more teachers were using English in class, 77% more teachers felt confident to speak English in class, and 126% more teachers felt able to get their students to speak English in class. These extremely significant increases highlight one of the many important goals of Stepping Stones' Teacher Training Program, which is to help teachers provide an enriched English learning environment for their students.

Figure 3: Teachers' Self-Assessment of their Language Proficiency, Teaching Skills and their Students' English Abilities - fall 2016 (baseline) vs spring 2017 (follow-up)



Another highlight of the impact evaluation is the proportion of teachers reporting an increase in their students' comprehension level. The number of teachers who thought their students' English comprehension level was either 'high' or 'very high' increased by 128% at the end of the program.

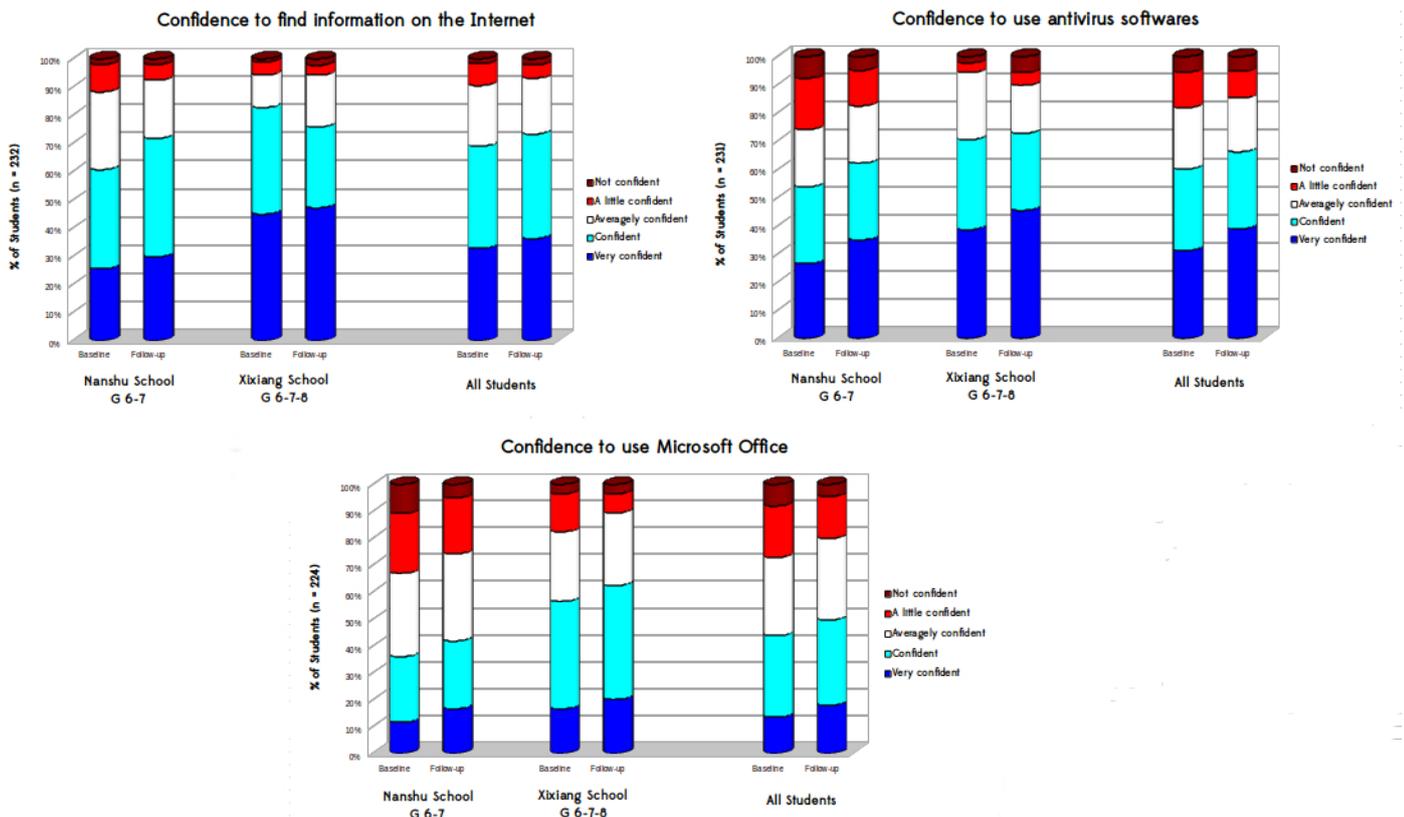
These overarching positive results are extremely encouraging considering that this program only started in 2016. They indicate that teachers under our program are likely to become more confident to use English in class, thus feeling more prepared for engaging their students in their English classes.

Stepping Up Digital Literacy Program

Developing students' confidence and proficiency in computers

As is the case for our English Teaching and Teacher Training programs, the impact evaluation of our Digital Literacy Program has shown positive results. Based on data gathered in the fall semester 2017 at two program sites, Figure 4 compares the baseline and follow-up results of three questions concerning students' confidence in computers. The results indicate a significant rise in the number of students feeling 'confident' or 'very confident' in finding information on the internet (6% increase), using Microsoft Office (12% increase), and using antivirus software (9% increase). These increases highlight one of the many important goals of the program, which is to become more comfortable with using computers to gather information, solve problems, and communicate knowledge.

Figure 4: Students' confidence in using computers - fall 2017 (baseline vs. follow-up)



One of the ways that we strive to help students become more efficient in using computers is to practice typing every week. We are pleased to report that students have significantly increased their typing speed over the course of the Fall Semester 2017. The number of students who thought their typing speed was either 'average' or 'fast' increased by 13%, from 61% to 73%.

Students were also asked if they liked using computers and if they thought that their computer studies would be of benefit to them in the future. The data shows a small but significant increase between the baseline and the follow-up surveys. Across the two schools, the percentage of students liking using computers rose by 9% (from 73% to 81%) and the number of students reporting they thought that their computer studies would be of benefit to them in the future rose by 3% (from 76% to 78%). These results show both students' strong interest towards computers and the great importance they place on the program.

Stepping Stones is encouraged by the results of its 2017 impact evaluations, which suggest that our programs have had a positive impact on the confidence, motivation and skills of our beneficiaries. We will continue to collect and analyze survey data to validate the impact of our programs.

