**Kids in Ningguo, Anhui, China**

**Hard Working Does NOT Necessarily Lead To Success**

Ningguo, a county city of Anhui province, is 180 miles east of Shanghai. Ningguo is a middle-sized city. For an 8-year-old kid, Ningguo looks just like Shanghai, but not as big as Shanghai. Its population is about 380,000, with 200,000 living in the central area of the city. Most areas of Ningguo are either hills or mountains.

Having been living in US for many years, we always believe that if one wants to achieve something, one just needs to work hard. However, this simple and intuitive philosophy does not always hold in many cities of China like Ningguo. There are many kids right here in Ningguo (and in the world) who are suffering from various kinds of misfortunes. Diseases, accidents, losing one or both parents, or in-born defects all post them in a disadvantageous position and take away their basic opportunities to succeed.

We spent two days in visiting four kids in Ningguo. We found that these kids are poor and they really need help.

The first kid we visited was Wanning Li. Wanning is a 10th grade student. When we saw her, she didn’t really talk a lot. She looked very worried. Wanning’s parents have been separated for many years and Wanning is staying with her mother since the separation. Without receiving any child support from her father, Wanning, her mother, and two other family members are living in a one-bed room apartment of size less than 30 square meters (i.e., 320 square foot). One family member has psychotic disorders. Despite all difficulties, Wanning manages to perform well in her study, ranking high in regional and graduation exams.

The second kid was Qinmeng Lu, who is an 8th grade student with a hole on her skull after a traffic accident which also broke up her family. Her mother left the family for good after the accident and she needs to take care of her father who became mentally disable after the accident which injured his brain. Qinmeng also lives with her grant-father and grant-mother. This accident has also left a hole on Qinmeng’s skull and it can only be fixed when she becomes 18 years old. The most valuable things in her house were a small TV and a bike. Despite the unfortunateness along with a hole on her head, Qinmeng is optimistic and open minded. She said thank you to us when we gave her a present.

The other two kids (Rao and Chen) that we visited share similar sufferings. Their living conditions are harsh and their parents are either disable or gone.

In the end of our visit to Qinmeng, she gave us a presence and it was a big rock. In China, there is an idiom that expresses appreciations for someone’s help: a great boon like a rock. To us, this rock has two meanings. One is her appreciations for people’s help. The other one, which is more important, is to solicit further supports to help other kids like Qinmeng, who never give up their hope and study under any difficulties. There are no reasons not to help these kids.

Just like kids in US, these kids also need schooling and good care. To do that, we need a team of volunteers. Dr. Yang, Mr. Hu, and several other volunteers are currently helping these kids. They visit these kids routinely to distribute the donations and make sure that they live in an acceptable condition. Their work is of great importance to these kids and the society.

Volunteers like Dr. Yang and Mr. Wu are just one light of help. There still many kids waiting for support and care. More volunteers are needed to ensure that the kids’ hard work can lead to their success.

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