

RUMAH KITA "OUR HOUSE"



Yayasan Kasih Anak Kanker Indonesia (Indonesian Care for Cancer Kids Foundation) provides services to assist low income families of children who are receiving treatment for cancer. Statistics released by the IARC (International Agency for Research on Cancer) indicate that 1 in every 600 children can potentially suffer from some form of cancer before the age of 16 years.

Cancer in children requires special treatment, expertise and facilities. Once a child is diagnosed with cancer it is not only the child and the parents that will experience the complexity of the burden, it is also other family members, doctors, nurses, schools and the immediate community.

A cancer diagnosis is obviously devastating for any family. Imagine then, the impact on one of the many Indonesian families who are already struggling to survive. Who lack basic necessities, such as appropriate housing.

Rumah Kita is a house in North Jakarta where the staff's aim is to lessen the burden on these families and provide them with a safe, clean and cost free environment during the course of their child's treatment.

Childhood cancer makes up 1-2% of the total number of cancer patients. Early detection and proper treatment can help reduce childhood cancer mortality. Yet early detection depends largely upon prompt diagnosis, appropriate treatment and follow-up, as well as adequate health service infrastructure and patient/family compliance. Rumah Kita is able to improve a child's chances of surviving their cancer by ensuring that families comply with doctor's instructions and follow treatment regimes.

In January 2009 Rumah Kita moved from a tiny kampung home to a rented, larger house. Through a number of sponsors they have been able to furnish the house and purchase the necessities they require. ANZA Social Welfare received a request to supply the funds for some basic outdoor play equipment for the children (when they are well enough) and also for siblings who may be staying. The funds were approved at our February meeting and the equipment was purchased the same month and is now being put to good use by these very special kids.

**Article by Alanna Bath
Co-Director ANZA Social Welfare**