



A helping hand: Ireka volunteers helping the children prepare some citrus fruit honey popsicle.



Engrossed in their task: Rumah Hope children topping ingredients to their gunkan sushi together with volunteer Nor Fathiyah (in headscarf).

Sushi 'chefs' for a day

Children from Rumah Hope learn the art of sushi-making

HAVING accomplished their feat of assembling their own *sushi* platter successfully, the boys from Rumah Hope called themselves The Sushi Boys.

They were among the 40 children who participated in the Ireka Cares Sushi-Making Workshop, organised under Ireka's flagship corporate social responsibility (CSR) programme.

Being first-timers themselves, The Sushi Boys (Berlock Ahmad, 13, James Lim, 13, Kuntum Asot, 13, Paul Teh, 13, Chong Chee Wai, 14, Srigan Nayako, 14, and Chin Kar Kit, 15), were intrigued by the meticulous step-by-step process of making *sushi*. The girls were as fascinated and found the task equally challenging.

"It looked harder than we thought,

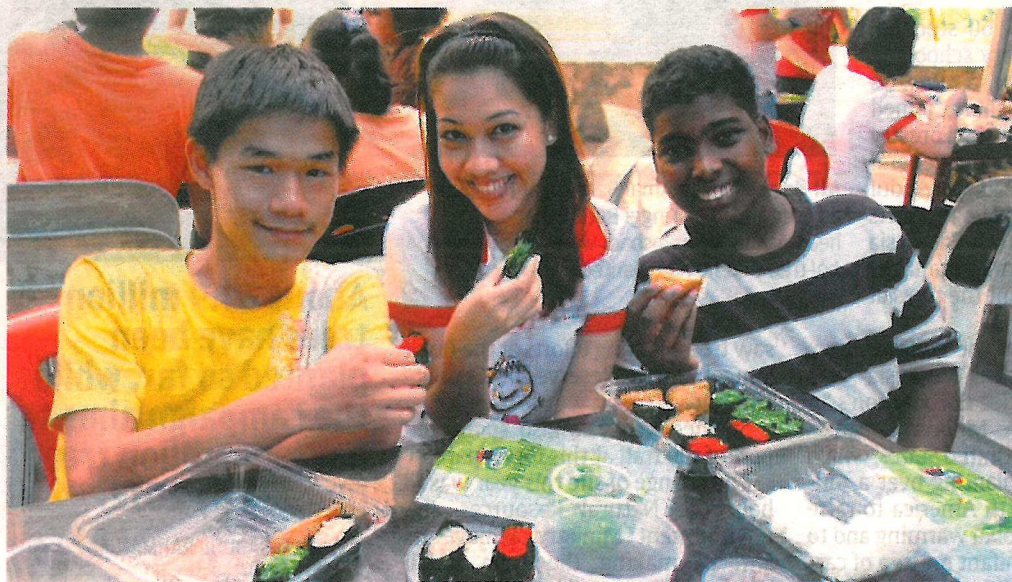
especially shaping the *sushi* rice into a consistent shape while making sure the rice logs do not break apart," said a smiling Esther Lee, 14, with her neatly pressed *sushi* logs.

Her friend, Vanni, 16, quipped, "After some trial and error, we mastered the trick! *Itadaki-masu!*"

Ireka had engaged T-Garden Cooking School to conduct the Living Skills workshop.

The children were divided into two groups, according to their age. With guidance from Ireka Cares volunteers, the older children were taught to shape the *sushi* rice base.

These rice logs were then 'transformed' into scrumptious *gunkan sushi* ('battleship' *sushi* for its resemblance to tiny ships) secured with *nori* sheets (seaweed) and filled with various toppings of *chuka*



We made these: Chin (left) and Rajah enjoying the sushi they made with Ireka Cares volunteer Yvette Erin Rajah.

wakame (shredded Japanese seaweed), tuna, *kani* (crabsticks), *ebikko* (fish roe); or inserted into *inari* (sweet-flavoured fried tofu pouches).

The younger children attempted to complete the Temari Bento lunch boxes, which consisted of *temari sushi* (*sushi* rice shaped into miniature balls with toppings), citrus fruit

honey popsicles, soy *cincau* puddings, octopus sausages, cherry tomatoes and fruits.

Ireka Corporation Berhad deputy managing director Datuk Lai Foot Kong said, "Our aim is for the Ireka Cares' initiatives to develop the children's living skills which leave a more lasting impact.

"Through workshops such as

sushi-making, the children will learn about ingredient preparation, food hygiene and presentation.

"We also believe they can utilise this skill for their future fundraising events.

"I am pleased that the Rumah Hope children enjoyed themselves, in the company of our Ireka volunteers."