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Greeting from the Unique City of San Ming, China,

The First Day of Work

“It is it hard work to get 6 very lazy boys to experience hard work!” This week I primarily focused on teaching my boys the many different tools in a woodshop. How to use a drill, hammer, chisel, scroll saw, etc. How to hold your hands when using a router and a where to stand when using a table saw and planer. I helped the boys purchase their own hammers, tape measure, safety glasses and aprons. The children were so excited their first day of work. Their smiles were a mile long. I taught them how to punch a clock. Their first project was to make a simple wooden box. I gave them all a piece of paper and showed them all how to draw out their plans and make the measurements before they go to cut the piece of wood. Then I gave them freedom to go and cut their own wood. The boys rushed through the planning and drawing and almost immediately started cutting their pieces of wood. I watched them for several hours as they cut and wasted piece by piece of wood. After several hours I decided it was enough and I got all the boys together and we talked about how they wasted so much wood and kept changing their design and wasting more wood. I ask the boys how can we prevent this in the future. They all agreed that they need to spend more time on the planning and measuring stage. A valuable lesson learn for my boys even though it was learned the hard way and it cost me some wood.

Planning ahead will save you in the end!





Learning more life skills

Along with learning woodworking skills my boys are also learning living skills. They must cook their own food. After one day of eating instant noodles and lots of junk food they got stomach trouble and they decided to eat a more healthy diet. The first time they tried to make rice they burned the rice, but not wanting to waste their own food they fried the rice and still ate it. If I had given them the rice using my own money they would 've wasted the rice and got some new rice. I was so impressed at their willingness to eat their own burned fried rice. The second day they once again tried to cook some more white rice and succeeded. Several of the boys made comments that they will never complain about the children's village food again. Heh! I was once again impressed. On Thursday day we went out together shopping and 2.5 liters of 7up was on sale for only 5.3 RMB or \$.77 USA . So everyone bought a bottle it was hilarious walking out of the store a foreigner with 6 teenagers and 7 BIG bottles of soda. We really attracted the stares. The

next day several of my boys had diarrhea because they drank their whole BIG bottle of soda. Together these boys are learning valuable lessons in life. Some of these lessons are being learned the hard way, but regardless they still being learned.

Thanks for your prayer and support,

Stephen Burkholder