“Mummy, I saw a couple of “Nemo” clown fish, a puffer fish and a school of squid!” shouted a young PADI Seal Team boy and a girl ecstatically looking at her mum while pointing to her underwater camera. It seems that nothing in this world excites a young child than seeing magnificent creatures between 3 – 5 meters at a confined shallow water scuba diving environment. Personally, I have been educating young kids aged 8 – 12 about scuba diving and the marine environment since 2004 with the start of Kids Scuba in Malaysia and there is nothing more cheerful than seeing little kids feeling enlightened by the magical world of our underwater garden and spectacular marine life. I am proud to be a Malaysian and Scuba educator as Malaysia is situated in the middle of the coral triangle which brings me great pride to point out some of the best diving site to the younger generation especially in Mabul and Sipadan Island.

For the lovely kids and their families, diving in Malaysia, especially in the Sabah state brings numerous advantages during Kids Scuba Camp which some of them would be boosting family ties among family members, making the children aware of the underwater Marine environment as well as introducing them to the many beautiful and world class islands in Malaysia.

During the Sea Turtle Research program at Kids Scuba Camp Mabul/ Sipadan 2011 was a truly special Marine educational camp with the attendance of Dr. Pushpa, the project leader for Sea Turtle Research from University Malaysia Sabah (UMS) to personally conduct, show and educate camp participants on the Sea Turtle Research and Tagging process witnessed by the lovely kids and teens "Live". This even comes lively with a night of special presentation by Dr. Pushpa on Turtle conservation by the university to the young kids, mummy’s and daddy’s as well. This is truly amazing as being part of an eco-diver which instills them the values of protecting and conserving the underwater marine environment with the right education.

As quoted by Mr. Henrik Nimb, Vice President of PADI Asia Pacific office Sydney, Australia who specially flown from Sydney to attend the camp at Borneo Divers Mabul Resort.

*My heartiest congratulations on an excellent Kids Scuba Camp on Mabul Island, a “first” for the PADI Seal Team! Although I was only there for the last 1 ½ days, I was completely awed by the excitement and passion! Syed, Your dedication to giving the kids a truly invaluable experience and lessons for life is very inspiring. Dr. Pushpa’s involvement and interaction with the kids (and us, too!) on the theory and practices of turtle tagging brought a real-world example of marine conservation to the fore. It was a magic experience which I will never forget.*
During camps, there are interesting activities which require the involvement of all family members to participate such as visit to the Bohey Dulang island Giant Clam Research center, Nightly Marine educational video presentation followed by quizzes, Beach Games, pool parties after the dives. This in turn will strengthen the bonds between family members as well as among different families. Besides that, from my observation children who are introvert or shy to speak up in public tends to “loosen up” and force themselves to push their boundaries and eventually have the courage to talk freely. Usually, this scenario will happen during the induction period and nightly quiz with great diving related prizes to be won for each question. Other than that, new friendship can emerge because their schoolmates or normal friends are not around them, therefore they have no other choice but to befriend other children attending the camp.

In addition, part of the Kids Scuba program with the PADI Seal Team and Scuba Rangers dive course is about discipline and being responsible towards the underwater marine environment while using Scuba Equipment’s with the correct procedure. Having this type of course outline will hopefully ease our environmental problem such as the global warming and teach our future generation to be more responsible towards the Marine environment and conservation.

The Sea Turtle Research program at Kids Scuba Camp Mabul/ Sipadan 2011 was made possible with the support from Tourism Malaysia, Sabah Tourism Board, Borneo Divers Mabul Resort, A & L, Adventure & Leisure, PADI Asia Pacific, SportDiving Magazine Australia, TV3 Malaysia and other personal contributions.

**Editor’s Note:**

Malaysia is known for its beautiful islands Marine Parks and magnificent underwater “rainforests”. Some of them are rated as world class diving sites and are unique in its’ own way. By keeping this in mind, I would sometime tell the kids that we actually are blessed to have some prominent dive sites that are as good as any other places in the region. We should be proud of what we have and infuse them with that kind of feeling.

To sum up, scuba diving as families in a broader prospect can bring so many advantages which go beyond imagination. These are some of the key highlights that I have personally seen through my perspective as the Founder and Instructor with Kids Scuba of what diving as a family in Malaysia could do to an individual. Personally, when I'm looking at them it actually makes me want to do more in terms of informing other families and kids on how important educating the younger generation is as well as transcending into a deeper understanding of what marine conservation and Marine environment is all about.

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