

**Event:** ECCC 2023 Conference  
**Date:** 27 October 2023 (FRIDAY)

**Speaker:**

Prof Tan Oon Seng  
Dean, Special Projects and Centre Director, Singapore Centre for Character & Citizenship Education  
National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore



**Biography:**

Professor Oon-Seng TAN is currently Dean of Special Projects and Centre Director, Singapore Centre for Character and Citizenship Education (CCE) at NIE, Nanyang Technological University. Before helming the Centre for CCE, he was the Director of the Centre for Research in Child Development (CRCD), where his advocacy and leadership helped grow the center's impact in terms of scholarship, grantsmanship and contribution to the early childhood sector in policy and practice. His accomplishments were well attested to by the independent review of the International Advisory Panel (IAP) comprising international renowned scientists and leaders of early childhood research.

Prof Tan was also previously Director of NIE (2014-2018) where he played a significant role in enhancing teacher education and revitalising NIE's training programmes to raise the image and professionalism of teachers. His many contributions included helping to initiate the Teaching Scholars Programme and refining the Post-Graduate Diploma in Education programme for aspiring teachers; enhancing teaching practices and international practicum opportunities for NIE student-teachers; and spearheading technology-enhanced learning and design-thinking infrastructural improvements. As Director of NIE, he also brought about leadership development and renewal across both academia and administration at NIE. Prof Tan advocated the idea of highly research-literate teachers in Singapore empowered and confident to improve pedagogical practices through evidenced-based research.

Prof Tan's areas of expertise include teacher education, teacher professional development, learning innovation (especially in problem-based learning), and educational psychology. He is recognized as an international thought leader in teacher identity as well as in advocating character and values as foundations of learning. He has authored/edited numerous books and scholarly articles/chapters in the various fields of education and psychology and has delivered keynote addresses on topics in these fields in major international conferences across the globe. He was conferred the Nanyang Distinguished Alumni Award in 2022 – "the highest honour that Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, bestows on its alumni who have achieved regional or international distinction in their chosen fields and have brought honour to the University".

**Keynote Address Title:**

**How early learners learn best: A honeycomb model**

**Abstract:**

How do children learn best in the early years? In this keynote speech, Professor Tan will share his gleanings from research and wisdom to provide early childhood educators with key insights and practical tips. The presentation will draw on research and knowledge from psychology, science and learning and neuroscience as well traditions of wisdom from across cultures. Using a honeycomb model he developed, the address will cover macro perspectives as well as critical elements for nurturing the early years. The address includes understanding the power of habits vs novelty, optimizing executive functioning, psychology of emotions, curiosity and playing well. The talk covers pragmatic pedagogical principles and practical pointers to enable our next generation of early learners to thrive with the pre-dispositions for learning how to learn, think and develop 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.