

THE MAGAZINE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD PRACTITIONERS AND PARENTS



Beanstalk

Oct-Dec 2016

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AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

Celebrating the Outstanding Contributions of EC Professionals & Pre-schools

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

The Importance of Partnerships between EC Professionals, Families and Community Partners

LET'S GO OUTSIDE!

Connecting classroom learning with the community we live in

Early Childhood Conference 2016

THRIVE

TIPS AND IDEAS FOR THE PHYSICAL, LANGUAGE, COGNITIVE AND SOCIO-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF YOUR CHILD

WIN! PICTURE BOOKS BY SINGAPOREAN ARTISTS EXCLUSIVELY FOR KIDS

IN THIS ISSUE



IT TAKES A VILLAGE



Effective family, school, and community partnerships enhance the academic, social and emotional development of our children. As Helen Keller put it, "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much".

to show their appreciation to our ECDA award recipients for their remarkable dedication and commitment to early childhood care and education.

Our educators play a pivotal role in the holistic development of our young children. To show our appreciation, Minister for Social and Family Development, Mr Tan Chuan-Jin, called on all pre-schools to give our teachers a day off on Teachers' Day from 2017. This is a call supported by the many parents we surveyed earlier this year.

Effective family, school, and community partnerships enhance the academic, social and emotional development of our children. As Helen Keller put it, "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."

Let's work together to build a village worthy of our children!

MR EUGENE LEONG

Chief Executive Officer
Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA)

The theme for this year's Early Childhood Conference, "Enriching Childhood: It Takes a Village", on 30 September and 1 October was inspired by the philosophy that children are not just raised by their parents, but also by other people in the community around them.

Over the two days, 1,200 early childhood educators as well as over 10,000 children and their families attended the conference and exhibition. We hope that the conference has equipped our educators with more knowledge and skills to develop sustainable partnerships with families and the broader community.

During the conference, we were also delighted to have families and children join us



2

8

10

18

Contents

FOCUS

02 What Makes A Village
The 2016 Early Childhood Conference celebrated partnerships and collaborations

IN THE NEWS

06 Creating More Rewarding Careers
A new Early Childhood Manpower Plan to support educators

EC LANDSCAPE

08 Making The World A Better Place
The 'Start Small Dream Big' Project concluded on a high note

09 Learning And Growing Together
Two ECDA schemes that help educators to deepen their skills

10 Let's Go Outside!
The POP scheme enables centres to extend children's learning beyond the classroom

MY TEACHER, MY SCHOOL

11 A Growing SPARK Family
More pre-schools have been SPARK-certified, and changes in the re-certification format explained

12 Making Great Professional Strides
EC leaders, teachers and educators were recognised at the ECDA Awards for Excellence



14

INNOVATION & RESEARCH

14 When Dragons Go Green
Mythical creatures got children of PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Geylang Serai Blk 412 excited about recycling

15 One For The Educators
A customised toolkit for new educators at St. James' Church Kindergarten (Harding)

ASK THE EXPERTS

16 Q&A
How collaborations between EC professionals and the community contribute to children's development

THRIVE

18 Young And Arty
A wealth of teachable moments at the National Gallery Singapore

21 Oat To The Holidays
Cookies that are crispy outside, but soft on the inside for your little ones

22 Leaf It To Art
Create a picture-perfect animal art masterpiece using fallen leaves

WELLNESS

23 For The Fun Parents
Fun happenings for the holidays

MAILBAG

24 We've Got Mail!
Parents discover that it indeed takes a village to raise a child

FUNTIMES

25 Life's A Buzz
A match-the-bees activity



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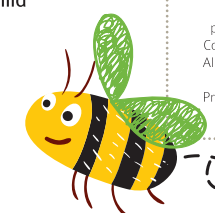


ON THE COVER

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WHAT MAKES A VILLAGE?

THIS YEAR'S EARLY CHILDHOOD CONFERENCE CELEBRATED PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS.

SOME 1,200 EC PROFESSIONALS + 10,000 FAMILIES AND CHILDREN Attended the ECC 2016

The ECDA Early Childhood Conference (ECC) 2016, held at the SUNTEC Singapore Convention & Exhibition Centre on 30 September and 1 October, attracted a record-high crowd since its inception in 2013. Themed 'Enriching Childhood: It Takes A Village', the Conference celebrated the importance of strong collaborative partnerships between EC professionals, families and community partners. Day One featured two insightful keynote presentations from Professor Marilyn Fleeer from Monash University, Australia, and Associate Professor Sandra Tsang Kit Man from the University of Hong Kong. Parliamentary Secretary for Education and Trade and Industry, Ms Low Yen Ling, also presented the Singapore Pre-school Accreditation Framework (SPARK) certificates to over 200 pre-school centres.



Minister Tan Chuan Jin with ECDA's CEO Mr Eugene Leong checking out an exhibition booth

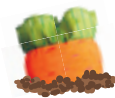
On Day Two, Professor Saravanan Gopinathan, Academic Director of The HEAD Foundation, Singapore gave his take on 'values education' in children's formative years. The three keynote speakers, together with two educators and a parent, then shared their views on the conference theme at a Panel Session. Minister for Social and Family Development, Mr Tan Chuan-Jin, also announced the new Early Childhood Manpower Plan and presented the ECDA Awards 2016 to outstanding EC professionals and pre-school centres.

More than 30 concurrent workshops were held over the two conference days. These covered a wide range of topics and issues in EC care and education. Prior to the conference, some EC professionals also signed up for their choice of Learning Journey from the eight offered.

The ECC 2016 also featured a fun-filled exhibition, comprising over 50 booths that offered a wide range of fringe activities, educational resources and performances. Some 10,000 visitors had the opportunity to tinker with tech toys at the PlayMaker Interactive Workshop organised by the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore, test their agility at the Friendship Olympiad obstacle course put up by the Singapore Kindness Movement, and more!



Photos by Mark Lee & Leo Shee igwei



STRONGER TOGETHER

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS AT THE ECC 2016 GAVE THEIR PERSPECTIVES ON BUILDING HOME-PRE-SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS AND INSTILLING VALUES.



The focus of Prof Fleeer's presentation was on the Relational Agency Framework, which she defined as "a tool that enables multi-disciplinary professionals, including educators and parents, to come together". Within a network, educators and parents feel a mutual sense of belonging as they work together to support the learning and development of young children.

What is the Relational Agency Framework?

It describes how educators and parents' engagement in networks progresses through eight phases, from building a foundational sense of belonging to enhancing professional practice by harnessing shared resources. The more each member of the network contributes to the dialogue, the quicker they can develop common knowledge, move up the levels and establish trust.

What steps can be taken to inject more openness or agency into the process?

Implementing a professional inquiry-based project helps, as the answers are naturally opened. Having a facilitator to guide the conversation ensures that each person has a safe space to contribute his or her ideas. And things can be made fun or enjoyable by talking over coffee, or bringing food to meetings.



Professor Marilyn Fleeer
Foundation Chair of Early Childhood Education, Faculty of Education, Monash University, Australia



Fun-filled exhibition with over 50 exciting fringe activities



Dr Sandra Tsang
Associate Professor, Department of Social Work and Social Administration, The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong



Dr Tsang imparted "KASH tips", explaining that mastery of important knowledge (K), attitude (A) and skills (S) leads to healthy harmony (H) among stakeholders.

Why is home-school cooperation so important?

Families and pre-schools are the first and second cradles of child development, respectively. Through parent-teacher collaboration, we can deepen educational advancement. We need to think of both educators and parents as partners in the education system.

How can educators set in motion the "KASH tips"?

Educators can encourage greater family involvement in pre-schools by setting realistic expectations for parent volunteers and being open to their views. They can also better equip themselves to engage parents by attending pre- and in-service training courses, as well as addressing deficits in interpersonal skills. This will help set the foundation for a healthy, happy environment for children to grow up in.



Professor Saravanan Gopinathan

Academic Director, The HEAD Foundation, Singapore and Adjunct Professor at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore

Prof Gopinathan noted that children are growing up in an increasingly stressful environment. With rising expectations for academic excellence and external influences from social media, it has become more critical for children to receive 'values education'. This needs to play a central role in early childhood education.

Why is values education so important?

In this fast changing world, values are our anchors. They are a part of one's personality and foundation to a resilient life. As a society, we need people who are empathetic, civic-minded, and service-oriented. This is a no-brainer and that is why we have to inculcate values from young, especially in Singapore where competition is so keen and the push for academic achievement is so strong.

How can we promote the "catching on" of values in children?

Most educators and parents recognise that values are crucial, but are not giving enough attention to putting these values in practice. Inculcating values is a shared responsibility, and no educator should do this alone. One way of imparting values is to support your child, listen to what he/she has to say and show empathy. This strengthens the relationship with your child. Adopt the same approach when you are communicating and sharing with your child's educators or parents. Strong relationships which involve sharing and looking out for one another are key to "catching on" of good values.



A plenary session at the ECC 2016

A LIVELY DISCUSSION

Everyone plays a part in raising a child. Dr Jacqueline Chung (Senior Principal and Academic Director of St James' Church Kindergarten and ECDA Fellow) moderated an engaging and meaningful panel discussion on how parents and educators can strengthen their partnership for the benefit of the child. The plenary speakers comprised the keynote speakers, Mr James Chong who is a father, and 2015 ECDA Awards winners, Ms Siti Nurrafidah Binte Samat and Ms Uma Mageswari.

Some highlights of the discussion were:

- The Importance of two-way communication.
- The challenges educators face in dealing with diverse parenting practices.
- The need to align different perspectives towards a common goal of supporting children's holistic development.
- The building of robust relationships among parents, educators and community partners is a continual work-in-progress.

A good partnership between pre-school and parents has to be based on agreed expectations, open and respectful communication, as well as trust. There should be a two-way feedback on the child's progress — both positive and negative — between educators and parents. Parents should also empower educators by trusting that they have the child's best interest at heart.

Mr James Chong, 41, Father of two girls aged 7 and 4



COVER: On Karina: Uniform Mothercare, Leggings & socks Stylist's own, Boots Dr Martens On Magiswari: Blazer, Blouse, Pants & Necklace Mark's and Spencer, Flats Melissa On Shao Wen: Shirt Mark's and Spencer, Pants Mothercare, Hat Stylist's own, Shoes KidSports On Kelvin: Sweater & Pants UNIQLO, Shirt & Sneakers, Mark's and Spencer On Yasias: Top Petit Bateau, Pants Mothercare, Beret Stylist's own, Shoes Dr Martens On Domayni: Blouse & Dungaree KidStyle, Jeans Mothercare, Hat Stylist's own, Spate Daboo, Boots Melissa

ENRICHING EXPERIENCES

WORKSHOPS AND LEARNING JOURNEYS WERE AN EXPERIENTIAL PART OF ECC 2016. BEANSTALK HIGHLIGHTS TWO OF THEM.

Educators worked through a range of theoretical and practical early childhood issues at the workshops. In one workshop, "Interdisciplinary Arts in the EC Classroom", educators learnt how children's literature can be used to seamlessly fuse multiple art forms — music & movement, visual arts and drama — and achieve curriculum goals. It was conducted by Ms Wong Seet Fun, Ms Lavina Chong and Ms Elaine Ng, all artists-cum-EC practitioners.



A workshop in session



A special performance at the ECC 2016

The three presenters recounted their successful efforts to design and deliver a 12-week interdisciplinary arts programme for K2 children in a pre-school centre in 2015, under the Artist-in-School Scheme for Pre-Schools (a joint initiative by the National Arts Council and ECDA). Such aesthetic expression, said Ms Chong, allows children to pick up "21st-century competency skills" or the "5Cs" which are creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, communication and confidence-building.

One of the educators who benefitted from the session was Ms Lim Qian Hao, a K1 educator at Soka Kindergarten. "Children at our centre explore with different visual art materials, but it was useful to have practical tips on how to integrate

visual art with the other two art forms," she said.

Another workshop, "Time's Up for Time-out: How Can Educators Cultivate Desirable Behaviours in Children?" was led by Ms Chong Hwee Min, a psychologist at the KK Women's and Children's Hospital. She focused on how educators can cultivate desirable behaviours with alternatives to time-out. She also recommended adopting "time-in" strategies to manage children's challenging behaviours:

- **Set the right climate.** Phrase classroom rules positively and enforce these regularly.
- **Communicate the desired behaviour.** Tell children precisely what you want to see in them and model that behaviour so they can emulate you.
- **Advise and remind.** Inform children on the consequences of inappropriate behaviour.

The workshop prompted participants like Mrs Careen Lee, a N1 teacher at Green Pastures Child Centre, to review their own classroom management practices. The proposed alternatives to time-out, she said, would complement her centre's emphasis on positive reinforcement. ♥

A JOURNEY TO REMEMBER

One of the Learning Journeys, offered as part of the ECC 2016, took educators to KidZania Singapore. This is an interactive indoor theme park for children aged four and above to role-play a range of occupations. Mr Leong Yue Weng, General Manger of KidZania Singapore, highlighted the importance of hands-on experience in the early years. "Role-playing offers children amazing opportunities to develop important life skills such as decision-making, problem-solving and even financial literacy through experiential learning," said Mr Leong.

This was something that Ms Kylie Ng from The Singapore Teachers Co-Op Child Care Centre agreed with. "With the first-hand knowledge and interactive experience, children are able to get a better idea of how things work and think through situations," said Ms Ng. "As the saying goes, 'tell me and I'll forget, show me and I can't remember, get me involved and I'll learn'."



Photos courtesy of KidZania Singapore



Educators on their learning journey

CREATING MORE REWARDING CAREERS

A NEW EARLY CHILDHOOD MANPOWER PLAN WAS ANNOUNCED AT THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CONFERENCE ON 1 OCT 2016.

The Early Childhood Manpower Plan is a collaborative effort by government agencies and industry partners in the Sectoral Tripartite Committee, including unions, industry and professional associations, pre-school operators, educational institutes and training agencies. This plan aims to attract, develop and retain a skilled and dedicated workforce for the growing sector. It also demonstrates a collective commitment to taking care of the Early Childhood educators, whose work goes a long way in nurturing and developing the future of our nation! ❤️



The Vision of the Early Childhood Manpower Plan

An Early Childhood (EC) sector that offers:



Rising Demand for Early Childhood Services

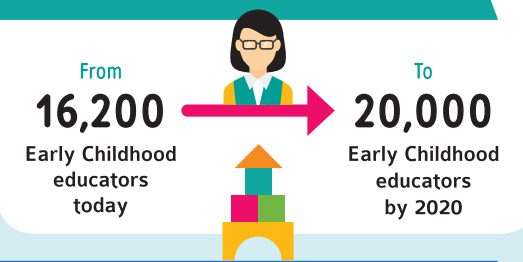
The EC sector has seen significant growth over the past few years, and is expected to continue to grow strongly in line with rising demand for early childhood services.



Growing Number of Early Childhood Development Centres



More and Better Employment Opportunities



How will the Manpower Plan support educators?

1 More opportunities to develop professionally

(NEW)
SKILLS FRAMEWORK FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION (ECCE)
Career pathways and specific skills and competencies required for various job roles

- ▶ Provide resources to help:
- Educators** Take ownership to plan for their professional growth
- Employers** Enhance their human resource frameworks and practices

(NEW)
MORE FLEXIBLE TRAINING PATHWAYS
Prior learning and working experience will be recognised for course entry in:

- WSQ Advanced Certificate in Early Years
- WSQ Advanced Certificate in Early Childhood Care and Education
- CET Diploma in Early Childhood Care and Education

▶ Allows lateral and vertical career development based on competencies

(ENHANCED)
PLACE-AND-TRAIN OPTION FOR ALL EC COURSES
All ECCE courses will be offered in work-and-study mode; newly-employed educators can earn a salary while undergoing training

- ▶ Course fee subsidies and salary support will be provided under:
- Professional Conversion Programme for Pre-school Teachers
- Place-and Train Programme for Educators under the Adapt and Grow Initiative

These build on existing professional development initiatives

Professional Development Programme (PDP) for teachers
▶ Choose from diverse Professional Development opportunities
▶ Up to \$12,000 upon completing programme and service milestones

ECDA Fellows Programme for Pinnacle Leaders
▶ To nurture exemplary professionals to drive quality improvements in the sector
▶ Professional Development opportunities and Annual Service Recognition Allowance of \$9,000

ECDA Scholarship for teachers
▶ To support skills deepening through the Bachelor and Master Degree Programmes

2 A more supportive working environment

(NEW)
SMART SOLUTIONS TO AID IN DAY-TO-DAY PROCESSES
Collaboration between:

| |
|--|
| ECDA |
| Association for Early Childhood Training and Services (ASSETS) |
| Info-communications Media Development Authority (IMDA) |

- ▶ To leverage on technology to streamline administrative duties e.g. temperature-/attendance-taking
- ▶ IT solutions to aggregate demand across the sector e.g. centralised food catering system

EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS WITH AGENCIES AND UNIONS
"Workplace to Worthplace" initiative
▶ To encourage sharing of best practices and to uplift working conditions

3 Greater respect and recognition

(NEW)
TEACHERS' DAY FOR EC EDUCATORS (2017 ONWARDS)
To celebrate and recognise contributions of EC educators

ON-GOING PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

- ▶ Annual Early Childhood Conference
- ▶ "Say Thank you to Teachers" initiative
- ▶ Privilege card for educators
- ▶ Heartland career fairs for back-to-work women
- ▶ Talks at Polytechnics/ITEs
- ▶ Beanstalk magazine
- ▶ Grow@Beanstalk Website
- ▶ Beanstalk Singapore Facebook
- ▶ APParent Mobile App

Individual Operators
To celebrate Teachers' Day by giving all EC educators the day off

ECDA
To support child care centres
By providing an additional half-day for centre closure

Children performing at the finale with community workers



MAKING SINGAPORE A BETTER PLACE

THIS YEAR'S PRESIDENT'S CHALLENGE PROJECT 'START SMALL DREAM BIG' CONCLUDED IN HIGH SPIRITS.

The heavy downpour on 7 October did nothing to dampen the spirits of the 10,000 children and educators at the Finale of the 'Start Small Dream Big' (SSDB) Project. Held at the OCBC Square at the Singapore Sports Hub in conjunction with Children's Day, the SSDB Project was part of the President's Challenge that inculcate the spirit of giving back to society in pre-schoolers. The event also featured an exciting carnival, comprising more than 20 activity stations set up by various government agencies, commercial partners, and pre-school centres.

The SSDB Project saw a five-fold increase in hours spent on community projects by children (see sidebar for more). The young ones also raised more than \$150,000 for the President's Challenge beneficiaries and other community organisations.

Guest-of-Honour President Tony Tan Keng Yam as well as Minister for Social and Family Development Mr Tan Chuan-Jin were impressed by the children's community projects

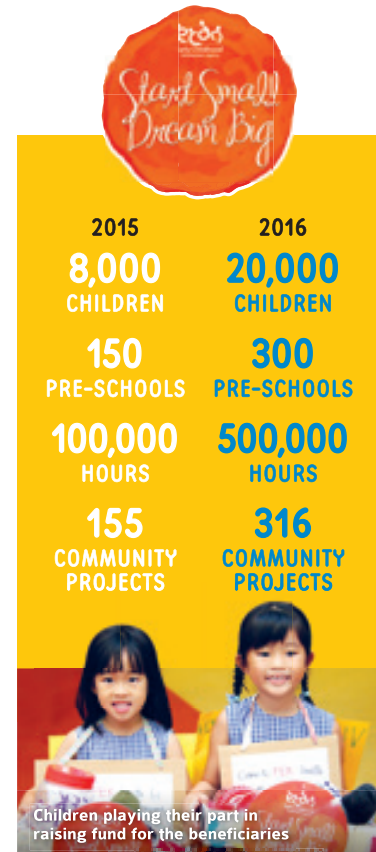
showcased at the Sports Hub. "The project has given our children small but invaluable opportunities to make positive changes to the world around them, and taught them to dream big," said President Tan.

One of the projects on display was titled "Kampung Spirit", an initiative by children of Kidz Meadow Childcare @ Buangkok Crescent. They worked as a team and packed groceries for distribution to the less fortunate during the Islamic fasting month of Ramadan.

"We hope to inculcate in the children the spirit of giving to those in need," said Ms Jurianna Bte Jumhari, the centre's Principal. "If we all work together like in the 'old kampung' days, we can achieve a lot. No act is too small." ♥



President Tony Tan at the SSDB Finale



Having fun at the carnival

Photos by Eric Chuan

LEARNING AND GROWING TOGETHER

CULTIVATING A CULTURE OF LIFELONG LEARNING FOR PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATORS.



SkillsFuture study awards recipients

Learning and growing is the life motto of Ms Uva Jothi, 24, who was nominated in December 2015 by her centre principal for the ECDA Professional Development Programme (PDP) for Teachers. Despite the hectic lifestyle, the pre-school teacher at PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Keat Hong Blk 489B welcomed this latest opportunity to deepen her skills and knowledge in child development and pedagogy. What is her secret? "Time management," says Ms Jothi. "It is an important skill to have." She even teaches this to her pre-schoolers so that they, too, can start reaping the benefits of having an organised schedule or a plan.

Learning and growing together helps us to provide a better environment for the little ones.

Ms Uva Jothi

Ms Jothi's passion for continuous learning stems from a desire to keep her practices current and relevant to the needs of children at her centre. Together with other educators and parents, she is confident of making a difference to the children's learning. "Learning and growing together helps us to provide a better environment for the little ones," she explains. She is already looking forward to the PDP Modular Course which starts in October.

But Ms Jothi's journey will not end there. She also plans to pursue a degree in early childhood education and become a curriculum writer so she can use her skills and knowledge to contribute to the sector and make a greater impact on the community. ♥

GROOMING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS

THESE TWO ECDA SCHEMES SUPPORT EC EDUCATORS WHO WISH TO DEEPEN THEIR SKILLS.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR TEACHERS

Pre-school teachers who have the competencies and aptitude to take on higher roles in the future can apply for the programme. Potential candidates should be highly committed to improving the centre's quality and the quality of their teaching and learning practices. To apply or find out more, visit www.ecda.gov.sg/pages/ECDA-PDP.aspx.



SKILLSFUTURE STUDY AWARD (SFSA)

SFSA awardees receive \$5,000, which can be used to defray out-of-pocket expenses associated with the ADECL (Advanced Diploma in Early Childhood Leadership).

Ms Sylvia Neo, the Principal of Apricot Academy (Laguna) Pte Ltd, encourages educators at her child care centre to take up the study award as "it will enable them to gain a deeper understanding of the early childhood sector and in turn, improve their pedagogical skills".

The centre supports award recipients by granting them more flexible working hours to attend the course. "It is important to provide additional support to staff to upgrade their skills so that they can continue to put in work of high and consistent quality that will benefit the children," Ms Neo explains.

Visit www.bitly/ECDA_SFSA to find out more.

▶ This year

349

SINGAPOREANS

in various sectors were awarded the SFSA in recognition of their efforts and commitment towards skills mastery.



Minister Ong Ye Kung with a SFSA recipient

Photos courtesy of SkillsFuture Singapore

LET'S GO OUTSIDE!



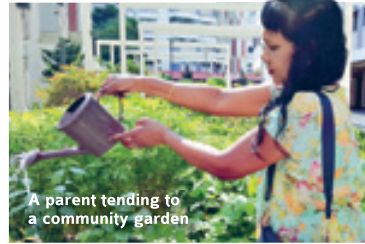
EXTENDING LEARNING BEYOND THE PRE-SCHOOL CLASSROOM DOES WONDERS TO CHILDREN'S SENSE OF COMMUNITY.

When pre-school centres work hand-in-hand with community partners to take early childhood education beyond classroom walls, it's good news for everyone, especially the children.

"Community partners bring with them different knowledge and expertise. Collaborations between pre-schools and community partners help connect the classroom learning with the community we live in. They create valuable opportunities for more in-depth experiential learning for educators, children and even parents," says Presbyterian Community Services (PCS) Principal Seow Hwei.

This year, PCS Jurong West Centre, a Partner Operator (POP) centre, participated in the National Parks Board (NParks) Community in Bloom (CIB) programme to promote a deeper appreciation for nature among their kindergarten children. Under this programme, the children and their parents tend to the community garden run by the Jurong Spring Zone C Residents' Committee. They carry out gardening activities such as watering the plants and weeding. Mdm Sivagami, mother of Roopan from K2, enjoys participating in the community involvement project.

"Roopan and I enjoy being outdoors with nature," says Mdm Sivagami, who has also noticed



A parent tending to a community garden

Collaborations... help connect the classroom learning with the community we live in.

Ms Seow Hwei

better physical health and reduced stress levels in her child.

By collaborating with partners like NParks, the centre is able to instill a love for horticulture in children through engaging gardening activities. "Besides contributing to the lush greenery of the centre, this partnership programme value adds to the centre's curriculum. It encourages self-directed learning among children, helping them develop science process skills, project management skills and teamwork," says Mr Ng Cheow Kheng, Group Director, Horticulture and Community Gardening, NParks.

POPular Advantage

"The POP Scheme has helped us harness additional resources for the centre," says Ms Seow. "Under the scheme, PCS has been able to send

more staff for training and this has, in turn, strengthened the curriculum."

The POP scheme supports pre-schools in their efforts to improve centre and teacher quality, and the affordability of their child care services. Learn more about the POP scheme at www.ecda.gov.sg/Parents/Pages/POP.aspx ♥

PARENTS CAN DO MORE!

TIPS FROM MS IVY TAGUDANDO MAESTRE, PCS JURONG WEST CENTRE:

Start by joining small projects in the community, such as a gardening project in your child's pre-school.

Volunteer for causes that are close to your heart.

Pick a project and turn it into a family tradition. This helps instill the value of sharing in your children.



Photos courtesy of PCS Jurong West Centre



A GROWING SPARK FAMILY

MORE SPARK-CERTIFIED PRE-SCHOOLS TO ENSURE A QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCE.

A total of 249 pre-schools were presented with their Singapore Pre-school Accreditation Framework (SPARK) certification and re-certification by Ms Low Yen Ling, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Trade & Industry. "You can take pride in how you have qualified for SPARK because your programmes, structures



Ms Low Yen Ling with ECDA's CEO Mr Eugene Leong

Teachers do not work in isolation — a conducive physical environment, a good curriculum, supportive employer practices are some of the key factors that contribute to good outcomes for our children. These qualities are captured holistically through SPARK.

Parliamentary Secretary Low Yen Ling

and processes have met its rigorous reviews and criteria," said Ms Low, in congratulating the certified centres and their staff. "You are part of our big and growing SPARK family that is key to our goal of providing quality early childhood education."

Ms Low was quick to point out that strong teamwork is key to attaining higher quality standards. She cited My First Skool at 85 Whampoa Drive as an example. The centre leader, Ms Jessica Leo, and her team worked together effectively

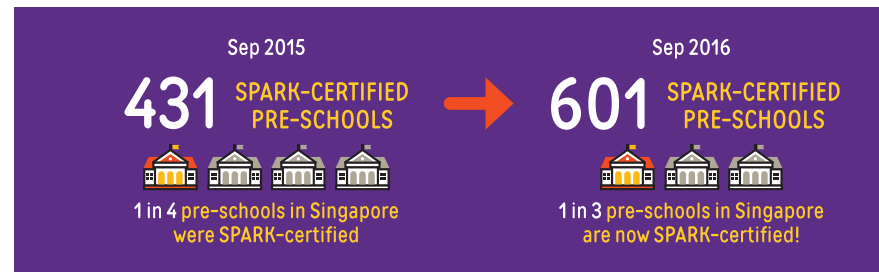
for their centre's SPARK-certification. At the centre, experienced teachers mentor their newer peers. Said Ms Leo, "Teamwork is important to us as it creates a strong bond that promotes unity, strength and reliability. Together we can uplift our professional knowledge and skills to provide quality early childhood care and education." ♥

NEW AND IMPROVED

Starting 2017, the SPARK quality improvement process will have a stronger focus on a centre's teaching and learning practices.

- ▶ Centres can monitor their own progress through self-appraisal, using the revised Quality Rating Scale.
- ▶ At the same time, SPARK certifications awarded will be valid for six years, up from the current three.
- ▶ To help centres take stock, a mid-term developmental visit will replace the current re-certification assessment.

These adjustments were welcomed by Ms Norhaidah Binte Mohamed Nasir, Principal of Just Kids @ Yishun Pte Ltd. "The mid-term Developmental Visit would provide greater emphasis on practical performance improvements that are customised to our centre's operations," she says. "These changes will help us to keep a balance between standards and performance — which will ultimately benefit the children."





MAKING GREAT PROFESSIONAL STRIDES



2016 ECDA AWARD RECIPIENTS ARE COMMITTED TO TAKING PROFESSIONALISM FORWARD.

This year's ECDA Awards for Excellence in Early Childhood Development received 282 nominations, up from 213 last year. It is a healthy indication of growing interest among centres to recognise exceptional early childhood leaders, teachers and educators, as well as pre-schools with exemplary innovation culture and outstanding teaching and learning practices.

A total of 23 awards were presented by Minister for Social and Family Development Mr Tan Chuan-Jin at this year's Early Childhood Conference on 1 October at the Suntec Singapore Convention & Exhibition Centre. "Our 'village' has grown from

strength to strength and this progress would not have been possible without you, our early childhood professionals. You are at the heart of quality care and education that we want to establish in Singapore," said Minister Tan, as he congratulated the winners.

Joining Minister Tan on stage, in a surprise segment at the Awards ceremony, were the families and children from the outstanding winners' centres. The families presented the winners with hand-made cards and crafts to show their appreciation to these unsung heroes in making a difference to the early years of their children.

Families from the outstanding winners' centres with the educators



AWARD WINNERS

OUTSTANDING EARLY CHILDHOOD LEADER AWARD

- ▶ Kathryn Goy
PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Pasir Ris Blk 738 (KN)
- ▶ Penny Quek Chor Pin
PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Nee Soon East Blk 223 (KN)
- ▶ Wee Suat Kwan
Pat's Schoolhouse - Kovan

OUTSTANDING EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER AWARD

- ▶ Sophia Koh Hui Fen
Odyssey the Global Preschool

(COMMENDATION)

- ▶ Hou Zhao Xia
The Little Skool-House By-The-Vista
- ▶ Neo Yee Lin
Camberley International Pre-school Pte Ltd
- ▶ Priyaalatha d/o Ramapri
Ramakrishna Mission Sarada Kindergarten

OUTSTANDING EARLY CHILDHOOD

Dedicated To Learning

One of this year's award recipients is Ms Sophia Koh, 27, who was named the Outstanding Early Childhood Teacher. The award is in recognition of her efforts to enrich the way her children learn. The children in her class are empowered to express themselves and their ideas freely. Sophia strongly believes that experiential and exploratory learning strategies will take children's learning to the next level.

Ms Sophia Koh, 27, Odyssey the Global Preschool



Photos by Leo Shengwei

Continuous upgrading is an important trait for educators. It helps us maintain and enhance our professional knowledge and skills.

Ms Sophia Koh

Also a Curriculum Specialist, Sophia conducts various projects reflecting her passion for hands-on learning. These projects range from art to science and technology. "They have moved past questions such as 'What is' to 'How and Why'," she says. To be able to answer such questions, Sophia regularly reads up on a variety of topics and researches together with the children.

Sophia also strives to engage parents in their children's pre-school experience. She believes that this broadens and reinforces the children's learning. Parent-teacher partnerships have had a positive impact on the children's behaviour and attitude towards learning. She recalls an incident,

"We had a child who started out not able to identify basic sight words, but was able to read a book independently after six months. Regular communication between the parent and teacher, as well as supporting them with tips and strategies, had sparked this change," she says.

Being a part of such change has kept the passion and commitment alive for Sophia. "After seven years in the industry, I remain motivated by seeing children progress and experiencing their joy as they discover and learn," she explains. For her, it is also heartening to see parents applying a recommended strategy and "their happiness when they see progress". Sophia was unable to attend the awards ceremony as she was away in the UK on a professional exchange programme looking at curriculum and pedagogical practices. "Continuous upgrading is an important trait for educators. It helps us maintain and enhance our professional knowledge and skills," she says. ♥

NURTURING BETTER LEARNERS

HERE ARE FOUR TIPS FROM SOPHIA TO SUPPORT AND FACILITATE YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING!



Understand that each child's rate of progress is different. "Avoid comparing children and adapt your parenting style to fit your child's personality and temperament."



Provide varied experiences. "Creative and character-building experiences such as arts, music and sports are very important for children at a young age."



Include them in household chores. "Activities like cleaning and packing will impart important life skills such as organisation, understanding instructions and self-help skills."



Remain inquisitive and curious. "When you demonstrate these traits, your child will follow suit. You are your child's best role model."



WHEN DRAGONS GO GREEN

HOW THESE MYTHICAL CREATURES GOT PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN EXCITED ABOUT RECYCLING.

Well-designed projects, with the close collaboration of teachers and parents, can provide our preschoolers with multi-dimensional learning experiences. 'Legends: Dragons Come Alive!' is one such project that won PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Geylang Serai Blk 412 the ECDA Early Childhood Innovation Award 2016 (Distinction).

Intrigued by a dragon dance during the Chinese New Year celebrations,

the children pursued an inquiry-based learning of the significance of dragons in both Eastern and Western contexts. Teachers then also worked with the children to create two- and three-dimensional dragons out of recyclable materials they found at home and in their pre-school. "The use of recyclable materials encourages our children to think more creatively and pragmatically," says Centre Supervisor Diana Lee. "Starting them young also makes it easier for them to form good habits in conserving the environment."

Parents also contributed towards the project based on their strengths and interests. According to Ms Lee, some shared stories and pictures about dragons, while some decorated the centre to create an authentic learning environment. Others teamed up to stage an exhibition on dragons.



Parents guiding their child through the project

A FOR ART

HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO KICK-START A CREATIVE PROJECT WITH YOUR CHILD!



Check out community centres for their holiday art and craft programmes.



The Internet and the library is a great source of how-to-do-it, with printable templates as well as instructive videos.



Pinterest is another favourite online platform for inspiring ideas and tips.

PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Geylang Serai Blk 412



Checking out the exhibition on dragons

The use of recyclable materials encourages our children to think more creatively and pragmatically.

Ms Diana Lee

To do this, parents researched and acquired skills on how to document their children's learning through photos, charts, booklets and posters.

The finale was an inter-class dance choreographed by the teachers and children, performed on the opening day of the exhibition.

Overall, the collaborative efforts paid off, and teachers, children and their parents all benefited from working together on this memorable project. ♥

Photos courtesy of PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Geylang Serai Blk 412

Since the inception of the ECDA Awards for Excellence in Early Childhood Development in 2013, St. James' Church Kindergarten (Harding) has earned recognition for projects that enhance the learning experience of children at the pre-school. This year, it received kudos again. But unlike previous years, the award it garnered, the ECDA Early Childhood Innovation Award (Distinction), was centred on curriculum and pedagogical practices. The 'IM-in-a-box', an induction and mentoring toolkit, targets first-year educators.

"It is common for first-year educators to experience information overload," explains Dr Jacqueline Chung, the pre-school's Senior

The in-house-created toolkit being used to mentor new staff



ONE FOR THE EDUCATORS

ST. JAMES' CHURCH KINDERGARTEN (HARDING) WINS AN ECDA INNOVATION AWARD FOR A PROJECT THAT SUPPORTS NEW EDUCATORS AND THEIR CONTINUING CAREER DEVELOPMENT.

St. James' Church Kindergarten (Harding)



Photos courtesy of St. James' Church Kindergarten

The toolkit provides me with a better understanding of the centre's culture and curriculum. This, in turn, has helped me better adjust to my new role.

Ms Aarathi d/o Ramchand

Principal and Academic Director. "This in-house-created toolkit is like a survival guide." Implemented at the end of 2015, 'IM-in-a-box' touches on topics that new educators need to be familiar with. How to communicate with parents and classroom management are just two examples. Each topic is dealt with in manageable 'doses', complete with training notes in the form of slides, a CD of model demonstration lessons, and articles for further reading. Educators can refer to the toolkit as often as they need to in their first year, or revisit certain topics later as a refresher.

Confidence Booster

Feedback from first-year educators has been mostly positive. "The toolkit is an enabler. It helps new educators gain a solid footing, especially at the start of our teaching journey.



Experienced educators presenting a segment of the induction toolkit

The toolkit provides me with a better understanding of the centre's culture and curriculum. This, in turn, has helped me better adjust to my new role," says Ms Aarathi d/o Ramchand, a Nursery Teacher. "The comprehensive induction programme delivered, using the toolkit, is both relevant and current. I find that I am now better able to plan, prepare and deliver my lessons with more confidence."

The toolkit is also intended as a useful resource for centre leaders assisting in the induction and mentoring process of new staff. At St James', experienced educators may also be invited to participate in the induction programme by presenting segments of the toolkit. "In this way, we hope to develop new trainers. Ultimately, this helps the centre maintain the quality of its curriculum and teachers," explains Dr Chung.

Most importantly, the project builds on the experiences of everyone in the centre to help develop its teachers. "Some of us started our early childhood education journey quite a long way back, some a few years ago, while others may be just starting out. It is most helpful to be part of a supportive team so that the collective strength of the team ensures that no individual has to be everything or do everything alone," says Dr Chung. ♥

Q&A

COLLABORATING WITH EARLY CHILDHOOD (EC) PROFESSIONALS AND THE COMMUNITY TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT.



For Parents

Q How can we tap on community resources to support children's holistic development?
Penny Quek: Children grow up as a part of the community. Their observations of how others interact or relate with the community help strengthen their ties and connections with the community.

► **Invite families and communities to donate materials such as egg cartons and empty bottles.** This not only helps centres to minimise costs, but also helps children to develop creative thinking skills by using these materials in atypical ways. They learn to innovate resourcefully to transform trash into 'treasure'. Children also develop a sense of responsibility towards their environment and become more civic conscious.

.....
Character is caught rather than taught. What you say and do as a parent contributes to your child's character development.

Mrs Ang-Oh Chui Hwa
 ► **You can also invite people in your neighbourhood such as traffic wardens and cleaners to share about their roles and responsibilities.** It will help children appreciate and respect the work they do and their contributions to the community.



For Educators

Q How can I work with my child's pre-school to contribute towards her character development?
Ang-Oh Chui Hwa: Character is caught rather than taught. What you say and do as a parent contributes to your child's character development. You can talk to your child's teacher to find out the pre-school's plans for character development and the values upheld by the centre.

Discuss these values with your child. Model and practise these in everyday life to help your child appreciate and embody them. This is necessary as children will regard these values positively when the home supports their learning. Another way you can contribute as a parent is to volunteer to read stories on character building and values in your child's class. Your willingness to take time to volunteer will demonstrate to your child that it is also important to share your time and skills with others.



ASK THE EXPERTS



✦ **MRS ANG-OH CHUI HWA**, the Principal of Far Eastern Kindergarten, has been in the EC sector for over 25 years. Appointed an ECDA Fellow in April 2015, she believes that character, compassion and communication are important cornerstones of children's development.

✦ **MS PENNY QUEK** is Lead Principal with PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Nee Soon East Bk 223 (KN), with more than 10 years of experience in the sector. She is a strong believer of community engagement and is also an ECDA Awards 2016 winner in the Outstanding Early Childhood Leader category.

SUPPORTING THE PHYSICAL, LANGUAGE, COGNITIVE AND SOCIO-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF YOUR CHILD

T H R I V E

grow

A wholesome cookie recipe for you and your little one

p21



play

Create a picture-perfect animal masterpiece using leaves

p22



learn

Enjoy an artful day out at the National Gallery Singapore with your child

p20



A SNOWMAN TAKES SHAPE!

learn



A story-telling session for children at the Gallery



Keeping a child engaged and keen in the arts

Artful Conversations

Hey Educators! ECDA has collaborated with National Gallery Singapore to develop a resource kit to ignite children's sense of wonderment and appreciation of art. The kit comprises activity cards and questions which will guide you and the children as you explore the Gallery's rich collection of Singapore and Southeast Asian art. Look out for the e-resource kit on this website: www.growatbeanstalk.sg!

done by engaging the child in imaginative conversations," says Ms Chan.

LET'S TALK ABOUT ART

To kick start such conversations, Ms Chan suggests that educators and parents pose open-ended questions. "A great place to start a discussion is to talk about colours, shapes, patterns and textures," she says. Children learn to create new meanings and make connections by expressing their thoughts and ideas freely.

"As children describe what they see in an artwork, they develop their vocabulary and visual perception skills," Ms Chan explains. "By making predictions of what they think might happen next in an artwork, children learn to construct new knowledge while building on what they know. This fosters both imaginative thinking and inference skill."

Ms Lydia Hong, from Clementi Woods Kindergarten, was one of the educators who took part in the learning journey. She learnt from the experience that there is no definitive answer to art. "If I play the role of 'discussion facilitator' as opposed to being an 'information provider', children can uncover their own knowledge and extend their thinking," Ms Hong says. This idea is supported by Ms Chan, who believes that

engaging children in conversations about art promotes creativity and individuality, as well as encourages them to be confident in their responses and ideas. "The arts teach children that problems can have more than one solution and that questions can have more than one answer," Ms Chan says, quoting the notable art and education professor, Elliot Eisner. ♥

WEEKENDS AT THE GALLERY

KCAE also offers a lively range of parent-child programmes. Designed in collaboration with artists and art practitioners, the programmes use the Gallery's collection as a springboard to introduce little ones to art.

DROP IN ACTIVITY

- ▶ Every weekend | 1-6pm | 4 years and up
- ▶ Get creative as a family through art-making and puzzle-solving. Art kits and fun activity guides to the galleries are available.

STORIES IN ART*

- ▶ 2nd weekend of each month | 2nd weekend of each month | Various timings | 4 years and up
- ▶ Dive into a world of stories that bring artworks to life! Follow storytellers and actors on a journey through the treasure trove of art in the galleries.

ART EXPLORERS*

- ▶ 2nd weekend of each month | 11-11.45am, 1.30-2.15pm | 5 years and up
- ▶ Learn more about the artist behind a masterpiece and the art-making process through close-looking and hands-on exploration.

*Registration or tickets required. Visit www.nationalgallery.sg for details.

YOUNG and ARTY

NATIONAL GALLERY SINGAPORE'S KEPPEL CENTRE FOR ART EDUCATION OFFERS A WEALTH OF TEACHABLE MOMENTS.



Art Playscape at the Keppel Centre for Art Education

artists, that stimulates children's creativity and curiosity. It also provides an exciting line-up of programmes for children and families all year round.

"No child is too young to be exposed to the arts. It's about encouraging what comes naturally to children – their curiosity," says Ms Elaine Chan, Manager (Education) at the National Gallery Singapore. Ms Chan facilitated a learning journey on 16 September, organised as part of ECC 2016. She encourages educators and parents not to be intimidated by art, or be burdened by thinking they need to have all the answers. "Art appreciation is simply the act of looking and talking about works of art. This can be

Photos courtesy of National Gallery Singapore



Doing art and craft at the Gallery



THE NATIONAL GALLERY SINGAPORE

KEEP A CHILD MEANINGFULLY ENGAGED

Ms Elaine Chan, Manager (Education) at National Gallery Singapore, shares three tips to help educators and parents support their children's learning when they visit the Gallery.



Encourage children to mirror the pose of a sculpture or imitate the expression of a figure in an artwork. This will encourage them to interpret the artworks.



Bring a clipboard, paper and a pencil to sketch in the galleries. For example, children can draw various shapes they spot in an artwork or a favourite portrait.



Play "I Spy" to enhance their observation skills by taking turns to identify shapes, colours and objects in artworks.

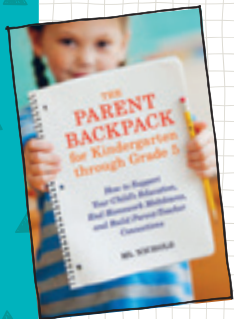


... learn ...

SIGHTS AND

BOOKS TO HELP DEVELOP THE LOVE OF LEARNING AND DISCOVERING IN YOUR LITTLE ONES.

Insights



The Parent Backpack for Kindergarten Through Grade 5: How to Support Your Child's Education, End Homework Meltdowns, and Build Parent-Teacher Connections
By Marylisa Nichols

Research shows that children perform better in pre-school when their parents are engaged with their learning. The author aims to help parents take an active role in their children's education and connect respectfully with teachers. The chapters are organised into three parts - dealing with insights and perspectives, practical tips for pre-schools, and learning at home respectively.

Contributed by Lim Han Sen, Librarian, National Library Board

Timmy & Tammy
By Ruth Wan-Lau;
illustrated by Eliz Ong

This series of picture books is about two Singaporean children exploring various interesting places in Singapore. Written in short sentences and simple vocabulary, the books are perfect for pre-schoolers who are just learning to read on their own. Young readers will enjoy seeing the familiar sights in the books - such as Changi Airport, the Singapore Flyer as well as popular dishes at the food court!

Contributed by Law Xiang Qing, Associate Librarian, National Library Board



Win

Kick-start Your Child's Love For Books And The Arts

NAME THREE PROGRAMMES THAT YOU CAN ATTEND WITH YOUR CHILD AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY SINGAPORE.

HOW TO WIN

Submit your answer to beanstalk@mediacorp.com.sg with your name and contact details.

Closing date: 30 Nov 2016



TOP PRIZE X 1

TWO SETS OF BOOKS
Salted Fish and When I Grow Up I Want To Paint Like Cheong Soo Pieng +
Koko The Great and When I Grow Up I Want To Paint Like Liu Kang



CONSOLATION PRIZE X 3

ONE SET OF BOOKS
Koko The Great and When I Grow Up I Want To Paint Like Liu Kang

FOR MORE EARLY CHILDHOOD INSPIRATIONS AND PARENTING TIPS, GO TO:



20 Beanstalk

Beanstalk WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/BEANSTALKSINGAPORE

grow@Beanstalk WWW.GROWATBEANSTALK.SG



APPARENT IN SG AVAILABLE IN APP STORE AND GOOGLE PLAY

... grow ...

Oat TO THE Holidays

THESE OATMEAL RAISIN COOKIES ARE CRISPY ON THE OUTSIDE BUT SOFT ON THE INSIDE - AND PERFECT FOR LITTLE ONES!



OATMEAL RAISIN COOKIES

MAKES 36 COOKIES

FOLLOW THESE STEPS

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- ▶ 1 cup butter
- ▶ 1/2 cup white sugar
- ▶ 1 1/2 cup brown sugar
- ▶ 2 eggs
- ▶ 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- ▶ 2 cups plain flour
- ▶ 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ▶ 1 1/2 cup raisins
- ▶ 3 cups rolled oats



HEALTHIER SWAP

Tips from the Health Promotion Board:

✓ Replace 25 per cent of the plain flour with wholemeal flour.

✓ Replace 1 cup of sugar with a cup of mashed bananas.

✓ Replace butter with healthier oils such as soya bean or grape seed oil.

This recipe is taken from Home Café, a publication of Marshall Cavendish Cuisine. Available at all major bookstores.

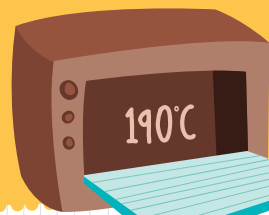


1 Using an electric mixer, beat the butter and both types of sugar on medium speed for two minutes until ingredients are combined. Add the eggs one at a time, and the vanilla extract. Mix well.

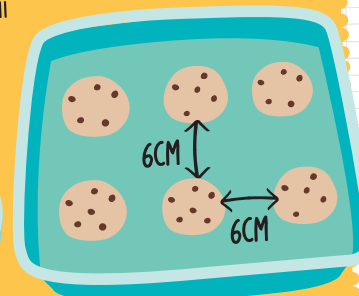
2 In a separate bowl, mix together the flour, rolled oats and baking soda. Gradually add this to the butter mixture, mixing all the while. Fold in the raisins.



3 Cover the dough and refrigerate for one hour until firm.

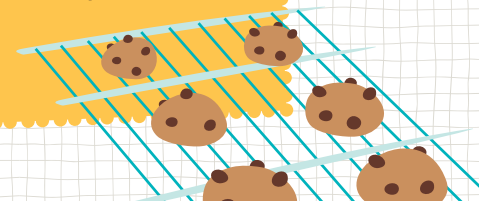


4 Preheat the oven to 190°C. Line several baking trays with parchment paper.



5 Scoop the dough with a tablespoon. Arrange each cookie, about 6 cm apart, on the baking trays.

6 Bake for 9 to 12 minutes or until golden brown. Leave cookies to cool before serving or storing in an airtight container. ♥



Oct-Dec 21

Leaf IT TO Art

play

TAKE A LEAF OUT OF NATURE AND MAKE A PICTURE-PERFECT ANIMAL ART MASTERPIECE WITH YOUR CHILD!

MAKES 1 LEAF ART



WHAT YOU'LL NEED



A piece of drawing block

Leaves

PICK DON'T PLUCK

When gathering leaves, flowers or twigs, make sure they are picked from the ground and have fallen off a tree or bush. Remind your child that greenery is very much a part of nature and should be given the opportunity to grow and thrive. This is a great way to teach the little ones about the many benefits of plants on our planet.

SHOW'EM OFF

Post your child's leaf-based artwork on Beanstalk's Facebook page. His or her masterpiece may be published in the next issue of Beanstalk!

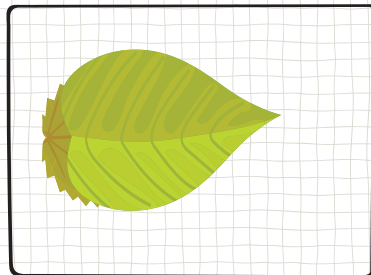


FOLLOW THESE STEPS

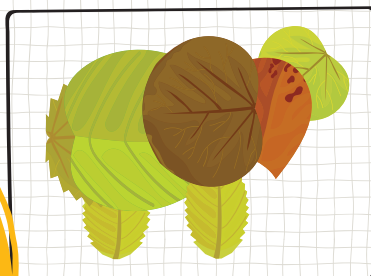
1 Go out and gather fallen leaves. Collect as many leaves in varying sizes, shapes and colours.



2 Use the largest leaf as the body and paste it on the drawing block using white glue.



3 Add on medium-sized leaves as its face, ears and legs. Glue these down firmly.



4 Save the smallest leaves to create the trunk and a pair of tusks. Secure them down with glue. And there you have it – an elephant! ♥



www.facebook.com/BEANSTALKSINGAPORE

Artwork first appeared in 'Look What I Did with a Leaf!' (Naturecraft) by Morteza E. Soltani.

Wellness

FOR THE FUN PARENTS

WE KNOW THAT PLAYING AND LEARNING DOESN'T STOP WHEN PRE-SCHOOL IS OUT. HERE'S WHAT TO DO THIS YEAR-END SO YOUR CHILDREN ARE HAPPY AND LEARNING



1 Go On A Romp

Singapore's maritime landmarks

The Singapore Maritime Trails are organised by the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore. The free tours run every first Saturday of the month, and take about 2.5 hours to complete. It's a great way for children to learn about our history as a trading port, as they visit old and new maritime landmarks including Fort Canning, the Singapore River and The Fullerton Hotel. If you would like to participate, email mpasmt@gmail.com or call 6836 6466.



2 Take A Guided Learning Tour

Marine Cove's outdoor playground

4 Run Wild

Marine Cove's outdoor playground



3 Spend Quality Time With Loved Ones

Families for Life picnics



5 See How Our Country Has Changed

Singapore City Gallery @ URA



22 Beanstalk

WE'VE GOT MAIL! 😊

PARENTS DISCOVER THAT INDEED, IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO RAISE A CHILD.



Ms Teng with her two-year-old son at the beach with her extended family



My husband has four siblings and our families live near each other. Our children will be at their grandparents' place before or after school. We head there after work for dinner and to bring the children home. Our extended family is a great help to my husband and I in raising our toddler. For example, my parents-in-law send him to and fetch him from the child care centre. They also take care of his bath and dinner. We believe too, that being part of a big family has created a sense of community and helped our elder son to develop his language and social skills.

Joanette Teng
Mother of two, aged 2 and 2 months



When she was a toddler, my strong-willed daughter would create a commotion to get what she wanted. She is now in Kindergarten One and her behaviour couldn't be more different! I attribute this to the positive role-modelling of my 84 year-old grandmother who is always very patient with her great-granddaughter. Whenever my daughter throws a tantrum, my grandmother would calm her by being affectionate. She even takes the time to praise my daughter when she displays positive behaviours.

Gary Teo
Father of twins, aged 4



As a mother of two and with a third one on the way, I am convinced that it truly takes a village to raise a child. Hence, I have made efforts to establish my "village". I have a support group of like-minded mummies who share a similar parenting approach. We organise playdates for our kids to socialise with one another while we catch up. I also involve my mum and parents-in-law in bringing up my kids. This fosters family togetherness. At the same time, I am able to tap on the strengths of having a bilingual household as my children can pick up Chinese from their grandparents and this helps build their language and communication skills.

Lim Hui Chee
Mother of two, aged 2 and 4



Ms Lim's sons with their grandparents

Photos courtesy of Joanette Teng and Lim Hui Chee

WHEN YOUR TODDLER IS A BABY NO MORE ...

Children grow up so fast! Parents, tell us about that moment when you realised your pre-schooler is no longer a toddler! Attach a photo with your anecdote, and your not-so-little one may appear in the next issue of *Beanstalk*.

Send your story to beanstalk@mediacorp.com.sg with your name and contact details.

We have three \$30 NTUC FairPrice vouchers to give away, and you may be one of the winners.

LIFE'S A BUZZ

HELP THE BEE FIND THEIR FRIENDS WITH WINGS OF THE SAME COLOUR! THEY FIND THEIR HOME ONCE THEY ARE PAIRED UP.

FUN FACT 🎵

Worker bees gather food and protect the hive as a team. They communicate by dancing!

HEY PARENTS!

Get involved and check if your child has the right answer. This is also a good opportunity to teach them about colours. Be sure to count the number of bees on the page too. Happy bonding!