

LEARNING TO SELF-REGULATE



These are exceptional times for all of us. Our early childhood educators have demonstrated fortitude and resilience in dealing with many challenges. During the circuit breaker, they worked with parents to support their children at home to ensure continuity of learning. When preschools reopened from 2 June, educators took pains to ensure children's safety. Starting this year, all early childhood educators will get a well-deserved day off on Teachers' Day. Let's take this opportunity to appreciate them. I wish all of our educators a Happy Teachers' Day!

Undeterred by the challenges of COVID-19, more than 53,000 children from over 950 preschools continue to give back to the community through the 'Start Small Dream Big' movement. Themed "A Caring & Inclusive Home for All", this is the sixth edition of the President's Challenge initiative since 2015. A big thank you to educators, parents and children for supporting this effort.

As adults, we need to help children figure out situations and the appropriate responses. These important life skills will help them manage stress, and cope with adversities and control impulses. As Charles R. Swindoll put it, "Life is 10% what happens to us and 90% how we react to it."

Research suggests that developing self-regulation and behaviour management skills in children's early years contributes towards their positive wellbeing, cognitive learning and development. It lays strong foundations for success in their school years and beyond.

In this issue, we explore ways to boost children's ability to focus and control their impulses. We also find out how different preschools help children engage in self-reflection as well as ways to manage and express their emotions, for example, through dance, music and drama activities.

Self-regulation is all the more important now, as the world battles the COVID-19 pandemic. Many safe management behaviours are not what we usually do, and require discipline in applying them. In June, ECDA rolled out the *COVID-Safe ABCs* — **S**afe **A**ccess, **B**ehaviours and **C**lassrooms — to keep our preschools safe. We also embarked on a *Back to School with Our New ABCs* public education initiative to strengthen public health awareness and build a culture of COVID-Safe habits among children and staff.

MS JAMIE ANG
Chief Executive Officer
Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA)



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ON THE COVER

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Some photos in this issue were taken before the circuit breaker period, and feature children/adults without masks on.