

WORDS FROM THE HEART

THE RECENT CIRCUIT BREAKER SHOWED TEACHERS GOING THE EXTRA MILE TO ENSURE THAT CHILDREN NEVER STOP LEARNING. THANK YOU, TEACHERS!

Dear Teacher Felicia and Zhang lao shi,

I have always been amazed at your ability to engage Gerald and keep him interested in the activities you do, bearing in mind that you have to tend to many children with varying learning styles. During the circuit breaker, when I experienced how challenging and exhausting it can be for the teachers, I was even more amazed!

As a first-time mother and working parent, it was challenging to engage Gerald meaningfully and get him to complete activities. I found the materials in the resource kit you shared useful for his learning and development. Your professionalism also showed in your daily video calls with the children where you conducted lessons virtually, and in your updates to me via email or the LittleLives app.

Both of you play a very big role in supporting Gerald's development. With your help, he has picked up many skills — from psychomotor to drama, and even little things such as buttoning up his uniform. You are extremely patient with him and have allowed him to express himself confidently.

MRS VERON TAN, mother of Gerald Tan, 3, who attends Learning Vision @ NTU



A PROUD LEADER

"I am proud of my team of teachers who rose to the challenge of ensuring that our children and families are supported appropriately during the circuit breaker period.



To support learning at home, the educators sent out daily assignments through the Education.com platform. They supplemented these with e-learning lesson plans, comprising video demonstrations and follow-up activities that could be completed with materials commonly found at home. The teachers were also diligent in updating parents and maintaining two-way communication with them through regular circulars, emails and texts on the children's progress.

The teachers designed fun activities that parents could do with the children at their own pace and, more importantly, around their work schedules. Parents were encouraged to share photos and videos of the activities that they had done with their children at home.

The teachers would then post these on our preschool's Instagram. This made for a more engaging experience and offered useful examples for other parents.

Not being there physically for the children was hard for the teachers, as their work normally involves hands-on learning and face-to-face interactions. They missed the children dearly. However, for the safety of our children, the teachers showed much patience, understanding and determination throughout the circuit breaker period. Their love for the profession and commitment to putting children first have shone through."

MS AFIQAH BINTI YUSOFF, Principal, HANIS Montessori Kindergarten (Tampines)



Dear Teacher Ann Na,

Thank you for all your hard work in teaching and looking after our son! The first week of the circuit breaker period was challenging. My wife and I had to rearrange our work-from-home schedules so that at least one of us accompanied Jed during the day while caring for our one-year-old. But the resources you provided guided us in being able to keep him on a good daily schedule.

Jed was very excited whenever we told him you had sent him new things to learn and watch. You were available any time he wanted to speak to you, or when we needed advice if he occasionally misbehaved. Between the weekly WhatsApp exchanges, the ad hoc video calls and text messages, your support during the circuit breaker period was as strong as that in the preschool.

We can tell you are concerned with every aspect of Jed's development, from social to self-care to academic. A lot of prep work is done behind the scenes. We know that our son is in awesome hands.

MR CHOO CHIN TIONG, father of Jed Choo, 4, who attends Sunshine Kids @ Hougang

TIPS FROM THE TOP

"The move to support children's learning at home meant we needed to figure out how to recreate lesson plans so that parents could easily engage their children at home.



Fortunately, I had my centre leader and senior teacher to turn to. They constantly checked in with the teachers to see how we were coping and were only a phone call away to offer guidance.

For instance, the teaching materials generally found in a preschool are different to those at home. When I brought this up to my centre leader and senior teacher, we discussed ways in which we could substitute baric tablets to teach the concept of weight in our Montessori curriculum with items readily found at home.

The circuit breaker period made me realise that being an educator takes special skills as

well as collegial support. Some parents wondered how I manage to get 17 four-year-olds to sit down for a 40-minute lesson when they couldn't even get their child to sit for 10 minutes! I have benefited from the experience of my senior colleagues. Their tips, such as letting children burn off excess energy through music and movement activities or a game before the lesson starts, have honed my classroom management skills."

MRS SAMIKANNU CHIITRRA, Teacher, Modern Montessori International (Kovan)



A WELL-DESERVED BREAK

Starting this year, all preschools will be closed on Teachers' Day to show our appreciation for the hard work that early childhood educators put in all year round. Enjoy your day off, teachers!

