

BOOSTING LANGUAGE AND LITERACY SKILLS



This adds to existing courses for the teaching of Malay and Tamil languages, and will help educators hone their skills in teaching languages to our children.

The Government has also announced measures to enhance inclusion and support for children with developmental needs. These efforts stand to benefit all children. Children with developmental needs can develop social skills and participate more meaningfully alongside their typically-developing peers. Typically-developing children can also develop positive attitudes, such as empathy, and acquire more helping and prosocial behaviours from a young age.

To support children from low-income families, the Government will further expand KidSTART to more regions. KidSTART equips parents with the knowledge and skills to nurture their children's early development, including their physical and socio-emotional well-being. This includes helping parents learn to interact with their children and develop their language skills.

Finally, I'd like to end off with a Chinese proverb: "To learn a language is to have one more window from which to look at the world." Let us work together to open as many windows as possible for our children to the world.

Exposing children to a rich array of language and literacy experiences in their early years is important in order to give them a good start in life. Research shows that a solid language and literacy foundation helps children become stronger readers and communicators. It also strengthens their comprehension, thinking and problem-solving skills. As a result, children increase in confidence and overall well-being. As Benjamin Lee Whorf, a linguist, remarked, "Language shapes the way we think, and determines what we can think about."

This edition of *Beanstalk* looks at how we can help young children boost their language and literacy skills. Preschools play a key role in building our children's foundation for language and literacy. In a multiracial society like Singapore, it is also important for educators to help children learn their mother tongue. To support this, the Government will introduce a new Certificate in Preschool Mother Tongue Language Teaching for Chinese Language later this year.

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



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EDITORIAL PANEL
Angela Anthony
Jennifer Law

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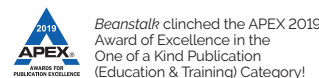


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Some photos in this issue were taken before the Circuit Breaker period, and feature children/adults without masks on.