

In

NOVATION & RESEARCH



Little Olympians

Lead The Way



A novel way of developing motor skills through play helps centre clinch innovation award.

OUTDOOR PLAY IS an important part of a child's social, physical and cognitive development. As a firm believer in the merits of outdoor play, My First Skool at Block 333, Kang Chin Road launched the "Little Olympians" project on March 2014.

"While the aim of the project was to help children develop and refine their motor skills, the intention was also to foster an appreciation of and interest in sports," explained Ms Rita Lim, the centre's principal.

To help their children develop, refine and master motor skills, the teachers in the centre set up game stations (made from recycled materials) that mimicked actual sports. The game stations were regularly modified to sustain the children's interest and engagement, based on the teachers' observations and children's feedback.

Through weekly hour-long play sessions held in open spaces around the centre, the children had opportunities to develop three key skills: locomotor skills, object control and stability.

The project culminated in a Sports Day held at Taman Jurong Community Club.

At the event, parents also joined their children in a self-designed obstacle course and picked up strategies on how to develop their children's motor development through simple activities.

For its innovative use and implementation of motor skills development concepts and resources, the centre won the Innovation Award (Commendation) at the ECDA Awards for Excellence in Early Childhood Development 2014.

"To us, innovation is about learning new ideas and doing things in a different way to support the development of our children. This was the goal of the Little Olympians project," said Ms Lim. "Previous motor development classes were restricted to simple movements like running and jumping. We found that such classes were not as enjoyable."

To tackle this, Ms Lim and her team revamped the classes with the skills learnt at the "FUN Start, MOVE Smart" course run by the Singapore Sports Council. The course is designed to help early childhood educators understand

fundamental motor skills development.

They also visited Lakeside Primary School and observed how a Physical Education class was conducted for Primary One students.

The centre has plans to share its knowledge, and is also currently in talks with grassroots organisations to set up activity booths at community events. ♥



CALLING ALL PRACTITIONERS

You can tap on the Practitioner Inquiry (PI) scheme, to explore innovative ways of delivering your curriculum and classroom activities.

Applications are open until 31 Mar 2015 (Tue) to all ECDA-licensed child care centres and registered kindergartens. As a funding requisite, educators are required to attend the Practitioner Inquiry in Early Childhood Education (PIECE) Workshop to be held in Mar 2015.

For more information, please visit the TEACHER'S gallery section (Professional Development) of www.growatbeanstalk.sg.



Ms Rita Lim (middle) with teachers at the centre.

My First Skool

DEVELOPING PRESCHOOLERS' FUNDAMENTAL MOVEMENT SKILLS

A three-day course, is available for all ECDA-registered teachers. For more information, please refer to ECDA's Online Prospectus 2015: www.ecda.gov.sg/Pages/Continuing-Professional-Development.aspx



Alman Safwan, 6, having fun batting a ball at a game station.



PHOTOS BY MARK LEE