

win!
"FUN START, MOVE SMART!"
PARENTS' GUIDES

THRIVE



Bouquet Of Blooms

Create "pencil flowers" for teachers on their special day



Patriotic Popsicles

Fruity, icy treats to celebrate National Day



Let's Move

Stay fit and healthy with these essential motor skills



COLOUR OUR ICONS
Have you been to these places in Singapore?

Beanstalk

JUL-SEP
2019

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[user/ecdasingapore](https://www.youtube.com/user/ecdasingapore)

ACTIVE BODIES ACTIVE MINDS

How exercise and sports
boost children's brain function
and mental well-being

**5 PLACES
TO GET
MOVING**
for the whole
family



GET ACTIVE FOR SHARP MINDS

Physical development helps lay the groundwork for our children's cognitive, language, social and emotional development. Neuroscience research shows that when children engage in physical activities, their motivation, memory, as well as the ability to focus, concentrate and learn improve.

I believe this is why our children are naturally active. They are looking for opportunities to learn and develop.

This is one reason why we are featuring outdoor learning at this year's Early Childhood Conference & Exhibition, which will be themed "Beyond the Classroom: Take Learning Outdoors", held on 13 and 14 September at Suntec City Convention & Exhibition Centre.

Do join us and get practical tips on how to take learning outdoors and get our children to be physically active, using learning opportunities in the community.

There are other opportunities for our children to go out and be active.

In support of the Singapore Bicentennial, the 5th edition of "Start Small Dream Big", a President's Challenge initiative, was launched in April under the theme "Learning from Our Past, Dream of Our Future".

This year, "Start Small Dream Big" aims to inspire our children to learn about Singapore's heritage and do their part in building a kind and caring society. Around 49,000 children from 820 centres will be participating in various community

projects. Thank you to all teachers and parents for their strong support of this movement.

Our early childhood teachers play a significant role in shaping the lives of our children in the early years. Let's celebrate and appreciate their passion, dedication and contributions. Please join me in wishing all our educators a happy Teachers' Day on 6 September!

Since joining ECDA in 2015, I have had the privilege to work with our partners to raise the quality, affordability and accessibility of preschools. It has been one of my most satisfying journeys both personally and professionally. I will be moving to the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources, and Ms Jamie Ang will helm ECDA as Chief Executive from September. Like me, she is committed to ECDA's vision of a good start for every child.

In conclusion, let's continue to create opportunities for our children to be active, and lay the foundation to help them reach their full potential. As Maria Montessori once said, "Watching a child makes it obvious that the development of his mind comes through his movements."



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MR EUGENE LEONG
Chief Executive Officer
Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA)



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ON THE COVER

From left Ashton Tanoto, Cahaya Ariana Fatanah binte Sha'Ari, Loo Chin Suan, Mirabelle Tan, Muhammad Sameer, Muhammad Gazzali, Beatrice Lai

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LET'S GET ACTIVE!

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS AND PARENTS DISCUSS THE IMPORTANCE OF PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND HOW TO CREATE PLAY AND MOVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES.



MAIN PHOTO On Ashton: Polo tee & bermudas Gingersnaps. Jacket, Marks & Spencer. Sneakers New Balance. On Beatrice: Striped top Gingersnaps. Tulle skirt & leopard print sneakers Cotton On Kids. On Mirabelle: Denim jacket & top Gingersnaps. Romper & shoes Cotton On Kids. On Cahaya Ariana Fatimah: Dress kookiesandmilk.com. THIS PAGE On Chin Suan: Cardigan & floral top Marks & Spencer. Skirt Crayon. On Muhammad Sameer: Polo tee & shorts Gingersnaps.

Motor skills acquisition allows children to explore the world around them. Research shows that introducing physical activity early into a child's daily life helps foster gross and fine motor skills. Gross motor skills are the big movements involving the legs and arms, such as running, climbing and hopping. Fine motor skills refer to small movements using the hands and wrists, such as holding a spoon or pencil and picking up small items.

Developing motor skills in young children leads to better physical, cognitive and psychological health, in areas such as cardio-respiratory fitness, brain development and self-esteem, among others.

If physical development undergirds development in other aspects, how then can we best support children in this domain of growth? These early childhood educators and parents weigh in.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR CHILDREN TO BE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE?

Oh Chiah Ching: Being physically active helps children develop stamina and motor skills. Expendng their energies also helps children sleep better. As a result, they will get refreshed and can focus and regulate their emotions better in the day. Research also shows that physical activities help children learn values like taking turns and working together as a team to achieve the same goals.

Siti Noraisha Mohamad Sa'at:

Physical activity lays the groundwork for children's intellectual, social and emotional learning. It builds children's self-confidence when they are able to complete a task independently. It also increases their self-esteem when they overcome challenges and, more importantly, resilience when they



AIM FOR 150 MINUTES of physical activity per week for a healthier you. This is the recommended target for adults aged 19 to 49, according to the National Physical Activity Guidelines by the Health Promotion Board (HPB). This number seems high but it is achievable if you break it down into 10 minutes of exercise three times a day, five times a week.



don't. Engaging in physical activities is an emotional outlet for children. It helps them release negative emotions through exercising. That's why we include physical activities in the centre's daily programme to support children in this area.

Loo Chin Suan: Through movement, a child is able to explore the environment and develop important spatial awareness skills. This is an important cognitive skill that allows him to see himself in relation to people and objects, and develop his sense of perception. Movement also allows a child to access, explore and interact directly with materials using his senses. For young children, this is how their brain develops.

EDUCATORS, HOW DO YOU CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN TO MOVE AND PLAY AT YOUR CENTRE?

Siti: Our preschool activities feature an integrated learning approach. For example, in our Language and Literacy lessons, arts and craft is used as a means to develop the children's fine motor skills when they create their own story puppets or cut them out using scissors. We help nurture their social skills, such as cooperating with one another, when we play games related to the story.

We also run daily activities focused on physical development. For example, during Music and Movement class, children hop, skip and dance to the selected music. Incorporating musical elements like beats and rhythms support their cognitive development, while they learn to discriminate and differentiate. Scarves, sticks and castanets are also included to encourage creativity and imagination, besides facilitating movement.

“Through movement, a child is able to explore the environment and develop important spatial awareness skills.”

MDM LOO CHIN SUAN, 52
Infant Educator, Heartyland Infant Care

We dedicate a daily 40-minute outdoor session to encourage children to run, climb and tumble, using equipment such as trampolines, climbing frames and tricycles. As they play in a safe environment, teachers are also on hand during these sessions to supervise and interact with children. This further helps develop the children's language and communication skills. Children who are trying out new activities feel reassured as they know there is someone they trust to help and support them.

Chin Suan: At our infant care centre, we have designed different spaces attuned to the infants' physical and exploration needs.

For those aged two to six months who have not yet mastered sitting up independently, we have an Activity Room which houses the baby gym. Hanging objects and toys stimulate their senses and imagination. These objects and toys encourage muscle development in their arms and legs as the babies reach for, grasp and kick them. They also enhance cognitive development as the babies learn to recognise colours, shapes and textures.

For seven- to 12-month-old babies who are learning to push themselves up and stand on their own, we have carved out a large area, which encourages safe exploration. It has an infant crawling ramp, a wall-mounted mirror for them to visually track their progress and a hand rail to provide support.

For 13- to 18-month-old infants who are at the stage where they are learning to walk, we have an indoor toddler slide, and a water and sand play area. The play space encourages them to work on their fine motor skills as they handle different materials and equipment to scoop, sift and pour. It also enables them to practise their hand-eye coordination.



A BETTER DIET IN PROGRESS

Singaporeans are starting to improve their diets and reduce calories intake, according to the 2018 National Nutrition Survey. We are eating more wholegrains, fruit and vegetables, but our high consumption of sugar and salt is still a cause for concern, says the report.

“Physical activity lays the groundwork for children's intellectual, social and emotional learning. It builds children's self-confidence when they are able to complete a task independently.”

MS SITI NORAISHA MOHAMAD SA'AT, 42
Centre Leader, Wee Care Kindergarten



PARENTS, HOW DO YOU SUPPORT YOUR CHILD'S PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AT HOME?

Muhammad Gazzali: Our son Sameer is beginning to walk. He enjoys the slides in the playground and loves climbing up the steps on all fours. So we bring him to the playground often where he can explore and play freely.

His favourite activity currently is stacking cups and we do it together frequently. I call out the colours so he can learn the names as well. He gets excited when I clap and encourage him. This activity develops his motor skills, especially his dexterity.

Chiah Ching: My husband and I bring our children outdoors as often as we can, to the park, the playground or anywhere with a big open space for them to run around. Sometimes we bring balls, scooters or a frisbee to encourage them to move about more. We also enjoy swimming and cycling as a family. I think the trick to getting them



MR MUHAMMAD GAZZALI, 39
Driving Instructor, Father of Muhammad Sameer, 1

to try a new activity is to make sure it's fun and enjoyable!

There are also games involving physical movements — such as musical chairs and “What's The Time, Mr Wolf?” — which they've played in preschool and have shared with us. We play these games with them at home too!

EDUCATORS, DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER ADVICE FOR PARENTS TO ENHANCE THEIR CHILD'S PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AT HOME?

Chin Suan: Clear away clutter to create space for your child to move around, be it to crawl or to run. Invest in sturdy furniture such as coffee tables, which can serve as a support for the child when he is at a stage to pull himself up. Look for push and pull toys which build strength, balance and confidence. Large empty boxes make good push and pull toys. Improvise. But remember to supervise your child at all times.

Siti: Join in your child's active playtime, when he is playing ball games for instance. Do provide opportunities for children to do their daily routines independently. These include brushing their teeth or eating using a spoon or chopsticks during mealtimes. These tasks help strengthen their small muscles over time — these important muscles are used for writing and other self-help skills such as dressing. Maintaining good nutrition is also important for healthy physical development. Be a role model to your child by practising healthy dietary habits such as eating more fruits and vegetables.

THIS SPREAD: On Siti: Striped shirt & wide-leg pants; Marks & Spencer; Jacket: Crayon. On Muhammad Gazzali: Shirt: Marks & Spencer. On Muhammad Sameer: Polo tee Gingersnap. On Chiah Ching: Blouse: Crayon, Striped pants: H&M. On Mirabelle: Jacket: Marks & Spencer, Shorts: Gingersnap.

THE BIG PICTURE



ECDA Fellow Dr Jacqueline Chung, Senior Principal and Academic Director of St. James' Preschool Services, sheds light on how physical activities influence other developmental domains in children.

Observing parents at her centre, Dr Chung finds that they are often more concerned about their child's cognitive development and occasionally, his social and emotional development. “Fewer parents ask questions about a centre's physical development programme unless there are medical concerns to address,” says Dr Chung. She shares three important benefits of physical activity:

Develops Tenacity & Confidence

Movement activities do far more than improve physical fitness. Children who are confident in their physical coordination abilities — run, jump, climb, throw and catch, for examples — are often also willing to try and persist at new activities. This has a positive impact on their self-esteem and strengthening dispositions such as persistence and resilience.

Enhances Focus & Learning

Active ‘movement breaks’ during class, sometimes called ‘brain breaks’, have been identified to help improve young children's focus and attention. When children are involved in physical movement, blood flow is increased, leading to more oxygen going to the brain. The boost in energy can help children to be more engaged in their learning.

Nurtures Thinking, Social & Communication Skills

Physical activities often involve social interactions and communication with other children. In team games, children learn to anticipate the movements and actions of their peers. They also learn to judge speed, distance, force, etc. These require motor planning, i.e. to think about a movement, plan, and carry it out in a sequence from beginning to end.

“Above all, young children enjoy moving, so physical activities are seen as fun which results in happier, vibrant children,” says Dr Chung.

“Being physically active helps children develop stamina and motor skills. Expend their energies also helps children sleep better.”

MS OH CHIAH CHING, 41
Analyst, Mother of Beatrice Lai, 5



Wish you can better support children in their physical development?

SIGN UP FOR THESE CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSES AT ONE@ECDA.



- Basic Educational Gym for Preschoolers
Dates: 29 July and 26 August 2019
- Exploring Creative Movement with Children
Dates: 14 and 28 October 2019

IS MY CHILD'S PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT ON TRACK?

DR SANDRA SYLVIA MASCARENHAS ON THE FACTS AND FALLACIES ABOUT GROSS MOTOR DEVELOPMENT IN INFANTS AND CHILDREN.

Motor development varies from child to child, and is influenced by genetic and environmental factors. For example, two nine-month olds — one who is sitting up while the other is crawling — could be considered within the 'normal range' of development, if everything else is normal.

Children who have experienced limited movement opportunities during their development (e.g. due to restrictions on physical movement because of safety or hygiene reasons) may show delayed skills. Those who have been hospitalised for a long time may also exhibit slow motor development with subsequent 'catch up.'

However, pushing them to catch up with their peers may have detrimental effects. Independent walking cannot be hastened by a parent's "hand or finger holding" to help a child walk. Stability of the trunk and coordination is necessary before independent first steps can be taken. The infant will need to master these skills on their own. Parents who use baby walkers are putting their children at risk. Evidence has shown that baby walkers will not hasten independent walking; it is also associated with injuries and gait problems.

Concerned parents can refer to the child's health booklet and complete the developmental checklist of milestones. If your child has not achieved a milestone, consult a doctor to review his developmental milestones and medical history, as well as perform a physical examination.



Dr Sandra Sylvia Mascarenhas

Dr Mascarenhas is a consultant at the Department of Child Development of KK Women's and Children's Hospital. She is part of a team of over 100 staff comprising doctors, allied health professionals and nurses, who sees a range of developmental issues such as gross and fine motor developmental delays, handwriting difficulties, as well as learning and behavioural problems. The department also runs community programmes, partnering with preschools, philanthropic organisations and other government ministries to bring early intervention to the classroom for children with developmental needs.



DO THIS TO DEVELOP MOTOR SKILLS

Making active play part of your everyday routine will enhance your baby's motor development.

1. Integrate music and movement into daily activities. Sing interactive nursery rhymes to your baby. Put in action words to encourage your baby to bounce, clap and tap. These enhances interaction and early literacy skills.



2. Motivate your baby to crawl further. Place a tower of blocks that is just out of his reach or roll a soft ball on the floor away from him.



3. Set up an obstacle course with pillows and cushions on a carpeted floor and play peek-a-boo. It is a fun way to engage and encourage your baby to move.



The child may need to see a paediatrician if he is unable to:

- > Have head control by five months of age
- > Sit independently by nine months of age
- > Stand independently by 12 months of age
- > Walk independently by 18 months of age
- > Walk with foot flat on the ground, or is persistently toe walking ●

ON COVER: On Ashton: Hoodie Marks & Spencer, T-shirt Gingersnaps, Leopard print shorts & hat Cotton On Kids, Sneakers Mothercare. On Cahaya Ariana Fatimah: Top Gingersnaps, Headband Stylist's own. On Chin Siam: Striped linen dress Mango. On Mirabelle: Striped tee Cotton On Kids. On Muhammad Sameer: Cotton shirt Marks & Spencer. On Muhammad Sameer: Geometric tee Marks & Spencer. On Beatrice: Top & striped playsuit Gingersnaps.

THE NEXT CHAPTER



ECDA's new Chief Executive Ms Jamie Ang with outgoing CE Mr Eugene Leong

On 1 September 2019, outgoing ECDA Chief Executive, Mr Eugene Leong, will pass the baton to Ms Jamie Ang, previously Director (Fiscal Policy) at the Ministry of Finance. Mr Leong is moving to the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources, where he has concurrently assumed the role of Second Deputy Secretary since April. Ms Ang is no stranger to ECDA. She was attached to the agency when she did her Masters in Public Management in 2013. In this interview, they look at how far the early childhood sector has come, and share their hopes and plans on the quality, affordability and accessibility of preschool services.

MORE PRESCHOOL PLACES

Mr Leong: Over 50,000 preschool places have been added since 2012. Now more families have access to child care places, especially near their homes.

Ms Ang: As a mother of a second child who's just turned one, I understand it can stressful for parents to worry about whether there is a preschool place for their child. Building more affordable, quality preschools will continue to be a priority for ECDA so that we remove this worry for parents.

GREATER PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT FOR EDUCATORS

Mr Leong: I once spent a whole day in a preschool and saw how committed, passionate and resourceful the educators were. It takes specialised training to work with young children. They need to have a good understanding of child development, and skills to plan enriching curriculum experiences to motivate and engage children.

Ms Ang: At the heart of it, a good preschool is about having good

educators! A growing priority will be to help our teachers to continually grow their competencies and keep their knowledge and skills current and relevant.

Mr Leong: As part of the **Early Childhood Manpower Plan**, the Skills Framework was implemented in 2015 to give educators clear career progression pathways. The framework is systematic and structured. We have also looked into improving the working conditions for early childhood educators, such as using Smart Solutions to reduce administrative work.

INTEGRAL ROLE OF FAMILIES

Ms Ang: When we talk about ECDA's vision of giving a good start for every child, it goes beyond efforts in preschools. What happens at home is critical and parents are integral in our children's lives. A growing effort for ECDA is to help lower-income families learn to build positive parent-child interactions through **KidSTART**. At a recent KidSTART group session, one parent shared the difference she saw in her children after learning to hug them more. Her joy and improved development of her children touched me immensely!

Mr Leong: Over 900 families and children so far have benefitted from the KidSTART initiative. I've attended KidSTART playgroup sessions and have seen how parent-child relationships have blossomed. That's vital because young children's brain development

thrives on positive relationships and communication.

INTEGRATED EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Ms Ang: In the early years of our children's development, education and care are not separate domains. **The Early Childhood Development Centres Act** which integrates these domains marks an important milestone in early childhood development in Singapore by bringing together the regulations of both kindergartens and childcare centres.

Mr Leong: In addition to preschool, ECDA will also be overseeing early intervention services. As children develop at different paces, they may require differentiated support to ensure a good start in life. We will work with both early childhood and early intervention professionals to provide a more holistic and comprehensive support system for our children.

SHAPING LIVES

Mr Leong: We launched our **'Shape Our Tomorrow'** national campaign last year to raise public awareness, change perceptions and foster greater respect for the early childhood profession.

Ms Ang: The skills and values imparted to children by our educators have a life-long impact. They shape the future of our families, communities and nations. The early years are not just about preparing our children for primary school. It is about raising adults and preparing our children for life. ●

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM: TAKE LEARNING OUTDOORS

FIND OUT HOW TO CREATE FUN OUTDOOR LEARNING EXPERIENCES FOR CHILDREN AT THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CONFERENCE 2019.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Learn how to integrate the outdoors into enriching curriculum experiences for children.



DR JANE WATERS

Assistant Dean Research and Knowledge Transfer, University of Wales Trinity Saint David, United Kingdom



DR HANIN HUSSAIN

Lecturer, National Institute of Education

EXHIBITION

Discover fun and practical ways to enhance your children's learning experience:

- Participate in interactive stage performances
- Enjoy over 20 fun and educational activities
- Learn how children, preschools and the community work together at the **Start Small Dream Big** booth
- Stand a chance to win exclusive prizes!



13 & 14 SEP 2019
(Friday & Saturday)
SUNTEC CITY CONVENTION & EXHIBITION CENTRE

Early Childhood Conference 2019

CELEBRATE WITH US!

Celebrate the achievements of individuals and preschools at the **2019 ECDA Awards Ceremony**, the **SPARK Certificate Presentation Ceremony** and the **Start Small Dream Big Finale**.

ECDA AWARDS 2019 PRESENTATION CEREMONY

13 September 2019 (Fri)

Honour the achievements of outstanding and promising EC professionals committed to delivering high quality early childhood care and education, and centres that excel in teaching and learning, as well as innovative practices.

SPARK CERTIFICATE PRESENTATION CEREMONY

13 September 2019 (Fri)

Celebrate preschools that have achieved their SPARK certification, which recognises their continued efforts in providing quality preschool education.

WORKSHOPS

Select from more than **40 workshops** and expand your curriculum and pedagogical possibilities with our experts and community partners.

FREE ADMISSION to families, educators and the public

LOOK WHO'S TALKING

HOW THREE PRESCHOOLS NURTURE CHILDREN'S INTEREST AND LOVE FOR THEIR MOTHER TONGUES.



PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Teck Ghee uses learning materials such as MTL storybooks to engage children and nurture their interest in their mother tongue

START THEM YOUNG

"There's a Malay proverb, 'Melentur buluh biarlah dari rebungnya', which means that we should start cultivating good values at a very early age," says Mdm Noor Fadillah Binte Amid, senior teacher at MOE Kindergarten @ Sengkang Green. She believes this applies to mother tongue language (MTL) learning too: "Research shows that children who learn both English and their mother tongue before the age of eight have a greater chance of acquiring both languages at a higher level than their peers who start later."



Teachers at EtonHouse Zhonghua Pre-School use MTL during field trips to allow language learning to take place naturally

USE MTL MEANINGFULLY

For teacher Ms Zhang Yuan Yuan from EtonHouse Zhong Hua Pre-School, the key to developing children's love for MTL is to establish warm and nurturing relationships with adults who speak the language from an early age. It also means finding out where a child's interest lies and planning appropriate experiences, to cultivate an interest in the language and culture, through elements such as food and costumes. "The language is not 'taught' in a structured and formal manner," she explains. "We also tap on resources in

the community to extend the children's MTL experiences. They can apply and practise their language skills in a meaningful context. For example, children can visit a nearby food centre and talk to different stalls manned by different ethnic groups."

MAKE IT FUN & IMMERSIVE

"It is also important to make mother tongue learning fun," says teacher Ms Veerappan Rameswari from PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Teck Ghee Blk 466. She elaborates, "I use mediums like songs, rhymes with movements and actions, musical instruments, and teacher-made language games. Creating a non-threatening and stimulating environment can help children



MOE Kindergarten @ Sengkang Green encourages interaction among children to promote MTL learning

Tips For Parents To Facilitate Children's Use Of MTL

- Seize opportunities through daily activities e.g. travelling on the public transport, grocery shopping, walking in the park or a stroll around the neighbourhood.
- Visit the neighbourhood library for storybooks in MTL.
- Look out for MTL plays, performances and workshops.



immerse themselves in the culture and cultivate a love for the language."

INVOLVE FAMILIES

Ms Zhang says, "Home-school partnership ensures the children's learning has continuity." Mdm Noor Fadillah agrees: "Parents are the children's first teachers." While preschools can organise workshops, we believe that parents who play a proactive and participative role also contribute to the children's learning of MTL. We need to work together to build a strong start for the children," she adds. •

MTL SYMPOSIUM 2019

Educators and parents can draw inspiration and ideas to support their children's love and appreciation for Mother Tongue Languages at the **8th Mother Tongue Languages Symposium** at Suntec Singapore Convention & Exhibition Centre on 24 August 2019 (Saturday).

The focus this year is on how children learn, grow and thrive in a vibrant, joyful and immersive MTL environment and develop a keen sense of lifelong learning for Mother Tongue Languages.

Find out more about the symposium at www.mtls.sg.



Visualising the future of Singapore at *The Bicentennial Experience*

FUTURE FORWARD

THIS YEAR'S "START SMALL DREAM BIG" MOVEMENT GETS A BICENTENNIAL SPIN.



Experiencing the multimedia show at Fort Canning

The theme of this year's "Start Small Dream Big" (SSDB) movement is 'Learn from Our Past, Dream of Our Future', in commemoration of the Singapore Bicentennial. Besides encouraging children to give back to society through community projects, the fifth edition of this movement focuses on promoting children's appreciation of the nation's heritage through nature, marine life and cultural diversity.

"We hope that our children will learn about Singapore's heritage, and dream and aspire towards the Singapore they want to contribute to," said Minister for Social and Family Development, Mr Desmond Lee, at the event launch on 26 April. 'Start Small Dream Big' inspires our preschoolers to do their part in building a kind, compassionate and inclusive society, by respecting others and through little acts of kindness.

A record 49,000 children from 820 preschools are taking part in this year's movement. Among them is CitiKids Academy, which has



Learning about the past while doing batik art

taken the cue from the Singapore Bicentennial for their SSDB project.

CONNECTING PAST AND PRESENT

"Our theme 'It Takes a Village' reminds us that it takes a whole community to raise a child and build a nation," explains teacher Ms Regine Neo. "When we learn about our history, it helps us better appreciate how we got to where we are today and plan ahead."

The centre kicked off their SSDB project with a batik art activity. "We invited parents to be part of their children's learning experience. It was also an opportunity for them to share snippets of their past with the children," says Ms Neo.

HISTORY COMES ALIVE

Throughout this project, children will learn about the history of Singapore, paying special attention to Amoy Street, where the preschool is located. The children will do short presentations to members of the public on the history of Amoy Street. They will visit iconic monuments such as the Thian Hock Keng temple and Chinatown Heritage Centre. Parents and stakeholders will be invited to join in.

In May, the children attended *The Bicentennial Experience*, a multimedia show at Fort Canning. In subsequent months, they will share how they visualise a future Singapore, and pen a letter to their future selves.

SEEDING KNOWLEDGE AND VALUES

Says Ms Neo, "These authentic experiences will help enrich their understanding of Singapore's history. Apart from the knowledge gained, we hope to inculcate in them the values of openness, multiculturalism and self-determination." •



NATURAL SELECTION

For its SSDB project, Little Footprints Preschool collaborated with social enterprise Preschool Market and Gardens by the Bay (GGB) to develop an educator's toolkit for a guided learning trail.

The 'Appreciating our Heritage in Nature' learning trail will introduce children to local plants found at the Heritage Gardens in GBB, and learn about our history and diverse cultures. Download it at www.preschoolmarket.com/ssdb.

PREP FOR PRESCHOOL LIKE A PRO



HERE'S HOW YOU CAN EASILY SEARCH FOR PRESCHOOLS AND INDICATE YOUR INTEREST IN YOUR PREFERRED CHOICE.



Preschool Search Portal (PSP), is a self-help tool for parents to search for preschools and indicate their interest in child care centres. To begin, follow these simple steps:

STEP 1

Visit cms.ecda.gov.sg/preschool

Scan this QR code to access PSP

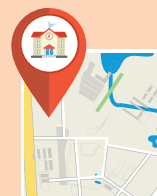


STEP 2

Enter the **Housing Estate** or **Postal Code** and select the **Type of Preschool, Level** and **Service** you are interested in. Indicate additional preferences under **More Search Options**.

STEP 3

Search results are displayed in an interactive map that allows you to view the location of each centre. You can select up to 10 child care centres to indicate your interest.



STEP 4

Log in with your SingPass to submit your indication of interest. Review and ensure all information is correct before submitting.

GOOD TO KNOW

- Parents would need a valid Birth Certificate (BC) number of their child to submit an indication of interest.
- Indicating interest in a child care centre through the Preschool Search Portal or Moments of Life application does not mean confirmation of a place for your child.
- Centres for which you have indicated interest in will contact you on follow-up actions within two weeks of submission.
- Thereafter, if there are vacancies, the centres* will contact parents directly for enrolment.



*Contact kindergartens directly to enquire about their admission or registration exercises which are held at specific times of the year.

EXTRA, EXTRA!

Through the Moments of Life (Families) app, you can also:

- View your child's immunisation record and medical appointments.
- Gain access to parenting information and child-friendly events for the whole family.

Scan this QR code to download the MOL app



BUDDING EXPLORERS

USING SENSORY PLAY TO ENCOURGE INFANTS TO EXPLORE THEIR ENVIRONMENT.

Experts say that creating opportunities for children, especially babies, to actively use their senses to explore the environment around them helps build nerve connections in the brain. This in turn supports their cognitive, language, social-emotional and motor skills development.

With this understanding, Ms Koh Gek Hong, an educator at My First Skool at Yishun Blk 612, observed that more could be done to intentionally engage the infants. She decided to initiate a Practitioner Inquiry (PI) project to further encourage active exploration in infants.

PROVOKING THE SENSES

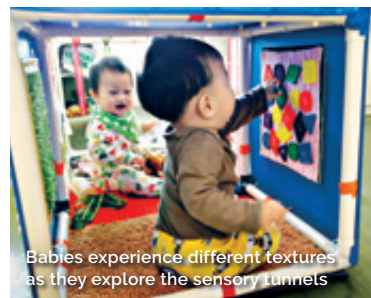
As part of the project, the infants explored pots and pans with wooden spoons. The educators observed that while the infants practised large muscle movements by banging on the utensils, they were also listening to the different sounds produced. These

“At the parents’ workshop, I learned to make sensory bottles with recycled materials to let my child explore sound and colour. The teachers shared techniques on how we can encourage active exploration such as giving my child more tummy time to strengthen his core. These activities definitely helped in strengthening parent-child bonding.”

MDM EUNICE GRACE CHAN,
mother of Joseph Issac Goh,
12 months



A bubble wrap ‘runway’ motivates babies to move and explore



Babies experience different textures as they explore the sensory tunnels

stimulate thinking, which is part of cognitive development.

The centre also created simple open-ended materials to motivate babies to move and explore. For example, they made sensory tunnels with different textured materials and covered a bubble wrap ‘runway’ with different non-toxic paint colours for babies to experience the different sections as they moved across.

DEVELOPING LANGUAGE

Educators play a vital role, says Ms Koh. “While it is important to provide these experiences for infants, we can support their language and thinking when we



Hitting pots and pans train large muscle movements and stimulate thinking

DIY SENSORY TOYS

Ms Koh and her fellow educators share how you can customise your own sensory toys from household and recycled items.

Spider Web Discovery Basket

Weave string over the top of a toy-filled laundry basket, leaving gaps for little hands to reach in. This promotes hand-eye coordination and thinking skills.

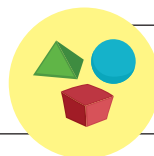
Rolling Ramp

Cut off both ends of two plastic bottles and tape over the sharp edges. Your child can slide balls inside and observe these roll down. This reinforces fine motor skills and exposes the child to the concept of cause and effect.

Sensory Bags

Fill a Ziploc bag with beads, pom-poms, plastic flowers or other items, and let your child squeeze and manipulate these objects. While he strengthens the muscles in his fingers and hands, you can introduce new words and expand his vocabulary.

verbalise their actions or describe what is happening. For example, you can describe sounds as loud or soft, or describe textures as smooth, soft or rough when babies are playing with objects.” ●



Want To Start Your Own Practitioner Inquiry Journey?
Visit www.ecda.gov.sg/Educators/Pages/PI-Grant.aspx to find out more about the PI Grant.



Nature Yoga integrates storytelling — children are encouraged to use their imagination when doing the poses



Yoga poses help to enhance children’s focus and concentration



A yoga practice in session with adult facilitation

ALL NATURAL MOVES

FOCUSING ON FUN AS WELL AS FORM, PPIS BUKIT BATOK’S NATURE YOGA PROGRAMME HELPS CHILDREN ACHIEVE STRONG BODIES AND CALM MINDS.



Three times a day, preschoolers at PPIS (Persatuan Pemuda Islam Singapura) Bukit Batok stretch like a cat, squat and jump like a frog, mimic a flower in bloom and strike other poses inspired by flora and fauna. The centre’s Nature Yoga programme was launched this year to enhance its existing nature curriculum which includes activities such as weekly trails to a park or garden, and using natural materials such as leaves and twigs to support children’s learning experiences.

“We find that children are calmer when they are surrounded by nature,” says Ms Zulaihabe Binte Talip, Acting Assistant Head, Operation, Pre-School

Development. This inspired the decision to add a yoga programme that will introduce 20 nature-inspired poses progressively throughout the year.

Nature Yoga is conducted after assembly to help children become more attuned to the activities for the day ahead, before naptime to help them calm down, and at the end of the day before they go home.

BODY AND MIND BENEFITS

“Children can learn yoga as early as four years old,” says Ms Zulaihabe. “Regular practice strengthens the muscles on the arms, back, legs and core, and builds balance and flexibility which reduce the risk of injury.”

With adult facilitation, yoga helps children to manage negative emotions like anger and agitation by helping them to relax, while encouraging quieter children to open up. It also enhances focus and concentration.

“Nature Yoga differs from regular yoga in that it integrates storytelling, games, music, language and other skills,” explains Ms Zulaihabe. “For instance, when children are adopting a ‘tree’ pose, they are encouraged to imagine what the tree will look like when it grows, prompting some to extend their hands upwards or outwards.”

MOOD AND ENERGY BOOSTER

Since the centre introduced Nature Yoga, teacher Ms Rabihton Selamat has observed positive changes in the children.

They are more energetic and alert, calmer and sleep better during nap time. For children who are anxious, stressed or unable to control their emotions, yoga has provided them with practical techniques to do so. It has helped channel the energy of children who are restless, and boosted the confidence of shy children. ●

“Practising Nature Yoga boosts memory. Teachers have observed that with calmer minds, children are more organised in their thinking and can easily recall what they have learnt.”

MS RABIAHTON SELAMAT,
Teacher at PPIS Bukit Batok

“I find that my child is calmer after practising Nature Yoga. This makes it easier for me and my husband to address her behaviour issues, and reason things out with her.”

MDM NURSUHAILAH BINTE ABU SAMAT,
Parent of Nur Humaira Binte Khairulah, 4

THANK YOU, TEACHER!

IN THIS TEACHERS' DAY TRIBUTE, **BEANSTALK** MEETS THREE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS WHO COMBINE PASSION AND PROFESSIONALISM DOING WHAT THEY LOVE.

Former nurse Ms Siti Khairunnisa Octavia made a career switch eight years ago and hasn't looked back.

Known as Teacher Nysa to the children and their parents, she believes educators make a big impact in the infancy and toddler years through their one-to-one interactions. This is how very young children learn.

Participating in the Professional Development Programme (Educarer) has given her further insights. "Infants can't fully express themselves. The course helped me to observe their cues and even gestures. It has also sharpened my skills to be responsive to their needs, reciprocate, and treat them respectfully."

As a first-time mum with an eight-month-old daughter, motherhood has also influenced Teacher Nysa's perspective as an educator. She says, "I am more

“Teacher Nysa is a committed and passionate educator who takes the time to understand our child's needs. We can always count on her to give us sound and practical parenting tips, from food allergies to managing behavioural issues. We are heartened to see Marcus blossom under her care. Thank you!

MR TAN CHOON GUAN

Father of Tan Hongyu Marcus, 6



LEFT: Teacher Nysa in a session with the centre's parents

open in expressing my affection easily, which is fundamental for a child's well-being. I find that I am also better able to understand the infants and toddlers better."

RIGHT: Teacher Nysa with her 8-month-old daughter

MS SITI KHAIRUNNISA OCTAVIA

Senior Infant Educarer
Agape Little Uni
@ Gambas
Pte Ltd



“Interacting with the children gives me the opportunity to build a positive connection with the children,” says Mr Jacob Tan, who has been teaching for five years. He has a Diploma in Early Childhood Education and a Bachelor's in Early Childhood Education.

Among the early challenges he faced as a preschool teacher

was adjusting to the rapid and ever-changing pace. "Beyond the skills needed to plan and conduct experiences for the children, I learned to manage and consider the needs of learners with differentiated abilities, to engage them by seeing each moment as a potentially meaningful conversation, and to build important partnerships with families," he shares.

Mr Tan feels he has made a difference as an early childhood educator when he sees the 'eureka' moments when children discover something for themselves, their sense of accomplishment as they grow in their abilities, and when they remember and reflect important values he has shared with them.



MR JACOB TAN
English Teacher
The Caterpillar's Cove
Child Development
and Study Centre
@ Jurong East



“With his calm, patience and empathetic warmth, Mr Jacob is a fantastic role model for children who are at an age where they are learning to regulate their emotions and negotiate social relationships. As parents, we always have concerns about our children and Mr Jacob takes the time to discuss their development with us. He has been a fantastic partner and guide in our son's preschool journey!

MS AGNES CHEW
Mother of Anselm Simons, 3½



MS SITI ROHAIZAN BINTE ABDUL RAZAK
Centre Leader
Harmoni Preskool
@Yishun

With 13 years in the early childhood sector, Ms Siti Rohaizan Binte Abdul Razak observes that the traditional role of teachers has evolved.

"As an educator in the 21st century, we must be open to change and continually adapt. It is important to learn, unlearn and relearn," she says.

Ms Siti is thankful for the professional courses which are readily available. As a result, she finds herself better equipped to guide and support her teachers.

Together with them, she is able to design more enriching and engaging curriculum experiences for the children.

For example, the Professional Development Programme (Leader) gave her the tools to be a better leader and mentor to her teachers. "It helps early childhood leaders like myself to broaden our perspectives and hone competencies in areas of professional interest."

Her passion is recharged whenever she meets former colleagues and parents who express appreciation and thank her for her guidance and efforts.



Ms Siti Rohaizan celebrating Teacher's Day with her colleagues

“It takes a big heart to shape little minds. Teachers play an important role in Uzair's life by planting the seeds of knowledge that will take strong roots. Ms Siti has helped to mould his mind and encourage him to become a thinking and a caring person. Uzair loves going to preschool and shares the wonderful things he is learning. Most important of all, Uzair is happy.

MS NORHIDAYAH BINTE ISHAK
Mother of Uzair Sng, 4



CELEBRATING OUR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

It is not only on Teachers' Day that we recognise the contributions of our early childhood educators. Scan this QR code and join us in appreciating their hard work through the years!

Q&A HOW IS PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT CRUCIAL TO A CHILD'S HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT?



FOR PARENTS

Q Why is it important for my baby to have tummy time, and how can I support his physical development?

Babies need tummy time, which means spending time in a prone, or belly-down, position when awake.

Tummy time allows infants to bear weight with their arms, and this helps to develop their neck, back and shoulder muscles. By their third to fourth month, babies should be able to lift and move their heads side to side while in a prone position. This develops their motor abilities to acquire skills like rolling and sitting.

All tummy time should be supervised. You can start when a baby is home from the hospital. In early infancy, parents can begin with short periods (one to three minutes) of tummy time, two to three times a day. Tummy time should be done before feeding to avoid vomiting. Some babies may not be comfortable with tummy time. You can lay your child on your chest while you engage him. Over time, your baby will come to enjoy tummy time. Observe your baby and stop the activity if he is uncomfortable or fusses.

How to practise tummy time:

- > **Start with kangaroo care.** Skin-to-skin contact promotes bonding and helps regulate babies' temperature, heart rate and breathing.
- > **Gently assist with rolling.** Encourage babies to enjoy the motion of rolling and weight-bearing with their arms.
- > **Speak gently or use toy rattles.** This encourages babies to raise their heads and even sustain their head lifts while attending to the different sounds.



MOK HUI WEN is a senior physiotherapist at the National University Hospital Rehabilitation Centre. She works with children and adolescents with medical, developmental and physical conditions. She believes that children learn best when having fun and being actively involved in meaningful activities that aid motor skills acquisition.



SYLVIA YEO is a Cluster Quality Manager at My First Skool with more than 17 years of experience in the early childhood sector. She is also an ECDA Fellow who mentors early childhood professionals and develop sector-wide resources. She believes that physical play is important for children's growth and development.

Q What are some ways to integrate physical development into the other developmental and learning areas?

Physical activity needs to be part of children's daily routine. Children are naturally active and movement allows them to release energy while practicing existing or learning new skills. Provide them with ample opportunities for physical development throughout the day during their daily activities. Remember to make it fun!

Here are some ways to integrate physical activities into other learning areas:

- > **Add movement to music or during transitions**
March to music with a strong beat. Create dance steps with music from different cultures. Encourage children to jump, hop, or crawl to a melody. When transitioning from one activity to another, children can tiptoe, walk on heels, use big steps, stomp, etc.
- > **Dramatise a story**
Encourage children to act out the characters. They can imitate the movements of the story's characters and dramatise a scene from the story.
- > **Play hands-on numeracy games**
Plan physical games to allow children to learn numeracy skills such as sorting, patterning, counting etc. For example, children can count the number of bean bags they toss into boxes or a laundry basket.
- > **Develop fine motor skills through art**
Provide different sized pencils, crayons, paintbrushes, scissors, or papers for children to tear or scrunch to create art while they strengthen their fine motor skills.



FOR EDUCATORS

THRIVE

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



While we know the sport as "football", it's called "soccer" in the United States so as not to confuse it with American football.

learn



18 | Active play tips for healthy growth

grow



21 | Fresh and fruity treats for National Day

play



22 | Plant a pot of pencil flowers for Teacher's Day



THE FUNDAMENTALS OF LIFE

Practice is key to mastering basic movement skills for daily routines, activities and sports.

If your child always seems to be tripping over his feet or dropping things, he may be struggling with his fundamental movement skills (FMS).

FMS are the building blocks for more complex movement patterns that children will need for physical recreation and sports. Before riding a bicycle, children must first learn how to balance. Before they can play basketball, they have to be able to catch a ball.

Providing opportunities to develop FMS proficiency between ages of two and eight is important. "While reflexes and reactions, such as grasping and sucking, can occur naturally in infants, being able to balance, run, jump or throw requires a healthy amount of exposure and practice as children enter their toddler and preschool years," says Dr Miriam Lee, Senior Manager (Design and Planning) of ActiveSG, the national movement launched by SportSG to encourage Singaporeans of all ages — including the little ones — to take part in sporting activities.

Dr Lee recommends encouraging your child to take part in a variety of sports and activities: "Let them experience different types of outdoor environments and play with different types of equipment, so that their bodies can be adaptable to different situations. In doing so, they can also develop a healthy dose of confidence and positive self-esteem."

There are over 25 ActiveSG Sport Centres island-wide with facilities and play spaces such as swimming pools, gyms, stadiums, badminton, tennis and multi-purpose courts. ActiveSG also offers a wide variety of programmes such as academies and clubs, school holiday programmes,

fitness classes and more, which are suitable for children and their parents too (see box below).

OFF TO THE RIGHT START

K1 and K2 children from eight preschools participated in the 'Nurture Kids' programme in 2017, initiated by SportSG. The aim is to promote good eating and sleep habits, limiting screen time, as well as fun games activities to develop their fundamental movement skills. All in support of their holistic development, this programme will be expanded to about 130 preschools by July 2019.

HOW TO GET ACTIVE

- > Visit your nearest ActiveSG sports facility (www.myactivesg.com/Facilities/Sport-Centres). Look for child-friendly features such as pools with giant slides or water play areas.
- > Download the ActiveSG App and take part in GameOn Nila where you can collect Activity Stars through treasure hunts and visits to ActiveSG facilities.
- > Take part in parent-child bonding programmes (www.myactivesg.com/Programmes). School holiday programmes are also available in March, June, September and December. Check out: water confidence courses, Aqua Fun (giant inflatables in the pool), archery and Boogie Bounce (trampoline exercise).
- > Celebrate National Day through sports at GetActive! Singapore from 1 to 10 Aug 2019. For details of what's happening at 14 festival sites around Singapore, go to events.myactivesg.com/getactive2019.



MY World @ Woodlands Circle was one of the first preschools to participate in the 'Nurture Kids' pilot programme. A key element of 'Nurture Kids' is the close collaboration between ActiveSG FMS trainers and EC educators, with both parties sharing the teaching responsibilities. Mr Alif Hafiz Bin Masnor, an ActiveSG instructor for the programme, elaborates: "With our guidance and working together, the teachers gain more confidence to conduct the sessions. They can also integrate topics such as addition and subtraction, and even colours as part of the physical activity. Most importantly, the activities follow the pedagogical principles of learning through play. This not only enhances their physical development, but their cognitive and social development as well."

"By becoming more competent in their movements, our children are showing more confidence in controlling and managing their bodies, as they negotiate their physical and social environments. We have also observed that movement and play experiences do promote attentiveness, physical fitness and positive self-esteem," says Ms Sivarranjani Jayakumar, a K2 English Language Teacher at the centre.

Teacher Sivarranjani is also appreciative of the coaching by ActiveSG trainers. Besides demonstrating the appropriate use of FMS strategies, materials and assessment tools, the trainers gave constructive feedback after observing the teachers conducting the lessons. For example, she says, "The trainers showed us how physical, visual and verbal prompts or cues can be used to help children who face movement difficulties. We also needed to decrease the prompts as children became more independent."

EAT WELL, GROW WELL

Being active is not the only factor contributing to children's physical growth and development. Having a nutritious diet is just as important.

- ✓ Use the Health Promotion Board's 'My Healthy Plate' (½ plate of fruits and vegetables, ¼ plate of wholegrains and ¼ plate of lean meat) as a guide to prepare balanced meals.
- ✓ Minimise distractions during mealtimes. For example, do not allow screen time at the dining table.
- ✓ Teach your child to be mindful of what they eat. Take them grocery shopping and point out food and beverage products that have the 'Healthier Choice Symbol'.

For more tips, check out go.gov.sg/raisehealthykids and go.gov.sg/preventchildobesity.

MAKE MOVEMENT FUN

Parents need to provide children plenty of opportunities for play and movement. Try these play ideas at home to develop these skills:

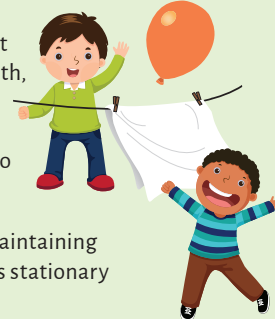
> **LOCOMOTOR SKILLS** move the body from one location to another (e.g. walking, running, leaping, jumping).

Try This: Arrange a rope or tape to form a giant "V" on the floor to serve as a "river". Read your child the "Little Red Riding Hood" story and ask him to think of a safe way to cross the danger-filled "river" (either by leaping or jumping across). Encourage your child to add a run before his jump over the "river" to increase leaping distance.



> **OBJECT CONTROL SKILLS** use parts of the body to give, receive and handle objects (e.g. throwing, catching, kicking, dribbling).

Try This: Set up a makeshift net with a clothesline and tablecloth, for a game of 'Balloon-minton' between kids. They can use overarm striking movements to send the balloon over the net.



> **STABILITY SKILLS** focus on maintaining balance, both when the body is stationary (static) and moving (dynamic).

Try This: For *Static Balance*, place different shapes (e.g. square, triangle, diamond) on the floor. These can be cut from non-slip mats or drawn with chalk. Get your child to balance different parts of his body on each corner of the shape and hold for three counts. Encourage him to name the shape he is balancing on.



For *Dynamic Balance*, hold a hoop vertically, just above the ground. Ask your child to step through the hoop without touching it.



win



→ Three lucky readers will each receive a FUN Start, MOVE Smart! resource guide that provides activities and teaching strategies for parents with children aged three to 10, to get them to connect with the physical world they live in and bond with them.

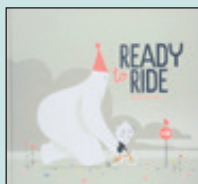
Simply answer this question:
Name three fundamental movement skills (FMS) that children should learn to develop from young.

Send your answer to beanstalk@mediacorp.com.sg with your name and contact details.
Closing date: **19 August 2019**



Get A Move On

Encourage your child to embrace an active lifestyle.



> Ready to Ride

By Sébastien Pelon

What started as a boring day turns out to be an adventurous one when a boy decides to learn how to ride a bike on his own, with the help of his imaginary friend. Read this heartwarming story with a child who needs the courage to leave his training wheels.

Contributed by *Norhashimah Azli, Associate Librarian, National Library Board*



> Balanced and Barefoot: How Unrestricted Outdoor Play Makes for Strong, Confident, and Capable Children

By Angela J. Hanscom

The author explains how unstructured outdoor play can contribute significantly to the motor and sensory development in children. She also offers practical ideas on how to get children to play creatively and independently outdoors. This book is an easy-to-read guide for parents, educators and anyone who wants to foster healthy and active lifestyles among children.

Contributed by *Jaslin Koh, Librarian, National Library Board*

Events @ NLB



Check out these programmes happening at the libraries.



APSN Tanglin Drama @ the Libraries 2019 ~ Choose Green, Think Green, Grow Green

Ordinary folks work together to save the life of a whale in this stage adaptation of Helmi and the Whale.



Just Teddy by The Kueh Tutus

Children aged two-four years and their grown-ups can help Just Teddy on his quest to find where he belongs in this interactive dance-theatre work.

Registration is required. For more information on the dates, timings, and venues, please visit www.nlb.gov.sg/golibrary.

FOR YOUR DAILY DOSE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD INSPIRATION...

Grow@Beanstalk is your one-stop early childhood (EC) resource portal for inspiring stories, useful tips and activity ideas, as well as the latest happenings from the EC sector.



Visit www.ecda.gov.sg/growatbeanstalk, or scan the QR code



You can also share your passion of "Giving a Good Start to Every Child" by "liking" our Facebook page for daily content, and engaging with other parents and EC educators.



Connect with us at www.facebook.com/beanstalksingapore, or scan the QR code



It's not just work when you work with children. If you aspire to make a lifelong impact, join us as an Early Childhood Professional to shape the next generation.



Find out more about a career in early childhood at www.ecda.gov.sg/ShapeOurTomorrow, or scan the QR code.



Patriotic Popsicles

Make these red-and-white treats in celebration of National Day!

Raspberry and yoghurt popsicles

SERVES 6



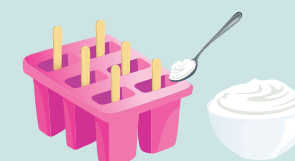
Follow these steps



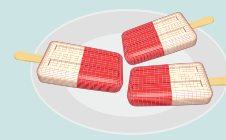
1. Using a food processor or blender, puree raspberries with honey or any healthier sweet alternative.



2. Fill the popsicle molds halfway with the raspberry puree.



3. Next, pour in the yoghurt to the top of the molds.



4. Freeze for at least six hours or overnight.

No Molds? Get Creative!

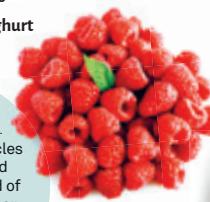
Fret not if you don't have POPSICLE MOLDS at home. Be creative and repurpose paper cups, reuse yoghurt containers, or even ice cube trays to make mini lollies!

→ WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- 4 cups raspberries
- 2 cups vanilla yoghurt
- 2 tbsp honey

Quick tips!

To make your popsicles even healthier, add watermelon instead of honey as a sweetener, and be sure to use reduced-fat plain yoghurt.



Raspberries



Vanilla yoghurt

Honey



BERRY BOOST

Antioxidants prevent cell damage and fight off disease, and berries have some of the highest levels among fresh fruits. These are the top five berries, ranked in order of antioxidant content:

1. Blueberries
2. Cranberries
3. Blackberries
4. Raspberries
5. Strawberries



For more juicy fruit-related facts, visit www.healthhub.sg/live-healthy/1291/fun-fruity-facts.

This recipe is adapted from www.homemadeinterest.com

play

Photo courtesy of whipperberry.com



→ WHAT YOU'LL NEED



Snip Snap

HEY PARENTS! Scissors skills are important for learning to write, and practising **hand-eye coordination** and **two-handed coordination**. Use child-safe scissors with blunt tips and be sure to supervise your little one. Assist your child with the wire cutter if he finds it challenging.

BOUQUET OF BLOOMS

This Teacher's Day, surprise yours with this potful of pencil flowers.

Follow these steps

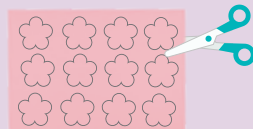
1. Place styrofoam inside your chosen container and cover it with shredded paper.



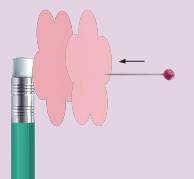
2. Sharpen pencils and set aside.



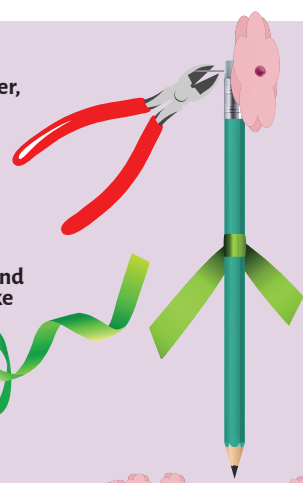
3. Draw flower shapes on construction paper and cut out.



4. Position the flower on top of the eraser and poke a pearl-headed pin through the centre.



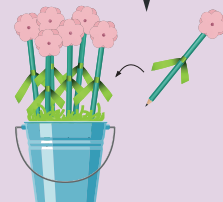
5. Using a wire cutter, carefully snip off the remaining length of pin.



6. Tie a ribbon around the pencil to make the 'leaves'.



7. Make as many pencil flowers as you like and arrange them in the container. Have fun experimenting with different flower shapes and colours!



Snap & Show

Take a picture of your child's bouquet creation to beanstalk@mediacorp.com.sg or post it as a public post on your Facebook with the hashtag #BeanstalkCraft. His or her masterpiece could be featured in the next issue of *Beanstalk!*

This craft is adapted from whipperberry.com

5 PLACES TO GET MOVIN'

IT'S EASY TO EXERCISE AS A FAMILY WHEN YOU COMBINE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY WITH FUN!

1 GO ON AN ADVENTURE AT JEWEL CHANGI AIRPORT

Don't let the hype surrounding its vortex waterfall distract you from the mall's other star attraction — the 14,000m² indoor Canopy Park. It is home to two mazes, one made of mirrors and the other featuring a 1.8m-high hedge, which are great for honing motor, navigational and problem-solving skills. A giant trampoline net and a 50m-long walking net suspended 25m above the ground offer an undulating surface that children can bounce and jump on, and build strength, balance and coordination.



4 STRETCH IT OUT AT FAMILY YOGA IN THE PARK

Held at Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park every second Sunday of the month, the NParks' Yoga in the Park is a one-hour outdoor session where you can enjoy the fresh morning air and get that essential dose of sunshine to make Vitamin D for bone health. Yoga offers multiple benefits — it increases flexibility, reduces stress and improves focus in both adults and children. The session is free but register online to reserve your slot as spaces are limited. Sign up at bishanparkfamilyyoga.eventbrite.sg.

2 PICK UP A NEW SPORT OR HOBBY AS A FAMILY

The family that plays together, stays together. The Health Promotion Board's Active Family programme offers a range of fun-filled outdoor activities such as archery, kite-making and flying, and inline skating at various locations all around Singapore. Taking part in an activity together encourages family bonding and gives your child an opportunity to acquire communication and social skills along with physical and technical prowess. Go to www.healthhub.sg to look for an event near you. Registration is free.



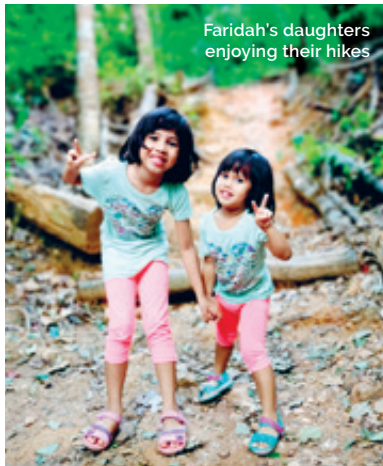
5 WHOOSH DOWN THE SLIDES AT ADMIRALTY PARK

This playground in northern Singapore has not one, or two, but 26 slides. It boasts the longest and tallest tube slide in a public park at 23m long and 9m high, a 34m-long curved roller slide and a family slide which is wide enough to accommodate an adult and child together. The slides are designed with the contours of the terrain in mind, so you get a mix of different gradients, straight and twisting angles, all of which helps to develop a child's spatial awareness and balance.




WE'VE GOT MAIL!


Parents tell us how they support their child's physical development.



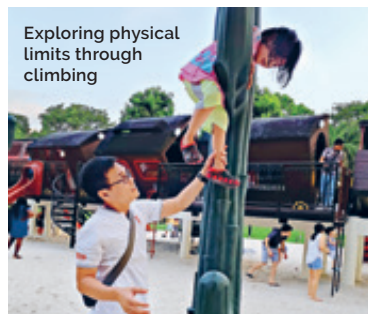
Faridah's daughters enjoying their hikes

 We love hiking as a family. Nothing clears the mind and energises the body like nature. My children enjoy navigating the sloping terrain, jumping over logs and balancing on pebbles. While hiking, they sometimes also invent creative games like "Who can spot the monkey?" or "Who can hear the crickets?". Such physical activities keep my daughters alert for day-to-day tasks and help build their strength.


FARIDAH MD SA'AT, mother of two, aged 6 and 4

 During playtime with my children, I sometimes prepare a bag of coins — local and foreign — for them to sort according to various sizes and shapes as a game. This way, they are able to sharpen their fine motor skills and also practise their hand-eye coordination. I also use this opportunity to teach them numeracy, and the importance of saving for rainy days ahead.

ZHANG SHUJUN, mother of two, aged 1 and 4



Exploring physical limits through climbing

 As a family, we often go to a park, especially those with rock walls or "spider web" ropes as my children love climbing. My children often have more confidence to try a difficult move when we are supporting them, not just emotionally, but also in times when they know they might fall. I make sure to give them the freedom to explore their physical limits, often with one of us closely guiding them along. I believe this will build self-awareness and confidence.

LEOW YONG MAY, mother of two, aged 4 and 2

TO DADDY, WITH LOVE

Some of you were inspired by our origami Father's Day card in the Apr-Jun 2019 issue, and created your own artwork just for dads. Great job!



LIU CHEN YU, 5



REHAN NATTANIEL GILL, 5



RAELYN LEE RUI LENG, 4



We have three **\$30 NTUC FairPrice vouchers** to give away to the best letters!

GET OUT OF THE CLASSROOM AND TAKE LEARNING OUTDOORS

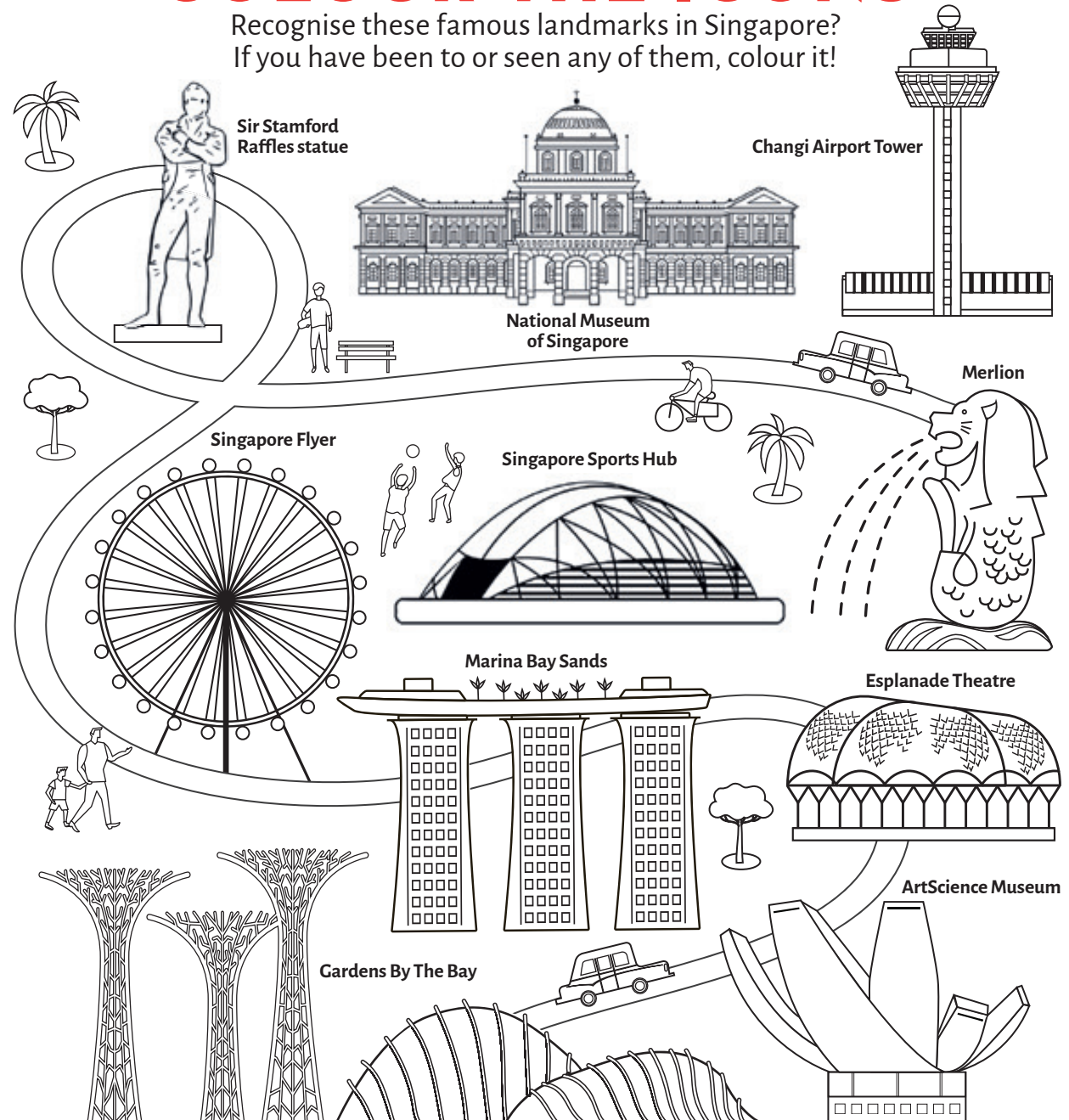
Parents, share with us a fun outdoor experience which you have enjoyed with your child. Let us know how you think the activity benefitted him or her. Attach a photo with your anecdote and your submission may appear in the next issue of *Beanstalk!*

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



COLOUR THE ICONS

Recognise these famous landmarks in Singapore? If you have been to or seen any of them, colour it!



→ Hey Parents!

Colouring activities help strengthen muscles in the fingers, hands and wrists. This improves hand-eye coordination and dexterity, which will help children with tasks such as dressing, eating and handwriting.

