

EMBRACING DIVERSITY

There is a (paraphrased) quote from Mother Teresa: "I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot; together we can do great things."

Embracing diversity strengthens society, as the different perspectives and strengths of each of us collectively lead to better ideas, and mutual understanding of everyone as unique individuals strengthens our social fabric. It also expands our children's view of the world, nurtures positive values and supports their learning.

I am glad that this year's Early Childhood (EC) Conference was themed 'Embracing Diversity: Every Child Shines, Growing Stronger Together' and brought together over 4,000 educators to discuss how we can support the diverse needs of our children.

At the conference, Minister Masagos Zulkifli announced new initiatives as we continue to strive to give every child a good start in life, regardless of their background or abilities. These include yearly Child Development Account top-ups for KidSTART families and expanding the Development Support — Learning Support programme to more preschools. The first pilot for the Inclusive Support Programme was recently launched in October.

To support our educators and preschools, Minister Masagos also announced a refreshed Skills Framework for Early Childhood and a \$4 million Early Childhood Digitalisation Grant for preschools to adopt digital solutions.

As part of continued efforts to nurture positive values among our young, a record 71,000 children from 1,050 centres joined the 'Start Small Dream Big' movement, reaching out to diverse segments of our community. Kudos to our children, parents, educators and preschools!

Since joining ECDA, I have never stopped being inspired by the passion and purpose of the EC community. As I hand over the baton to Chee Wee this December, I leave forever a supporter of the EC cause. Please continue to support him and the ECDA team as they pursue a good start for every child!



TAKING UP THE BATON

"I am humbled by the opportunity to join the EC sector and be part of its mission to give every child a good start in life. I look forward to working closely with educators, parents and community partners to uplift our sector and deliver higher-quality preschool services."



MR TAN CHEE WEE,
CE-Designate of ECDA



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



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Beanstalk clinched the APEX 2021 Award of Excellence in the One-of-a-Kind Publications (Education & Training) category!

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