



Preschools are encouraged to organise their own water-saving activities on Singapore World Water Day

DROP BY DROP

Children learn about saving water and the importance of being good stewards for the environment as they explore Singapore's waterways

Teaching children that every drop of water does not come easy has taken on greater importance today because of climate change. "We are experiencing more extreme weather such as prolonged droughts and intense rainfall, which have direct impact on our water resources," says Mrs Cindy Keng, Director of 3P Network, PUB. "Good water habits must be formed from young. We want to educate children on the water journey so that they grow up to be water-saving adults, and also influence their family and friends to similarly adopt good habits and use water wisely."

Children can visit the NEWater Visitor Centre and Marina Barrage to learn about the Singapore Water Story and the four National Taps. The exhibits trace how we have overcome our lack of natural water resources and established a diversified water supply from these sources: local catchment water, imported water, recycled water and desalinated water.



LET'S GO EXPLORING

Children can also learn about Singapore's native plants and biodiversity as they explore self-guided routes along various waterways.

The Sengkang Floating Wetland trail at Punggol Reservoir

Children are introduced to the wetlands, and the animals and plants that flourish in such habitats. Through various activities such as drawing, storytelling and simple science experiments, they learn to keep our waterways clean and beautiful.



MacRitchie Reservoir

Children have the option of doing hands-on experiments to learn about the water cycle, and how nature and the environment impact our waterways. For example, the DIY Filtration activity allows children to learn about how wetlands and waterways help to keep our waters clean.



CELEBRATE WORLD WATER DAY

To commemorate Singapore World Water Day on 22 March 2020, PUB offers suggestions on how preschools can organise their own water-saving activities:

- Conduct a **water rationing exercise**. Temporarily shut off the water supply. This will give children a first-hand experience of what it feels like when water is not readily available at the turn of a tap. They will also learn to appreciate that our precious water resources should not be taken for granted.
- Conduct a **water-centric lesson** to raise children's awareness of the importance of water by using the online resource kit at www.pub.gov.sg/Documents/PreSchool.pdf.
- Organise a **trip to the NEWater Visitor Centre or Marina Barrage**. Apart from free guided tours, both centres also offer fun and interactive Rain Garden and Upcycling workshops that preschools can sign up for. More details can be found at go.gov.sg/newwatervc and go.gov.sg/marinabarrage.

Visit www.makeeverydropcount.sg for more programmes and events.



Preschoolers learn about water filtration by building their own mini rain gardens

These trails help children in many other ways as well, says Korey Tristan Yu, centre leader at E-Bridge Preschool at Blk 417A & 418C Fernvale Link. "Through PUB's Water Wally adventure stories, children develop language and literacy skills as they retell and dramatise the stories. It helps enrich their vocabulary, proper usage of grammar, intonation and expression," she adds. "The children also become immersed in the history and geography of Singapore's water system."

USING THE TRAILS

For teachers, Korey offers suggestions on how to adapt the learning trail resources to engage young children. Add colours and dimensions to the Water Wally mascot and get children to act out the storyline. Frame the colouring pages in the classroom to help children recall their learning and share it with peers, and any visitors to the preschool. Children can extend their learning and critical thinking by journaling the knowledge and information they have gained and noting down their reflections. This also helps to develop their penmanship skills. Visit the library to borrow books on water conservation.



"When using the materials, teachers can use the 3Es which I find useful in framing children's learning in a larger context," she says.

- **Expose** children to the environment and develop their awareness of how they make an impact on it.
- **Explore** and innovate on ways to make positive changes and improve their way of life.
- Provide **experiences** that are meaningful for children to value and reminisce as they continue on their journey of learning.

ECO-SCHOOLS PROGRAMME



The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Eco-Schools Programme encourages young people to take an active role in how their school can be run for the benefit of the environment. "Through the programme, preschoolers learn about environmental issues and how to take action to change habits at home, in preschool and in the community for a sustainable Singapore," says Ms Chitra Venkatesh, Head of Education and Outreach, WWF Singapore.

LITTLE PADDINGTON PRESCHOOL SERANGOON

Little Paddington Preschool Serangoon reached out to WWF Singapore three years ago in an effort to raise awareness of conservation among their preschoolers. In the first year, they raised funds by auctioning off children's art pieces in #LPPSsavesthewild. The following year, WWF conducted a talk on endangered animals and illegal poaching. This culminated in an art exhibition called "The Circle of Hope" featuring artworks by the children. Last year, the children learned how devastating deforestation can be, and how they could do their part by minimising the use of disposable items.



All in, it has been an incredible experience for the children, says Principal Ms Aryany Binte Abdul Manab. "Partnering WWF means we have access to more information on the environment and the little part we can do to help make a difference," she says. "Hopefully, it will be something the children carry forward for the rest of their adult lives."

E-BRIDGE PRESCHOOL AT BLK 417A & 418C FERNVALE LINK

E-Bridge Preschool participated in the Innovation Guidance Project 2019 as part of its pledge to be an active eco-school. In collaboration with WWF Singapore and PUB, the preschool worked on a project to "Make Every Drop Count". The children brainstormed ways to engage with the community, and embarked on a campaign to distribute flyers. Teachers of each class also created a take-home project for children to work on with their parents.



"This project focused on the significance of valuing our water for today, tomorrow and the generations ahead," explains centre leader Korey Tristan Yu. "WWF Singapore was invited to share their expertise on water scarcity, saving our oceans and our water. We also helped to raise funds through a bake sale and art auction towards the conservation efforts."

The final highlight was the drip irrigation project that arose out of children's concern about water waste in the garden. The children and their teacher created a simple, but useful drip irrigation device made from recycled plastic bottles. "A 1.5litre plastic bottle can water a plant for a week — an innovative solution for households with greenery and also for people with plants who are going away for holiday trips, preventing water stagnation and mosquito breeding," says Korey.

TOWARDS A BETTER WORLD

Environmental education is no longer a 'good to have' for the young, adds Ms Venkatesh. "Young children have a real stake in the world that they will inherit. They can play their part to influence the thinking of their families and friends on important environmental issues."

