

DSA NEWS

25 years of service to the Down syndrome community



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Working alongside families and children, ITP marked its 5th Anniversary in April 2022.

From the ED's Desk



For those who were able to join us at our recent Annual General Meeting (AGM), we were pleased to share the positive outcomes DSA had made in 2021 despite the upheaval caused by COVID-19.

We are elated to finally see some semblance of normality when Singapore announced the major easing of COVID-19 rules from 26 April 2022. We took that as a good opportunity to move forward in terms of better support and new initiatives for our beneficiaries and their families.

We also see unwavering support from our partners, beneficiaries, caregivers, volunteers, and donors who continue to make DSA better in both good and bad times and for that, we are extremely grateful. We will build upon your support to enhance our programs and services, use donor dollars prudently and keep growing our voice for persons with special needs in our community.

One of the highlights shared by our Chairperson Mr. Alex Yan at the recent AGM was to ensure that DSA was able to attract and retain skilled and dedicated voluntary Board members to serve its beneficiaries and the Association. He also took the opportunity to encourage members, especially parents of our beneficiaries to come forward to

serve on the Board and working committees. That mandate could not be any stronger now with the unexpected passing of one of our founding members, Mr. Ratnasbapathy Sivanandam on 25 June 2022.

Mr. Siva, as he is affectionately known, has dedicated more than 25 years of services to DSA since the Association's inception in 1995. He has taken on many roles within the Board and the most recent as the Immediate Past Chairperson. Mr. Siva has dedicated most of his lifetime to serving DSA and has pro-actively mobilised many persons in the community to support the work of DSA which has developed into a well-established organisation today. Although Mr. Siva has left us, he left behind a legacy to continue the good works he has done in DSA.

Aside the sombre note, I would like to thank all our volunteers, supporters, partners, and donors for their contribution to the DSA family. We cannot thank you enough for all that you have done to help us succeed.

Mr. Yeo Ando
Executive Director

DSA 25th Annual General Meeting



DSA's 25th Annual General Meeting was called to order on Saturday, 18 June 2022 at 1.30pm

Mr. Alex Yan, Chairperson of DSA extended a warm and hearty welcome to 42 members joining DSA's 25th Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Saturday, 18 June 2022 at 1.30 pm. The meeting was conducted in a hybrid format, consisting of an in-person venue at DSA Centre @ Bishan Junction 8 and a video conference via Zoom to allow and enhance our members' participation.

The 25th AGM was curated by the key office bearers, Chairperson Mr. Alex Yan, Deputy Chairperson Ms. Li Shu Yun, Honorary Secretary Mr. Chan Wing Git and Honorary Treasurer Mr. Adrian Foo together with the Executive Director Mr Yeo Ando.

Mr. Alex Yan's opening address thanked members for their continued membership with the

Association and their presence at the meeting. In his address, he highlighted the key initiatives and achievements and a summary of the progress DSA has made during the reporting year.

Mr Alex Yan announced that 2021 stood out as the year where DSA celebrated its 25th Anniversary and shared how the Silver Jubilee was commemorated where DSA commissioned a commemorative book and milestone video to chart the progress of DSA. He also shared some insights on the initiatives the Board has taken over the past year to bring DSA to the next lap and a call to have more members, especially parents of our beneficiaries to come forward to serve on the Board and its working committees.



Platter of Joy 3

Back for the third consecutive year, DSA organised Platter of Joy, a delivery fundraising initiative launched during the COVID-19 pandemic in June after positive responses in the preceding two years. Platter of Joy 3 is made possible through the support of our F&B partners, Bowl Chap, IndoChili and The Plattering Co. as well as our volunteers who stepped up to assist with the deliveries.

Thanks to the support of the community, we were grateful for the 170 meals ordered and donations which generated a revenue of over \$45,000 to date. Throughout the campaign, 10 volunteers were engaged to assist with the delivery of the meals. It was such a joy seeing familiar faces from Conrad Centennial Singapore and other individual volunteers participating in this campaign.

We'd like to thank all our supporters who have purchased our 'Platter of Joy' and hope it brought you as much joy as it did for our beneficiaries.

Our deepest appreciation to our F&B partners:



Sponsors:



170 sets of 'Platter of Joy' from three F&B partners were delivered within four days



Scan the QR code to make a contribution towards Platter of Joy,

Thrift Shop Jumble Sale!



DSA's Thrift Shop had its soft re-opening on Saturday, 25 June 2022, in the form of a mini Jumble Sale and Carnival. This event was a reunion of sorts for learners from AEP and ILT Centre to contribute to the preparation and the running of the event.

The learners packed the goodie bags, helped to plan the game stations, and set up the event space on a Saturday morning. Staff from AEP and ILT Centre also worked side-by-side to make this a meaningful experience for all. The learners were responsible for all the stations - they helped to serve the customers and pack their purchases, and assisted children and parents at the game booths. Leading up to the event, the learners had been undergoing training in the different areas of retail and customer service.

Each learner played an important role in the success of the event, and the pride they felt from serving the customers is priceless.

Contributor: Todd Simonson, Supervisor, Independent Living & Training (ILT) Centre



Our learners had been eagerly waiting for the re-opening of our Thrift Shop where they could put their training to good use.

Infant Toddler Program Turns 5!



DSA's Infant Toddler Program (ITP) started as a pilot program in April 2017 to support children with Down syndrome from birth to 36 months who are awaiting enrolment into Early Intervention Programme for Infants and Children (EIPIC). ITP was conceptualised in collaboration with the Centre for Disability Studies, University of Sydney. The programme focuses on parents' ability to promote their child's participation in naturally occurring, developmentally appropriate activities with peers and other family members. We devel-

oped a skilled and trained transdisciplinary team of early intervention teachers and therapists under the expert guidance of a mentor from New Zealand. Working alongside families and children, ITP marked its 5th Anniversary in April 2022.

Children grow rapidly in the first three years of their lives and ITP's 5th anniversary is a prime opportunity to foster a mindset that all children will flourish and succeed. Infants and toddlers learn best by incorporating repeated learning opportunities into day-to-day activities. At ITP, parents and caregivers work together with the early intervention teachers and therapists to promote natural learning opportunities for the child.

We are grateful for the efforts of every child, parent, and caregiver in contributing to our shared goals of improving outcomes for children with Down syndrome.

Contributor: Viemala Davie Kelaver, Head, Children Education Services



Want to find out more about our Infant Toddler Program?

Scan the QR code to visit our website or write to us at admin@downsyndrome-singapore.org.

Creating Resources for IFSP



Hand puppet social skills video developed by Sabrina for IFSP students.

“I was exploring ways that I can contribute to DSA and children have a special place in my heart. It has been so enriching for me volunteering at DSA.”

- Ms. Sabrina Goh

Volunteers are an integral part of DSA’s efforts to support our beneficiaries and their families. So how can volunteers and IFSP teachers get involved in our volunteering projects?

DSA volunteer Ms. Sabrina Goh and IFSP teachers worked together to create interactive media materials for cross-curricular lessons and online resource materials including songs with hand puppets. The interactive resources were customised to teach social skills in a fun and engaging way. Through several brainstorming sessions, the valuable media resources Sabrina created benefited both IFSP teachers and the students.

IFSP student Zanna Sim particularly enjoys the interactive “Simon Says” game that includes dance, music and movement activities that promote receptive language skills. Zanna learns to label parts of her body and develops gross motor skills through watching and interacting with the resources created by Sabrina.

Contributor: Viemala Davie Kelaver, Head, Children Education Services

AEP Goes Outdoors

After two years of safety management measures due to the Covid-19 pandemic, our AEP learners were excited with the relaxation of rules and were eagerly looking forward to the resumption of their outdoor programmes.

Since March 2022, our AEP learners have been travelling to Bishan Stadium and the neighbouring parks for their Gross Motor Skills classes, engaging in physical activities such as walking, running, and playing basketball every Wednesday morning. One of their favourite parks is the Bishan Active Park which is a large park with a field and an interactive playground where they can work out at the fitness corner and have a fun time at the playground.

AEP learners were also able to use the opportunity to practise their community and travelling skills as they need to walk to the park and translate what they have learnt about traffic rules into action which is all part and parcel of reinforcing independent living skills.



Contributor: Simon Tng, Training Officer, Adult Enhancement Program

A Recipe for Success!

For the past four months, our adult learners at ILT Centre had been learning to prepare pizzas with an assortment of ingredients of their choice. Their abilities were stretched and challenged, and their hard work had paid off. They can now whip up a delicious pan of pizza entirely on their own!

During this process, our learners not only explore and experiment with the use of different ingredients through testing and tasting but they are also encouraged to explore creative solutions to create a pizza such as switching ingredients by replacing the tortilla wrap base with a roti prata as the pizza base. Learners were also given the opportunity to share their 'secret' recipe with their peers and help one another, especially those seen to be struggling. The undertaking helped to foster a better team spirit among the learners.

To prepare a dish and be able to adapt to what-

ever ingredients they have may not be an easy task. However, the learners have demonstrated their strong will and determination to push through the challenges ahead of them. An Award Ceremony was held to celebrate their achievements not only as an individual but also as a team to reward and acknowledge their consistent effort and determination.



If you are lucky, you might even get to have a taste of their signature pizza one day!

Contributor: Anne Elizabeth Chua, Lifestyle Educator, Independent Living & Training Centre

June Holiday Program

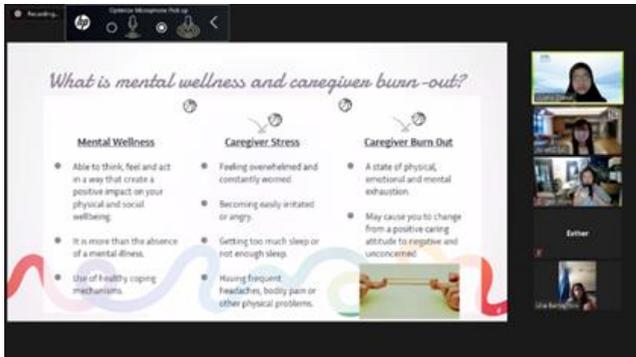


After a 2-year hiatus, DSA resumed our School Holiday Programs in June 2022! DSA worked with corporate partners, organisations, and volunteers to run a series of activities like art & craft, baking, swimming, and learning life skills. It was a joy to reconnect with familiar faces and see our members learning and having fun with their peers.

DSA would like to thank Ms Ranae Lee-Nasir, Ms Sabrina Goh, Infineum Singapore LLP, RSVP Singapore - The Organisation of Senior Volunteers, Sage Artelier and Swimray SG for bringing us the fun-filled program during the school holidays. If you missed the activities, look out for DSA's email for upcoming activities and programs!

Contributor: Amelia Sim, Senior Executive, Membership & Enrichment Programs

Strategies for Self-Care



It is crucial for caregivers to engage in regular self-care and seek help if they feel stressed from caring for their child. Caregiving stress can lead to burnout if it is not properly taken care of. As such, DSA Family Support Services conducted an online workshop 'Caregivers Mental Wellness' on 9 April 2022 with a speaker from SATA CommHealth, Ms Liyana Nabilah Zainal.

Ms. Liyana shared the importance of mental wellness and strategies to maintain good mental well-being. Throughout the session, she took questions and held discussions with parents on the causes of caregivers' stress and burnout as well as healthy coping tips. Case examples were also given to illustrate healthy coping mechanisms. We hope that such sessions will give parents more insight into their caregiving journey, and the reassurance that they are supported every step of the way.

Contributor: Janet Boo, Executive, Family Support Services

Immunity for Persons with Down syndrome

New research by Benaroya Research Institute sheds light on how having Down syndrome impacts the immune system. To provide our caregivers more insight into the research findings, Family Support Services invited Dr. Bernard Khor from Benaroya Research Institute to share via Zoom on 22 April 2022.

During the two-hour session, Dr. Bernard shared about how the immune system of the sample Down syndrome population shows features of advanced ageing and autoimmunity. Dr Bernard and the participants engaged in an active discussion about the differences in the immune system between persons with Down syndrome and the general population.



Contributor: Janet Boo, Executive, Family Support Services

Craft and Music with TMS

With the easing of COVID-19 safe management measures, Adult Enhancement Program (AEP) finally had its first in-person activity with Temasek Secondary School on 7 June 2022! AEP learners and Temasek Secondary School students embarked on an afternoon of craft, dance, and sing-along sessions.

The session commenced with a K-pop dance performance by the students which garnered applause and cheers from our learners. Split into groups of five, the students patiently guided our learners with the aid of clear and colourful visuals to fold paper hearts and paper boats. The session ended on a high with a sing-along session to the tunes of "We Will Rock You" and "Believer". Our learners had a great time belting and dancing to the music.



Contributor: Siti Nur' Fadhilah Binte Abdul Halim, Training Officer, Adult Enhancement Program

Friendship Bracelet Making with VJC

My classmates and I had the opportunity to collaborate with DSA for our Service Leader Venture project on 24 May 2022. We learned a lot about the Down syndrome community and their daily lives during this process. To appreciate our newfound friendships, we decided to arrange a friendship bracelet making workshop. We hope that via this project, individuals from DSA will feel loved by us and will be able to share that love with their loved ones and friends.

While there were many ups and downs during the planning phase, from coordinating with external organisations to finalising all arrangements, it was a fruitful and valuable experience for not just the planning team, but also our classmates. During the craft session, we encountered difficulties interacting online with DSA learners. However, we stayed patient and cool as we frequently checked on their progress in producing the bracelets. We were overjoyed to see how much fun they had crafting the bracelets, as seen by their smiles as they held onto their final creation.



Contributor: Cheng Tian Tse, 22S39, Victoria Junior College

From the Heart

The service-learning collaboration with DSA has been very engaging and purposeful. It gave us a glimpse into the lives of the Down syndrome community in Singapore. The workshop, 'From the Heart', hopes to show the participants the different ways of appreciating others, including dancing and making a card.

We were lucky to have some members at ILT Centre to personally interact and connect with the learners while the other members conducted the workshop via Zoom. By actively engaging in the Zumba dance, we see their enthusiasm and energetic side. The learners have shown resilience, creativity, and innovation in creating their cards. We love the cards that were created by the participants and hope that their loved ones will love them too.

Contributor: NIE Student Teachers, Service Learning Project



Project Bloom



Project Bloom has been a heart-warming project for all of SMU's volunteers, as we interacted and befriended DSA members. As the Project Director, it is always rewarding to see SMU volunteers interacting with DSA participants. Amidst the fun games like spot the difference, storytelling and wacky crafts, my favourite element will always be the participants. Their welcoming energy never fails to brighten my Fridays whenever I hear my name being called out excitedly in the waiting room.

Although we had to work around the restrictions on Zoom, both the participants and volunteers were able to bond through common topics like their love for Disney and sing-a-longs. Our volunteers also became "buddies" with the participants, as I often hear my volunteers addressing them as "buddy Michael" and "buddy Allan". Overall, Project Bloom was a huge success, and we hope to see you again next year! (Hopefully in your Project Bloom shirts and in person!)

Contributor: Adalia Goh, Project Director, SMU Rotaract Project Bloom 2021-2022

In loving memory of



**Mr. Ratnasabapathy
Sivanandam**

1946-2022

*Your presence we miss,
your memories we
treasure.*

DSA Board, Members &
Staff

Dear Friends,

Greetings to you from all of us at Down Syndrome Association (Singapore).

Your support will enable us to support our children and adults with Down syndrome through various educational, developmental and social programs with the aim to assist them to become more independent and lead productive lives.

Whether in big or small ways, we hope that you will continue to support our Cause. If you wish to make a contribution, kindly complete the donation form below and return it to us via post or at DSA Centre.

Once again, our heartfelt thanks and appreciation from the DSA Board of Management, staff and our community of persons with Down syndrome!

DONATION FORM (NEWS/2022/06)

Name [as per NRIC/FIN/Registered Company]: (MR/MS/MDM/DR)

Contact no: _____ NRIC/FIN/UEN/: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

I would like to make a contribution of:

A donation of \$50 / 100 / 500 / 1,000 / Others: \$ _____

By Cheque:

Made payable to Down Syndrome Association (Singapore)

Cheque No.: _____ Bank: _____

By Credit Card:

One-time Monthly Contribution

Visa/Mastercard Credit card no.: _____

Card Holder's Name: _____

Expiry date: _____ Signature: _____

All outright donations are entitled to a tax deduction of 250%.

Kindly drop off this form together with your contribution at our reception counter or mail to DSA Centre, attention to "Team CPCC".



Scan to Donate



TO BE THE CENTRE OF
EXCELLENCE FOR INDIVIDUALS
WITH DOWN SYNDROME,
THEIR FAMILIES AND
THE COMMUNITY.



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