

DSA NEWS

Serving the Down syndrome community since 1996



03 DSA 26th Annual General Meeting

39 members joined the AGM held at DSA Centre, Bishan on 10 June 2023.

05 Charity Movie 2023

600 supporters attended the screening of Transformers over two days at GV, Suntec City.

13 Everybody Dance Now

DSA Fusion Dancers and Danz People's Mini Groovers collaborated for da:ns by Esplanade.

From the ED's Desk



Dear Members,

Greetings to all of you!

I joined DSA on 15 May 2023 and will be taking over from Ando to continue the good work that he has done at the Association. Ando has built up a great team of dedicated staff and an awesome community of support for our members, especially those with Down syndrome.

I have been serving in the social service sector for about twenty years, mainly providing community-based support to individuals and families facing socio-economic challenges, mental health difficulties and family issues. While not entirely new to working with people with special needs, serving with DSA allowed me to deeply understand the experiences of individuals with Down syndrome and their families, their challenges, resilience, and aspirations. More importantly, I have witnessed the potential of people with Down syndrome and the difference that the right support can make in their development and achievement of their aspirations for a better quality of life.

Recognising the importance of the right support for individuals with Down syndrome, DSA started Leave No One Behind (LNOB) to reach out to individuals with Down syndrome in the community who are not receiving the required assistance. DSA hopes to engage them and support their

development and build their capability for a quality life through lifelong learning and social integration. We also hope to support caregivers with the necessary resources to care for their loved ones with Down syndrome. We will be glad to be in touch with anyone with Down syndrome who may need additional support to develop to their fullest potential and live a meaningful life.

Under the good leadership of the Board and the management team, there are exciting plans on how DSA will strengthen our capability and capacity to enhance our existing services and develop new programmes to better serve our members and meet the changing needs of the Down syndrome community. We will be sharing more details at the DSA Members' Town Hall on 16 September 2023 and look forward to an engaging session with you such that we can collectively co-create an enhanced support network and community for our members and loved ones with Down syndrome.

On this note, I also look forward to connecting with more members and working closely with the Board, staff team and our partners to serve our members and the Down syndrome community towards the vision and mission of DSA.

With warmest regards,
Evelyn Lai
Executive Director



Dear Members,

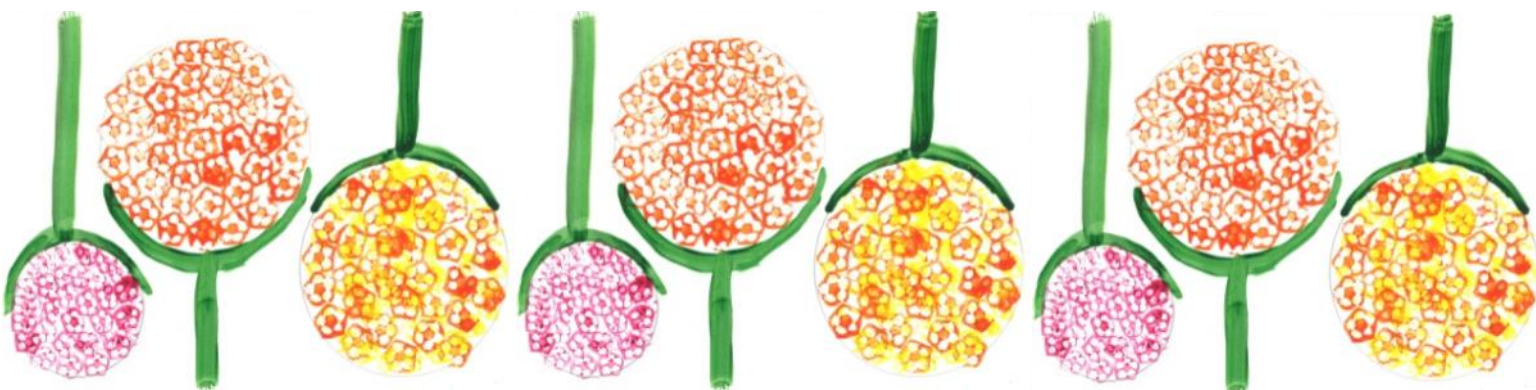
I will be leaving DSA as of 30 June 2023. My decision was not an easy one, made particularly difficult both by my strong conviction and optimism for DSA's future and my current health issues.

I believe the time is right for me to hand over the reins to a new Executive Director to lead DSA to the next phase of growth and to ensure that the Association is well placed to keep growing in breadth and depth moving forward.

I am extremely proud of the work my team and I have been able to accomplish over the past three years and eight months. I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to have served as Executive Director for this wonderful association, a Board that appreciates and values her staff, and the confidence and support that you have given us during my tenure.

I am saddened to think that I will no longer be involved in the day-to-day operation at DSA but I am consoled by the fact that I will remain an advocate for both the Association and the mission regardless of where I am in the future.

With gratitude,
Yeo Ando
Executive Director
11 Nov 2019 to 30 Jun 2023



DSA 26th Annual General Meeting

Mr Alex Yan Chairperson of DSA extended a warm and hearty welcome to 39 members joining DSA's 26th Annual General Meeting physically at DSA Centre on Saturday, 10 June at 1.30pm.

His opening address noted the progress DSA had made in 2022 from 1 January to 31 December 2022 and key highlights such as the resumption of DSA's signature Mystique Charity Gala Dinner after a two-year hiatus and being awarded the Most Eco-Friendly Contingent Award at Purple Parade.

Deputy Chairperson, Ms Li Shuyun and Honorary Treasurer, Mr Adrian Foo gave their respective reports with the Executive Director, Mr Ando Yeo hosting and facilitating the proceedings.

Mr Alex Yan announced that there were ten nominations for the election of the Board of Management for the new term. The ten nominees were officially elected to form the Board of Manage-

ment for the Term 2023/2025.

He then called upon each elected nominee to briefly introduce themselves to the members before conveying his gratitude to Mr Gerard Lim, Mr Gopalan Nair, Ms Lia Marahusin and Ms Monica Kan for their valuable contributions to the Board during their term in office.

The meeting was closed at 3.30pm with a note of appreciation to members, volunteers and donors for their fervent support which created the impact where it matters most for people with Down syndrome. He also thanked the members present for their valuable inputs at the AGM and urged for members to come forward to support DSA and help our beneficiaries soar to greater heights.

Contributor: Joanne Toh, Head of Community Partnership & Corporate Communications



Board of Management 2023 to 2025

04
HIGHLIGHTS



Alex Yan

DSA Board Member since 2013

Head of Corporate Assurance
CIMB Bank

Chairperson



Li Shuyun

DSA Board Member since 2009

Senior Lecturer
Nanyang Technological University

**Deputy
Chairperson**



Chan Wing Git

DSA Board Member since 2018

Director & HRBP Head
Retail Business & Own Brands,
FairPrice Group

**Honorary
Secretary**



Jonathan Seow Wei Peng

DSA Board Member since 2021

Chief Financial Officer
Moleac Pte Ltd

**Honorary
Treasurer**



Adrian Foo Qijing

DSA Board Member since 2020

Partner
Go-Ventures Investments Pte Ltd

Member



Helena Oh Hui Jun

DSA Board Member since 2023

Reward Business Partner
Colt Technology Services

Member



Khairul Alam Bin Mohd Zaini

DSA Board Member since 2021

Head of Compliance
Union Bancaire Privee

Member



Moses Teh Chu Tak

DSA Board Member since 2021

Funeral Consultant
Abound Grace Bereavement Ser-
vices Pte Ltd

Member



Nicholas Cheam

DSA Board Member since 2023

Equity Product Manager
HSBC

Member



Simon Soh Zhao Kun

DSA Board Member since 2023

Tax Director
Unity Advisory Pte Ltd

Member

Charity Movie 2023



One of the first halls to catch the premiere screening of *Transformers: Rise of the Beasts* during Charity Movie 2023

During the June holidays, DSA was excited to host a two-day Charity Movie Screening of “Transformers: Rise of the Beasts” for over 600 of our members and supporters at Golden Village, Suntec City on 8 and 11 June 2023.

Through the effort and support from all our donors, sponsors, members, and volunteers, we raised over \$90,000. Funds raised through this event will support the many programmes and services offered by DSA, one of which is the Independent Living & Training (ILT) Centre. The ILT programme aims to help persons with disabilities to be as self-sufficient as possible – with a centered focus on preparing them for independent living. Adult children of ageing caregivers could practise their independent skills in a communal setting with others in a simulated, home-like environment.

We are immensely grateful for your generous contribution and participation, and we look forward to your continued support in our charitable endeavours.

Thank you once again to all our donors, partners, members and individuals in making our event a success!



Contributor: Joanne Toh, Head of Community Partnership & Corporate Communications

Parents in Conversation

We are extremely grateful to everyone who came together at our 'Parents in Conversation' sharing on mainstream education for children with Down syndrome. The discussions captured the various skills children with Down syndrome should be empowered with to be in a mainstream educational setting. The open sharing of our parents and their experiences left an impact on all of us.

The two parents on the panel spoke about the need for better informational support to help families navigate through the complex needs of preparing and supporting their children with Down syndrome in mainstream educational settings.

The sharing provided a source of timely information about skills, activities, and knowledge that are relevant to parents. The speakers provided

strategies to reduce stress and anxiety in their children and tips on how to easily incorporate math and reading opportunities into the children's daily lives. The overriding feeling was how powerful the parents-led discussion addressed key concerns and ways to strengthen and support positive learning experiences and outcomes for the children.

We express our sincerest appreciation to Ms Chris Hui and Ms Shannon Ong for their invaluable time and contribution.

Contributor: Viemala Davie Kelaver, Head of Children Education Services

Ms Shannon Ong

What are the skills to teach?

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Social Awareness
- Relationship Skills
- Responsible Decision Making

○ Socio-emotional Skills

Ms Chris Hui

What I did at home to help Zhuo Ying

- Consistency of discipline/routines between school and home
- Create a calm and quiet, substance-free zone/room for study and educational play
- Treat her just like any other child except to be understanding and positive
- Put effort to consider in understanding her learning at school, extra learning the wrong math problem-solving method to help recall at home
- Praise, positive, motivate, support... Achievement is an achievement by grades but by the improvement, she did year after year

○ Parent involvement

How I built rapport and relationships with teachers and school team

- In contact with teachers which helped in getting feedback on her issue in school
- For any kindergarten, primary school, secondary, or even TTE involvement, I will be sure to be with her, meet the home teacher, and be open about her condition. Provided teachers with my mobile number for communication anytime
- USP involvement and acting as a bridge between the school and myself too
- Helped to encourage social skills. E.g. encourage study sessions together with classmates, engage visiting friends or shopping with family

AEP Community Integration Outings

The Adult Enhancement Programme (AEP) teaches a variety of domains, including Community Integration (CI) to help our adult learners become more integrated in the community. Twice a month, our learners practise their independent living skills in the community. They take public transport, order their own food and interact with different members in the community as they go about different activities.

In April, our learners visited some churches to learn about the preparations for Easter and visited Sultan Mosque in celebration of Hari Raya Puasa. The staff at the churches and mosque were very welcoming and appreciative of our learners' enthusiasm.

CI is an important aspect of our adult learners' development, as it allows them to showcase their diverse abilities and build strong ties with the community.



<p><u>Outing at Sultan Mosque</u></p> <p>Place - Sultan Mosque</p> <p>Date - 19 April 2023</p> <p>The three trainers including Uncle Tan brought the AEP learners and I to Bishan MRT station. (North South Line) to City Hall MRT station and we waited patiently for the train to arrive.</p> <p>Then, we transferred to another train (East West Line) and we boarded the train. We alighted from the train to Bugis MRT station. The three trainers including the AEP learners walked to the Bugis Junction Food Court for lunch. I ordered Fried Bee Hoon and it was yummy & delicious. After lunch, we walked to Arab street and we toured around to look at the Muslim clothes.</p>	<p>At 2pm, we walked to Sultan Mosque and we saw Fadiliah there.</p> <p>Fadiliah gave me a scarf around my neck inside the Sultan Mosque.</p> <p>The mosque has a golden dome.</p> <p>Simon distributed the drinks for us to drink there. I drank vanilla coke and it was delicious.</p> <p>We decided it was time to go back to Bugis MRT station. We took the train (East West Line) and it travelled to City Hall MRT station (North South Line) and it travelled all the way back to Bishan.</p>
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Journal entry by Lau Su An, Learner at AEP

*Uncle Tan volunteers with AEP whenever the group goes out for CI outings.

Contributor: Catherine Michael, Head of AEP

A Day with the Seniors at Sarah Active Ageing Center

On 11 May 2023, 13 learners from AEP were invited to participate in the Mother's Day celebration at Sarah Active Ageing Centre with Mr Melvin Yong, Member of Parliament for Radin Mas Constituency, and 20 seniors.

Brimming with excitement at the opportunity to socialise and interact with the seniors, our learners tapped on their past volunteering experiences with Lions Home For The Elders and curated a series of activities for the session. Our learners led the way with a Zumba performance and a sing-along session to the tunes of 'The Moon Represents My Heart' and 'Top of The World' much to the delight of the seniors. This was followed by a craft activity titled 'Basket of Love' to symbolise their love and appreciation for mothers. Together with the seniors, AEP learners drew and painted hearts and flowers on the 'basket' created from paper plates.

The celebration ended with our AEP learners gifting the seniors a handmade craft. AEP learners and seniors from Sarah Active Ageing Centre had a great time interacting and socialising with one another. It was a meaningful and empowering morning for our learners who felt that they made a difference in the lives of the seniors.

Contributor: Catherine Michael, Head of AEP



Purposeful Learning, Meaningful Living

Since January this year, DSA's thrift shop at Telok Blangah has increased its operating hours to twice a week, on Mondays and Thursdays. Our learners welcome many happy return customers from the neighbourhood and some from afar.

The increased operating hours provide more opportunities for our learners to apply their vocational skills and soft skills learned at ILT Centre. Besides performing customer service duties, our learners also enjoy learning and carrying out basic retail tasks such as preparing price labels, identifying and sorting products, and keeping our thrift shop neat and tidy.

Each week, the learners look forward excitedly to serving their customers at the thrift shop, working alongside their peers and volunteers, and getting to know each other better. Running the thrift shop is a wonderful way for them to build teamwork and self-confidence, accumulate work experiences and engage with the community at the same time.

We welcome all to visit the thrift shop and support us!



Tidying up the books for sale.



Preparing the price labels.

Contributor: Todd Simonson, Former Head of ILT Centre

Swimming with Ray!

The ILT Centre learners have been taking swimming lessons once a month for the past year and a half at Bukit Merah Swimming Complex. The instructors at Swim Ray have generously given their time and expertise to help our learners gain crucial water safety skills.

The learners have improved in various areas such as perfecting the freestyle swimming stroke and the kicking technique. The activity provides both fun and exercise. Thanks so much to Jo and all the instructors at Swim Ray, we really appreciate your time.

Contributor: Todd Simonson, Former Head of ILT Centre



The caregiving journey is one of exploration that is in constant evolution. At times, it can be challenging and isolating, and even result in burnout.

Caregiver Support Group (CSG) aims to provide a safe space for our caregivers to meet and empower each other on a similar journey. It aims to build lifetime friendships and a stronger support network within the DSA family.

On 29 April, the Family Support Services (FSS) held the first CSG get-together. During the session, caregivers were encouraged to share their thoughts on how CSG could best support them. One of the participants who suggested having more regular sharing sessions commented, "Sometimes, we just want to confide in others who have had similar experiences."

CSG Kopi Chat!

We invited two participants, Ms Suryani Lim, and Ms Amirah Ismail, to share their experiences with respite care routines and tips on how to manage their personal care time.

It is important for caregivers to take some time off from their care responsibilities to recharge their mind and body. As part of CSG initiatives, we are working on bringing a variety of activities for our caregivers. Stay tuned for more updates!

Contributor: Steffi Tjong, Executive of Family Support Services



FSS Mother's Day Celebration

Nothing expresses gratitude like a deliciously handcrafted cake. In light of Mother's Day, FSS collaborated with RSVP Singapore, The Organisation of Senior Volunteers for a baking session.

The participants learned to make strawberry shortcake, using instant cake mix, fresh cream and sweet strawberries. The whole kitchen was filled with the aroma of vanilla during the baking session. Caregivers and their children worked hand-in-hand decorating the cakes.

The workshop wrapped up on a cheerful note with everyone looking very satisfied with their baked goods. FSS looks forward to bring more of such activities and continue to strengthen family bonds and provide respite care for the caregivers.



Photo credit: Jerome D Gift Navoa

Contributor: Steffi Tjong, Executive of Family Support Services

ASRJC's Cookie Decoration, Watercolour and Dance Session

Our Service Learning (SVL) project at DSA was a very fruitful and memorable experience. The five of us planned various activities for the participants such as watercolour painting, cookie decorating, and dancing.

Being able to interact and have interesting conversations about their daily routines and their hobbies enlightened us. Our fellow friends at DSA, although were shy at first, gradually opened up to us by the end of the session, which was unforgettable.

This SVL at DSA gave us an opportunity to interact with people who may be differently abled but could share similar interests as us. It also taught us several values such as patience, perseverance, and adaptability. Although our intention was to



teach simple art skills, we ourselves have learnt many things and would love to come back to meet them again one day!

Contributor: Ravindran Mahalakshmi, Anderson Serangoon Junior College

Colours of Friendship with SMU Project Bloom 2022/2023

It was a bittersweet goodbye at the end of the outing, but looking back at this season of Bloom, the interactions we have had with DSA participants have made our Fridays and Saturdays meaningful. Everyone looked forward to seeing their friends from DSA each session.

This season was Project Bloom's return to physical sessions after two years, and it was a huge success thanks to the support from the volunteers, participants and DSA! The Project Bloom team has learnt and grown from this experience, and we are very grateful for having met every one of our participants. We hope that you had a meaningful time with us, and to see you again for the next season of Bloom!

Contributor: Anthea Ang, SMU Rotaract 'Project Bloom 2022/2023'



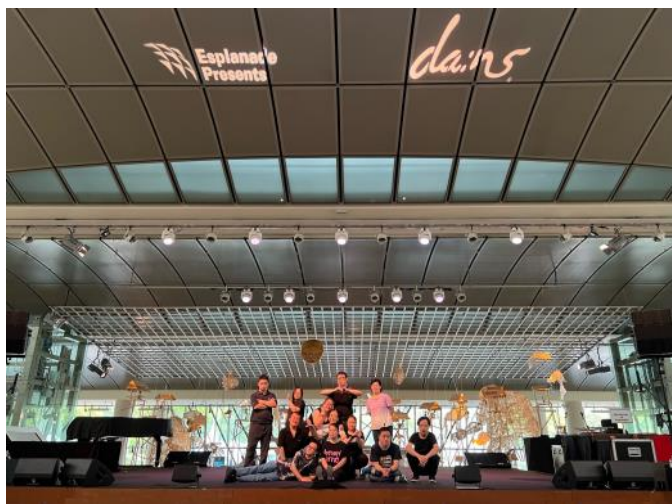
For Project Bloom's last session of this season, we headed to Marina Barrage and the Flower Dome to celebrate the friendships we have formed throughout this season. Volunteers and DSA participants worked together on team games, took great photos for the memories, and braved the heat to spend time with familiar and new friends.

EveryBody Dance Now



As part of Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay da:ns focus this April, the DSA Fusion Dance group was invited to perform and teach a 30-minute session on 16 April 2023. The programme 'EveryBody Dance Now' focuses on a weekend of dance with inclusivity, diversity and participation that encourages everybody to experience dance.

In collaboration with Danz People's Mini Groovers kids crew, 10 DSA Fusion Dancers performed a 5-minute K-pop dance to their favourite songs before teaching the audience the choreography highlights.



It was a unique experience for the dancers as they had the opportunity to collaborate with other dancers and to teach the audience after the performance. Through the interaction and engagement, the dancers shared their passion and love for dance with the audience and had a blast! The dancers were also treated like artists at the National Art Centre where they were given artist passes and access to backstage areas and artist holding room.

We look forward to more of such opportunities for DSA's performing groups to showcase their talents and abilities in the community!

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



Scan to watch
the performance
highlights!





DSA Enrichment Programmes

Tuesday

- 4.15pm - 5.45pm: Visual Art
(Age 10 years and above)
- 6.30pm - 8.00pm: Speech & Drama
(Age 21 years and above)

Wednesday

- 6.00pm - 7.00pm: Drums & Percussion Class 1
(Age 12 years and above)
- 7.00pm - 8.00pm: Drums & Percussion Class 2
(Age 12 years and above)

Note that the age group categorisation is only a guide. Students will be grouped depending on observations and abilities.

Saturday

- 9.00am - 10.00am: Aikido
(Age 12 years and above)
- 12.00nn - 1.00pm: Zumba
(Age 10 years and above)
- 1.00pm - 2.30pm: Creative Dance (Basic)
(Age 12 to 18 years old)
- 2.30pm - 4.30pm: Fusion Dance
(Age 18 years and above)
- 2.30pm - 4.00pm: Speech & Drama (Junior)
(Age 6 to 12 years old)
- 3.00pm - 4.00pm: kidsREAD (Senior)
- 4.00pm - 5.00pm: kidsREAD (Junior)
- 4.30pm - 6.00pm: Speech & Drama (Senior)
(Age 13 to 21 years old)

Are you thinking of exploring programmes in the areas of Arts, Education, and Sports & Fitness or is your child keen to try out something new? DSA Enrichment Programmes are designed to develop the capabilities of each individual and seek to achieve the following objectives:

- Engage, educate, and inspire members.
- Encourage members to acquire new skills, nurture interest, and develop talent.
- Build and strengthen members' cognitive, emotional, physical, and social development.
- Showcase the abilities of our members.
- Change the perspectives of others on the abilities of persons with Down syndrome.
- Raise members as valued people in the community who contribute their areas of interest and skills.

For more information or request to attend a trial session, please contact Amelia or Nalla at membership@downsyndrome-singapore.org.

DSA Town Hall

We would like hear from you! Together we can create an inclusive community for all persons with Down syndrome and/or special needs. Join us at DSA members' town hall on 16 September 2023, Saturday.

More details regarding the town hall will be shared in due course. For more information, please contact Steffi at membership@downsyndrome-singapore.org.

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 programmes 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/2023/06)

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

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

Address: _____

Email: _____

I would like to make a donation of:

\$50 / 100 / 500 / 1,000 / Others: S\$ _____

By Cheque:

Made payable to "Down Syndrome Association (Singapore)"

Cheque no.: _____ Bank: _____

By Credit Card:

☐ One-time ☐ Monthly Contribution

Visa/Mastercard/AMEX Credit card no.: _____

Card holder's name: _____

Expiry date: _____ Signature: _____

By PayNow to UEN:

UEN Number: S96SS0170K

All outright donations are entitled to a tax deduction of 2.5 times.

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

**NRIC/FIN/UEN is required for tax deduction purpose.*



Scan to Donate



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

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