

DSA NEWS

Serving the Down syndrome community since 1996



06 DSA Family Day 2024 @ Batam

A group of 35 DSA members and staff went on a Family Day trip to Batam on Saturday 1 June 2024.

16 DSA Welcome Basket

We are soft launching project “Welcome to our World” baby baskets that we will be gifting expectant parents and parents of newborns (<12 months) with Down Syndrome.

17 DSA Bowlers at the Special Olympics

8 bowlers from the Bowling Enrichment Programme represented DSA at the Special Olympics Singapore Bowling Competition on 18th May 2024.

From the ED's Desk



Dear members and friends,

Greetings to you once again as we conclude yet another quarter in 2024 and share upcoming plans for the next quarter.

The period from April to June 2024 was fulfilling as we celebrated our bonds and connections through various engagement activities.

In April, we connected with our Board Committee members and DSA volunteers to share DSA's refreshed strategic plans and more importantly, thank them for valuable contributions to DSA. During the event, we also bonded closer to one another through a floral arrangement activity.

In May, we celebrated Mother's Day. Our adult learners from the Adult Enhancement Programme baked cupcakes for their mothers while the Family Support Services brought mothers and children together to make edible terrarium.

In June, we celebrated Father's Day. In addition to brownies made by our adult learners, our fathers and other caregivers were also treated to a fun day of drumming with their children.

Parents, family members and caregivers are critical in ensuring that individuals with Down syndrome get the best care and support to grow well and live a quality life. It is important for parents and caregivers to be supported well in their caregiving journey to ensure that their personal needs are met so that they can provide quality care for their loved ones. DSA organised several caregivers support activities, including a Family Day Trip to Batam to promote bonding among family members and with DSA members.

Establishing long-term positive and supportive relationships is one of the key objectives of DSA's refreshed strategic plan for the next five years. The other two being delivering quality programmes to meet current and future needs of individuals with Down syndrome, their family and the community and to develop our capacity and capability to ensure the long-term viability and sustainability of DSA. We shared DSA's Strategic Plans (2024-2028) during our 27th Annual General Meeting conducted on 22 June 2024.

To establish long-term positive and supportive relationships, we are glad to share that DSA will have a new department, Support and Advocacy Services. The new department will focus on providing psycho-socioemotional needs of individuals with Down syndrome and their caregivers while also enhancing our outreach and advocacy services to build positive collaborative partnerships to promote social inclusion of individuals with Down syndrome.

We hope you enjoy reading the various stories of the bonds we have with one another in this edition of DSA News. More importantly, we welcome you to engage further with us and be a greater part of the journey ahead as we strive to do better to develop, support and advocate for individuals with Down syndrome, their families and the wider Down syndrome community in Singapore.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,
Evelyn Lai
Executive Director

27th Annual General Meeting

Mr Chan Wing Git, Honorary Secretary of DSA's Board of Management called the meeting to order with a quorum being present at 10.30am on Saturday, 22 June 2024. Mr Alex Yan, Chairperson of DSA's Board of Management extended a warm welcome to 31 members in attendance.

Mr Yan's opening address highlighted DSA's ongoing efforts to improve our governance, management and service delivery to best serve individuals with Down syndrome, their families and the community. In 2023, the Infant and Toddler Programme and the Independent Living and Training Centre programme were reviewed and enhanced. They were re-introduced as the Early Start Programme (ESP) and Enhanced Independence Programme (EIP) respectively. Mr Yan reported that DSA achieved full compliance with the Governance Evaluation Checklist and met the requirements for annual submissions indicated by the Charity Council. Mr Yan also shared that DSA had met the requirements of the Charity Transparency Framework and performed well in the assessment for the Charity Transparency Award and hence shortlisted as a potential winner for the Charity Transparency Award 2024 and is also a qualifying entrant for the Charity Governance Awards (CGA) 2024.



Ms Evelyn Lai, Executive Director, shared details of DSA's refreshed Strategic Plan (2024-2028) and the new organisation structure and which would take effect from 1 July 2023. DSA's Strategic Plan (2024-2028) seeks to establish DSA as the trusted and preferred Centre of Excellence representing the Down syndrome community in Singapore. Our desire is to reach beyond our members and serve the wider Down syndrome community so that more people can benefit from our services and programmes. The key objectives of DSA's strategic plans are to (i) establish long-term positive and supportive relationships, (ii) deliver quality programmes to meet current and future needs of individuals with Down syndrome, their family and the community and (iii) build our capacity and capability to ensure the long-term viability and sustainability of DSA.

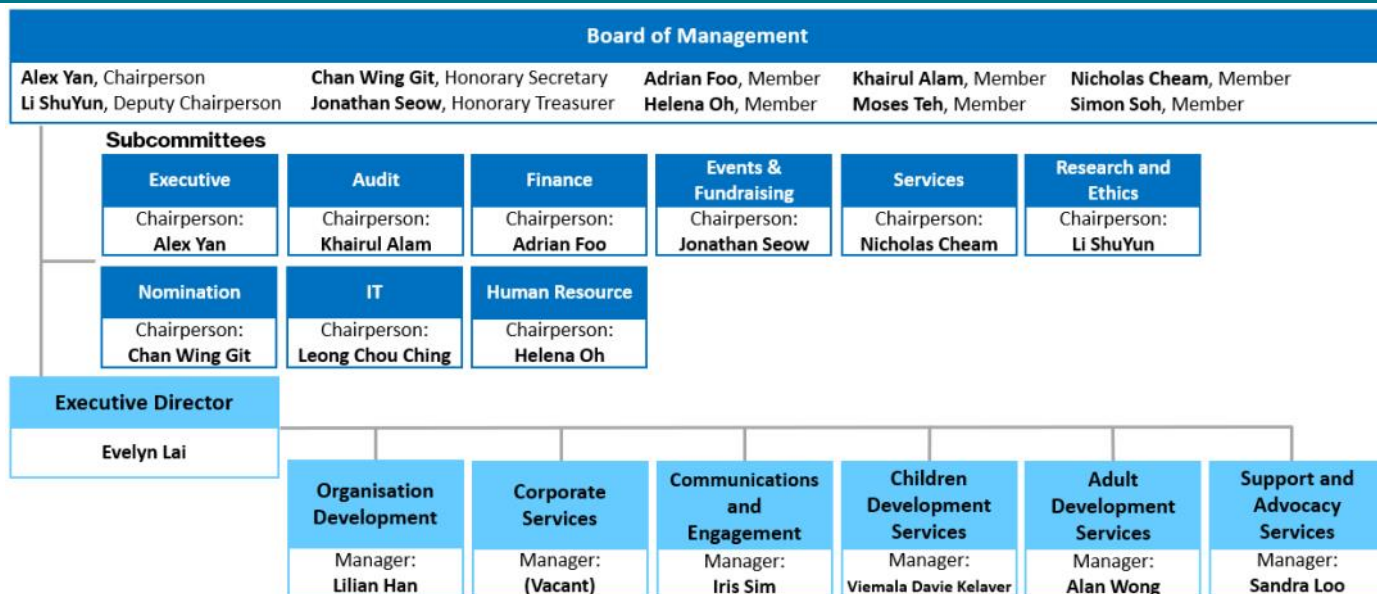
Mr Chan Wing Git, Honorary Secretary, reported on DSA's programmes and activities in 2023 and presented DSA Annual Report for the year 2023 to members. Mr Jonathan Seow also presented DSA's Financial Reports for the year 2023 to members during the AGM.

Mr Yan closed the meeting at noon with a note of appreciation to members, volunteers and donors for their fervent support where it matters most for the community. He also thanked the members present for their valuable inputs at the AGM and urged members to come forward to further support DSA in journeying with the members of the Down syndrome community.

Contributor: Iris Sim (Manager, Communications & Engagement)

New Organisation Structure

(with effect from 1 July 2024)



The new organisation structure seeks to promote effective communications and working relationships and streamline functions while enhancing cross functional collaborations as DSA implements its re-freshed strategic plans. Some of the key changes include:

1. New department: Support and Advocacy Services

The department will support the psychosocial and emotional needs of individuals with Down syndrome and their caregivers. The department will also develop community-based collaborations and support and lead DSA's research and advocacy efforts.

2. Streamlining of Corporate Services

Corporate functions such as administration, finance and human resources would be streamlined as corporate services while a new function, Organisation Development, will focus on building capacity and capability of DSA to enhance its governance and organisational performance.

2. Renaming of Departments to reflect focus of each

Community Partnerships and Corporate Communications department will be renamed as **Communications and Engagement** to reflect the strategic objectives of DSA to build long-term positive and supportive relationships and establish itself as the trusted and preferred Centre of Excellence representing the Down syndrome community in Singapore.

Children Education Services and Adult Education Services will be renamed as **Children Development Services (CDS)** and **Adult Development Services (ADS)** to align our re-affirmation to DSA's mission to develop individuals with Down syndrome through lifelong learning and to achieve physical wellbeing and independence, while the new Support and Advocacy Services will focus on the other two parts of DSA's mission to support through specialist services, information, and education and advocate for equal opportunities, quality of life and their contribution to society.

Charity Movie 2024: IF (Imaginary Friends)



DSA hosted our members and supporters to the Charity Movie screening of “IF (Imaginary Friends)” at Golden Village VivoCity, from 16 to 18 May 2024. The film, written and directed by John Krasinski, follows the magical adventure of a girl who discovers she can see everyone's imaginary friends and helps reconnect forgotten IFs with their kids.

The Adult Development Services (ADS) team arranged for our adult learners and their families to attend the opening night of the screening. The joint experience provided an enriching and enjoyable experience for the participants. The families enjoyed a night filled with laughter, popcorn, and heartwarming moments. The event not only offered a fantastic movie experience but also strengthened family bonds and created lasting memories.



Learners (from top-left) Dawson, Tabitha, Wei Kang, Angie and John with their temporary tattoos of cute monsters.

Through the effort and support from all our donors, sponsors, members, and volunteers, DSA raised over \$90,000. Funds raised through this event will support the many programmes and services offered by DSA for individuals with Down syndrome and their families. We are grateful for your generous contributions and support for our cause and look forward to continued participation at our next Charity Movie screening at the end of 2024. Follow our social media channels for updates!



Thank you once again to all our sponsors, donors, partners, members and individuals for making this screening a success!

Contributors: Amelia Sim (Senior Executive, Communications & Engagement) and Nur Shuhada Suhaimi (Senior Training Officer, Adult Development Services)



FAMILY DAY 2024 @ BATAM

DSA members went on a Family Day Trip to Batam on Saturday, 1 June 2024.

At Batam, our members were treated to a traditional Indonesia cultural dance which featured key acts such as de-husking of a coconut by mouth and glass eating!

Lunch was a sumptuous spread of seafood and a surprise cake for all the June babies, including a member who turned 40 years old on the day itself!

Other highlights of the trip included a visit to the famous kueh lapis store and a trick-eye museum for a session of fun photo-taking.

Despite the inclement weather, our members had fun bonding with their family members, friends and DSA staff.

Contributor: Iris Sim (Manager, Communications & Engagement)



Nina and her mother at The Illusion 3D Museum



Happy bellies, happy families!



June and Ming Fei enjoying the exhibitions.

Look forward to more family trips and outings during the year-end school holidays! Sign up or renew your membership with DSA to stay in the loop and join in our many activities!

DSA MEMBERSHIP

Do you know of any families caring for persons with Down syndrome or would you like to seek support for your Down syndrome child/ ward? Down Syndrome Association (Singapore) provides a range of services for persons with Down syndrome, caregivers and siblings. DSA members will get to enjoy the following benefits:

- Subsidised rates for persons with special needs when enrolled in Education and Enrichment Programs.
- Care planning, access to Parent Support and Education talks for caregivers.
- Outings and activities organised by DSA and external organisations.

To find out more about DSA membership, please visit our website <https://downsyndrome-singapore.org/get-involved#pane-F>

or kindly contact Amelia

at Amelia@downsyndrome-singapore.org,

6500 9321.

Contributor: Amelia Sim (Senior Executive, Communications & Engagement)

You can now buy our merchandise online!



Marbled Canvas Magnet
\$16



Fabric Bound Diary
\$15

Are you thinking of items to purchase as gifts or are you looking to purchase items in bulk? Support our DSA artists and their hand-drawn merchandise on our newly launched e-platform, CocoCart!

Your purchase will go towards encouraging our artists in their creative talent, raising awareness of the abilities of the Down syndrome community and contributing towards supporting the programmes and services provided by DSA.

Scan the QR code to view and purchase DSA's merchandise or click here:



[Down Syndrome Association \(Singapore\) \(cococart.co\)](https://downsyndrome-singapore.org/cococart.co)

Contributor: Amelia Sim (Senior Executive, Communications & Engagement)

Volunteer Appreciation

The Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) designated 2024 as the Year of Celebrating Volunteers (YCVolunteers) to recognise and celebrate the contribution of volunteers in the social service sector and community. In line with MSF's efforts, DSA hosted a volunteer appreciation event to thank our volunteers for their invaluable support in our programmes, activities and events on Saturday, 20 April 2024.

Volunteers were treated to light bites as they arrived and mingled with other volunteers, strengthening the camaraderie of serving the community together. Mr Alex Yan, DSA Chairperson, welcomed the volunteers and presented certificates of appreciation to individual and group volunteers. Mr Alan Wong, Manager of DSA Adult Development Services and Ms Iris Sim, Manager of Communications & Engagement also shared various upcoming DSA initiatives and volunteering opportunities.

The highlight of the session was undoubtedly the floral arrangement activity, which got everyone blooming with excitement and creativity! The volunteers created their own unique bouquets, symbolising the beauty and collective impact of their efforts in supporting the Down syndrome community.

DSA would like to thank our volunteers for their hard work and dedication towards our cause to support, develop and advocate for individuals with Down syndrome, their families and the community.



Community Outreach at the Libraries

DSA is collaborating with the National Library Board (NLB) to raise awareness of Down syndrome and advocate for the social inclusion of individuals with Down syndrome through the community walls at different NLB libraries.

From now till 31 July 2024, head over to Bishan Public Library for to visit our community wall with bite-sized information on Down syndrome or browse through a collection of books on Down syndrome specially curated by the library. The community wall also features vibrant artworks and DSA socks designed by our members. DSA's community wall will also be set up at Punggol Regional Library from June to December 2024.

In addition, DSA will be conducting talks at the library, including a talk on empowering children with special needs at Bishan Public Library in July 2024.

We thank NLB for supporting our cause to raise awareness of Down syndrome and promoting social inclusion of individuals with Down syndrome.

Contributor: Nur Sulyanna Sumali (Executive, Communications & Engagement)



Celebrating Mother's Day with Children Development Services

DSA Children Development Services (CDS) celebrated Mother's Day with heartwarming gifts handmade by our children for their beloved mothers. Our children in the Early Start Programme (ESP) and Integration Facilitation Support Programme (IFSP) created beautiful flowers using air-dry clay, leaving their tiny fingerprints on the petals and leaves. The dried clay petals and leaves were then carefully painted and assembled into vibrant floral masterpieces.

With their handmade gifts framed and ready, the children eagerly presented their creations to their mothers, filling the air with joy and love. The smiles on the mothers' faces were testament to the heartfelt effort by their little ones.

The Mother's Day celebrations at CDS fostered a sense of togetherness and appreciation for the special bond between mothers and their children. The handmade gifts served as reminders of the unconditional love and care that mothers provide, and the children's creations were beautiful expressions of their affection.

Contributor: Viemala Davie Kelaver (Manager, Children Development Services)



"Pressed with love"

- Andrew (IFSP)



"Little fingers, lasting memories"

- Rino (ESP)



"Tiny hands, big love"

- Ihsan (ESP)



"Petals of love"

- Zachary (IFSP)

Networking Breakfast for Early Intervention Professionals

On 3 June 2024, CDS hosted a networking breakfast session for practitioners from Early Intervention Programmes for Infants and Children (EIPIC) centres. The networking session aimed to foster collaboration and share best practices among professionals providing early childhood intervention.

CDS Manager, Mrs Viemala Kelaver welcomed participants to network and exchange ideas and best practices in early intervention over breakfast. Participants shared their experiences and discussed possible practices to overcome challenges. The vibrant discussion laid the groundwork for future collaborative efforts among practitioners across agencies to strengthen integrated early intervention to best serve children with special needs.

Following the networking breakfast, Mrs Viemala Kelaver presented DSA's Early Start Programme (ESP) to the participants, highlighting the innovative design and methodologies which were designed to provide specialist early intervention and support for children with Down syndrome, ensuring they receive the necessary resources and guidance from a young age. The presentation concluded with a sharing of success stories, capturing the interest and admiration of all present.

Another highlight of the event was a guided tour of the early intervention facilities at DSA. Attendees had the opportunity to witness firsthand the comprehensive support system in place for children enrolled in our programme. The tour showcased specialised therapy rooms, with specially designed learning spaces, and interactive activities tailored to meet the unique needs of each child.

Participants were particularly impressed by the dedication and expertise of the CDS staff, who demonstrated deep commitment to fostering a nurturing and stimulating environment for children with Down syndrome. The visit provided valuable insights into effective intervention strategies and reinforced the importance of customised early support in maximizing the potential of each child.

The attendees expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to learn about ESP and to connect with fellow practitioners from other EIPIC centres. The networking breakfast session facilitated knowledge sharing and strengthened the sense of community among early intervention professionals.

DSA's CDS recognises the vital role of collaboration in advancing early childhood intervention and look forward to hosting similar events in future. By bringing together dedicated professionals and sharing innovative practices from different agencies, CDS aims to enhance the quality of support and care provided to children with special needs across Singapore.

The success of this networking breakfast session underscores the importance of continuous learning and partnership in the field of early intervention. CDS looks forward to building on this momentum and working together with EIPIC centres to create a brighter future for all children.

Contributed By: Viemala Davie Kelaver (Manager, Children Development Services)

Hari Raya Celebrations 2024

Our adult learners from the Adult Enhancement Programme (AEP) had a memorable Hari Raya celebration this year!

AEP organised a Community Integration Outing to Sultan Mosque and Arab Street before Hari Raya. Our adult learners toured mosque and admired the beautiful architecture and pictures inside the mosque. The tour around Arab Street exposed our adult learners to different festive traditions of our Muslim friends.

We built on the experience during the Community Integration Outing and decorated our centre with hanging ketupats, replicating the festive atmosphere at Arab Street. The decorations reinforced the learning from the outing and provided an immersive experience in the Malay culture as we celebrated Hari Raya at DSA.

Our celebrations began with a lively sing-and-dance to festive music. Following that, learners learnt names of different festive goodies while being treated to the different delicacies.

The experiential activities blended fun, learning, and cultural appreciation. Our learners deepened their understanding of Malay culture and appreciation for the multicultural society that we live in.

We are grateful to everyone who contributed to making our Hari Raya Celebrations a very special and immersive experience for our learners.

Contributor: Nur Shuhada Suhaimi (Senior Training Officer, Adult Development Services)



DSA Thrift Shop

At DSA Thrift Shop, there is a special partnership between learners from DSA Enhanced Independence Programme (EIP), and RSVP Singapore The Organization of Senior Volunteers. The collaboration creates a unique and inclusive environment that benefits both groups and the community.

Our EIP learners are given the opportunity to gain valuable work experience and develop important skills through their participation in the thrift shop. RSVP volunteers and the EIP Trainer guide our learners to sort and organize donated pre-loved items, stock shelves, and assist customers. The hands-on experience build our learners' confidence and independence in various tasks and social interaction which help strengthen their employability.



The RSVP volunteers, who are retirees and seniors looking to give back to their community, play a crucial role in supporting and mentoring the EIP learners. They provide guidance, encouragement, and friendship, helping the learners feel accepted and valued. The volunteers also benefit from the interaction, as it allows them to stay active, socially engaged, and continue to contribute to the community in a meaningful way.

Together, our learners, volunteers and trainers create a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere at the Thrift Shop. Many of our customers expressed appreciation for the friendly service and positive energy emanating from the partnership and often return to the Thrift Shop for good bargains and have built friendships with the team. The community is enriched by the presence of our diverse team at the Thrift Shop working together towards a common goal.



The collaboration between our EIP learners and RSVP volunteers at the Thrift Shop is a shining example of how different groups can come together to create a supportive and empowering environment. It demonstrates the power of inclusivity, diversity, and community spirit, and serves as a model for other organisations looking to promote social good while enriching the lives of all individuals involved.

From 1 June 2024, DSA Thrift Store would be opened from 11.00am to 3.00pm on Wednesday and Friday. We are looking for more volunteers to join our diverse and inclusive team and contribute to the community. To join us and volunteer at the Thrift Shop, please contact Sulyanna via email at Sulyanna@downsyndrome-singapore.org or call 6500 9321.

Contributor: Uthaiyan S/O Ellangovan (Trainer, Enhanced Independence Programme)



Outing to Transport Museum

A group of eager learners from the Enhanced Independence Programme (EIP) had the exciting opportunity to visit the transport museum with our EIP trainers and volunteers. The trip was organised as part of the curriculum to enhance their knowledge and understanding of Singapore's transportation and its importance in society.

The learners were fascinated by the vast collection of vehicles on display, and being able to learn how transportation has evolved over the years.

The trip was not only educational but interactive, with hands-on activities and that allowed the learners to deepen their understanding of the different modes of transportation. They were able to test their knowledge with quizzes and games, and even had the opportunity to ride on some vehicles.

Overall, the trip to the transport museum was a memorable and enriching experience for the learners of EIP. It not only broadened their horizons and deepened their understanding of the world around them, but also sparked their curiosity and imagination.

As they left the museum, the learners were filled with a newfound appreciation for the role that transportation plays in our daily lives, and a sense of excitement for the possibilities that lie ahead in the world of transportation.

Contributor: Uthaiyan S/O Ellangovan (Trainer, Enhanced Independence Programme)

Junction 8 Office Tower Annual Fire Drill

20 DSA staff and AEP learners participated in the Annual Fire Drill with other tenants of Junction 8 Office Tower on 22 April 2024.

When the fire alarm went off, the learners were calm and followed the instructions of the trainers. Together, they walked from our centre to the designated assembly point in an orderly fashion.

At the assembly point, the team from the Singapore Civil Defence Force guided our learners in putting out fires using fire extinguisher during the simulation exercises. Our learners also got the opportunity to get close to the various firefighting vehicles on-site.

The fire drill was an invaluable learning experience for our learners to learn and practise measures to keep themselves and others safe in the event of a fire. We are proud of our learners who successfully carried out the measures which were briefed to them before the fire drill.

Contributor: Vincent Choo (Trainer, Adult Development Services)



Chun Ru trying her hand on the fire extinguisher



Wei Kang and Wei Jun beside the Red Rhino

Adult Development Services Mother's and Father's Day Celebrations



Our DSA learners have been hard at work, not only to show their appreciation for all the wonderful mothers but also to master a new skill set. Through patience, dedication, and a lot of love, they have learnt the art of baking delicious cupcakes. Each cupcake is a symbol of their progress, joy, and the special bond shared between our learners and their mothers.

This baking project allowed our learners to develop valuable life skills, from measuring ingredients to decorating their creations with care. They poured their hearts into each step of the process, making these sweet treats truly special.

Our learners packed and presented the cupcakes to their mothers. We believe that their mothers enjoyed these heartfelt cupcakes, knowing that the cupcakes carry the message of gratitude and love from our talented learners. We wish all mothers a Happy Mother's Day!

For Father's Day, our adult learners embarked on another exciting journey to honour their fantastic fathers. Our learners embraced the journey with enthusiasm and dedication and learnt the art of baking mouth-watering brownies and baked mouth-watering brownies for their fathers.

Throughout the baking class, our learners practised new life skills, and mastered different baking techniques. Each brownie represents not only their hard work and growth, but also the deep appreciation for their fathers. The whole process was filled with laughter, learning, and a lot of love.

These delicious brownies were heartfelt tokens of gratitude from our learners, who wanted to make this Father's Day extra special. We hope that the fathers enjoyed the sweet treats, and know they come with a warm message of thanks and love from their children.

Contributor: Syafiqah (Intern, Adult Development Services)

Songwriting for Wellbeing Workshop

Caregivers often neglect their well-being while focusing on the needs of those they care for, leading to physical and emotional exhaustion. Mental wellness activities, such as mindfulness, regular exercise, and connecting with support groups, are essential for caregivers to maintain their health. DSA organised several workshops aimed at helping caregivers to help caregivers prioritise self-care, learn stress management techniques, and build a supportive community.

We collaborated with Esplanade for a Songwriting for Wellbeing workshop on 13 April 2024. The workshop led by Ms Crystal Goh, Singer and Songwriter, offered participants a unique opportunity to engage in self-care by expressing their emotions and experiences through music, significantly benefiting their overall mental well-being. Throughout the workshop, participants learned to channel their personal stories into lyrics, crafting at least one verse that resonates with their journeys



Flower Embroidery Workshop



Proud of their beautiful masterpieces!



A great way to train focus and patience

Embroidery can be used as a therapeutic activity to promote mental wellness. The repetitive, rhythmic nature of stitching can induce a meditative state, helping to reduce stress and anxiety. DSA held a Flower Embroidery Workshop for caregivers on 20 April 2024. Ms. Inez Tan from Inez Designs taught participants different stitches to create several floral embroidery designs. Through this workshop, participants learnt embroidery skills and more importantly strengthened their support network and friendships with other caregivers.

TCM Workshop

Ms Lee Hui Fang from OUCH conducted a TCM workshop for our caregivers on 25 May 2024. Ms Lee shared holistic approaches that promote harmony between the mind and body. By incorporating practices such as basic acupressure massage and basic tai chi movements, we hope that our caregivers can be better supported to manage their stress.

Contributor: Steffi Tjong (Executive, Support & Advocacy Services)

Family Support Services Mother's and Father's Day Celebrations



To show our appreciation for caregivers, DSA celebrated Mother's Day and Father's Day with family bonding activities to celebrate their journey, dedication, and love in caring for their loved ones.

For Mother's Day, DSA held a baking workshop on 11 May 2024. During the workshop, participants had a wonderful time during the fun-filled session making edible terrariums. At the end of the session, DSA members wrote notes of appreciation to their loved ones.



On Saturday, 8 June 2024, we held a 'Let's Drum Together' workshop to celebrate Father's Day. The trainer, Mr Ferdinand, started the session by introducing the participants to African and Brazilian percussions. Everyone was eager to try out some beats and challenged their newly learned skills in rhythm games.

We will be having more family bonding activities for our members and caregivers. Stay tuned to many more similar events in the future!

Contributor: Steffi Tjong (Executive, Support & Advocacy Services)

"Welcome to Our World" Baby Basket

DSA welcomes our little ones with Down syndrome with our newly launched "**Welcome to Our World**" baby baskets.

Filled with gifts for the newborn and family members and information regarding caring and supporting for a newborn with Down syndrome, the baskets expresses DSA's congratulations and support to the parents and families in celebrating the arrival of babies with Down syndrome. The basket is available for any expectant or new parents of a child with Down syndrome, aged 12 months and below.

DSA also provides pre-natal support for expectant parents and caregiver support to new parents to support them in best caring for and support their child.

If you or someone you know is expecting or having a new born with Down syndrome, contact us to get the "**Welcome to Our World**" baby baskets by scanning the QR Code on the right. If you would like to know more about DSA Pre-natal and Caregiver Support, please email Sandra at sandra.loo@downsyndrome-singapore.org or call 6500 9321.



Contents of "Welcome to Our World" basket.*

**Items are subjected to change.*

DSA Bowlers at the Special Olympics



8 bowlers from DSA Bowling Enrichment Programme represented DSA at the Special Olympics Singapore Bowling Competition on 18 May 2024. The event saw over 80 bowlers from various special education schools and social service agencies participating in the Junior, Senior and Master divisions.

Our bowlers trained weekly for the competition and looked forward to the opportunity to showcase their talent and skills and bowl with their friends. Their hard work paid off. We would like to congratulate our bowlers (in alphabetical order) for their good performance:

- David Tan, Bronze medal in the Mixed Senior Master Division 1
- Jesslyn Wong, Gold medal in the Mixed Senior Master Division 2
- Kenny Chen, Bronze medal in the Mixed Senior Master Division 2
- Lennard Ong, Silver medal in the Male Open Master-Senior Master Division 1
- Lim Thye Ann, Certificate of Participation in the Mixed Open Senior-Master Division 2
- Samuel Lee, Silver medal in the Mixed Open Senior-Master Division 1
- Lynn Kok, Certificate of Participation in the Mixed Senior Master Division 2
- Wang Wei Jian, Silver medal in the Mixed Senior Master Division 2

Contributor: Amelia Sim (Senior Executive, Communications & Engagement)

EveryBody Dance Now 2024

Our Fusion Dancers were invited to DA:NS by Esplanade for the second year on 21 April 2024. The programme 'EveryBody Dance Now' promotes dance with inclusivity, diversity and participation that encourages everybody to experience dance.

6 DSA Fusion Dancers performed a remix of two songs before teaching the audience the choreography highlights.



The dancers also participated in **Listen to See**, an intimate and participatory experience by Restless Dance Theatre (Australia).



We hope that DSA's performing groups will continue to have many more opportunities to share their skills and talents with the community!

Contributor: Nur Sulyanna Sumali (Executive, Communications & Engagement)

Paralympic Fiesta

Our members took part in the Paralympic Fiesta @ OTH on 4 May 2024. Organised by the Singapore National Paralympic Council (SNPC) and People's Association, the fiesta aims to engage the community to promote and strengthen the Paralympic Movement in Singapore. The key objectives of the fiesta are to:

1. Contribute to nation-building and community bonding through inclusive activities.
2. Engage the community to increase public awareness of para-sports; thereby promoting sports for all.
3. Profile some para-athletes and for them to share on their sporting journey; thereby positively influencing people's perception of Persons with disabilities.
4. Increase public awareness of SNPC; thereby growing and strengthening the Paralympic Movement.

Families who attended were treated to performances, exhibitions, carnival activities and Para sports try-outs like Para-leisure shooting, boccia and many others. We wish our national Paralympians the best in the upcoming Paralympic Games 2024!

Contributors: Amelia Sim (Senior Executive, Communications & Engagement)

SMU Project Bloom 2023/2024 Journey

Project Bloom has been a safe space for participants and volunteers to interact freely, relax and have fun with one another.

Throughout the year, our volunteers guided the participants through a series of creative and engaging arts and craft activities that stimulate the participants' motor skills, alongside educational quizzes and interactive games. Each and every activity was curated specially by our volunteers for the participants!

Through the regular interactions, we could see our volunteers and the participants grow closer and fonder of one another's presence after every session together, creating lasting bonds and memories that we hope both parties can take away from this experience.

One of the most memorable experiences I had during Project Bloom was our outing to the Bird Park. Through the sweltering heat, our volunteers and participants bonded over engaging activities and puzzles and had a fun and meaningful time spent together!

The journey was enjoyable for our volunteers and I hope that the participants had as much fun with us as we had with them.

Till' next time, Project Bloom!

Contributor: Sydney Pek Li-Wen (Project Director, SMU Project Bloom 2023/2024)



Applied Materials Bazaar

DSA was invited to be a part of the Applied Materials bazaar on 15 May 2024. The bazaar was jointly organised with the North East Community Development Council. Two learners from the Adult Development Services (ADS), Brandon Wong and Tabitha Dorai tended to DSA booth and supported with the sale of DSA merchandise, raising over \$500 during the lunch-hour bazaar raised.

Two Applied Materials employees were especially delighted to see DSA at the bazaar. One of them had a daughter who used to be a DSA member when she was in Singapore two years ago, but her daughter has since returned to India. Another was a lady, Chloe, who volunteered with DSA beneficiaries when she was a student and she recognised who was helping to man the booth. The surprise reunion is a perfect example of the significant impact volunteering has on both volunteers and beneficiaries. Applied Materials employees could also sign up as DSA volunteers at our booth.

We are grateful for the opportunity, made even more memorable with the special customers.



Brandon, Tabitha, and former volunteer, Chloe

Centre Activities (April to June 2024)

From April to June, we had 8 engagement sessions organised by school and corporate volunteers who shared their time, skills and resources with beneficiaries from the Adult Development Services and general membership. From craft-making, to singing and dancing to outing, these activities promote social interaction and communication skills of our beneficiaries.

Our greatest appreciation to the following partners:

1. SMU Project Bloom
2. Temasek Secondary School
3. Boon Lay Secondary School
4. Pasir Ris Crest Secondary School Girl Guides
5. Infineum Global & SG HR Team
6. Indian Muslim Social Service Association

Contributor: Nur Sulyanna Sumali (Executive, Communications & Engagement)



Origami with volunteers from Boon Lay Secondary School.



Learners had the time of their lives with Infineum volunteers

Celebrating Teamwork and Fun: DSA's Quarterly Staff Engagement Events

DSA staff office has been buzzing with excitement, thanks to a series of engaging and entertaining staff events organised by the different departments. From April to June 2024, CDS was in charge of organizing the monthly staff engagement activities. The high-energy gatherings strengthened team bonding and boosted staff morale.

April 2024: Imposter Karaoke Extravaganza

In April, staff members unleashed their inner pop stars during a fun "imposter karaoke" session. Participants were challenged to watch video clips of popular singers and then recreate the performances, complete with dance moves. This activity encouraged staff to step out of their comfort zones, resulting in plenty of laughter and memorable moments.



May 2024: Music and Movement Teambuilding

In May, we took our engagement to the next level with a music and movement activity. This group dance session required staff to work closely together, helping each other remember and perform specific dance sequences. The collaborative nature of this activity highlighted the importance of teamwork and mutual support, reinforcing the strong bonds among our staff.

June 2024: Bowling and Afternoon Tea

To cap off the quarter, the DSA team headed to the Civil Service Club for a friendly bowling competition. The event provided a perfect opportunity for staff to showcase their bowling skills (or lack thereof) in a relaxed, out-of-office environment. Following the lanes, colleagues enjoyed a sumptuous afternoon tea, and engaged in conversations and laughter as we recalled memories of the fun times together.



These events have brought our staff closer together, fostering a sense of camaraderie and shared experiences. These Staff Engagement events have been a fantastic way to strengthen our team dynamics and create lasting memories. We look forward to more such activities in the future as we continue to build a vibrant and cohesive work environment at DSA.

Contributor: Viemala Davie Kelaver (Manager, Children Development Services)

New Staff Welcome



Tan Yanru, Job Coach, Adult Development Services

Miss Tan Yanru, Job Coach, Adult Development Services

Prior to joining DSA, Yanru has served in different social service agencies in the children, youth, family and disability sectors. She has also worked in a special education school and adult centre for independent living for special needs. Working in the special needs sector has been a fulfilling and meaningful journey for Yanru and she is looking forward to growing and learning together with the learners in DSA!

In her free time, Yanru enjoys the nature and outdoors and likes to chill and watch shows.

Miss Sandra Loo, Manager, Support and Advocacy

Sandra joined DSA in June 2024 and will lead DSA's new Support and Advocacy Services.

Sandra's first degree was in Business Administration, and she made a career switch to social services about. She now holds a master's degree in social work and is also counselling trained. Sandra is now a registered Social Worker with the Singapore Association of Social Workers in Singapore.

In her 15 years of experience in the social service sector, Sandra held many portfolios which include providing direct services, supervision and management work.

Sandra has extensive experience in case management work for family violence, grief and youth mental health. She has led teams to implement numerous initiatives and programme over the years including Caregiver Support Group and managing an Elderly Service Centre. In her last position before DSA, she helped to set up a helpline and counselling services focusing on mental health of youths.

Some fun facts about Sandra. Sandra loves eating good food and would hop from one hawker to another just to taste different food. She doesn't cook but loves to watch cooking videos and collects cookbooks. Jamie Oliver is her favorite chef for now. Sandra's motto is "have food will travel".



Sandra Loo, Manager, Support and Advocacy Services

Experience Working in DSA

Noor Syafiqah Binte Mohammed Faizal is currently a part-time Training Assistant with DSA Adult Development Services. She was previously an intern from Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, Diploma in Art Teaching and served in DSA in 2023.



At DSA, I was able to apply my skills in conducting art classes, designing materials, and creating content to communicate with members and other stakeholders. These responsibilities have been a dynamic and fulfilling part of my role.

In our weekly art classes, our approach diverges from traditional instruction. Knowing that our learners have sensory issues or some who have hearing issues, we opt for a more visual teaching method. To accommodate varying comfort levels, I suggested a lesson involving sponges, fingers, and palm impressions to create textures on paper or canvas. This diversified approach aims to gently coax them out of their comfort zones while fostering a sensory-rich experience.

Beyond art classes, I leveraged on my design skills to create social media content for Down Syndrome Awareness Month. This responsibility has allowed me to practically apply design principles acquired in my design classes since year one. Crafting these materials not only supported a noble cause but also provided an avenue to refine my design proficiency in a real-world context.

This journey of stepping out of my comfort zone and seizing leadership opportunities has been immensely rewarding. Taking charge without waiting for instructions has been exciting, allowing me to explore a diverse range of tasks, from creating art pieces, ideation, planning, and leading sessions to one-on-one art sessions and video editing. Navigating this multifaceted role has been comparable to leading three distinct lives simultaneously: an educator specialising in special needs, an artist, and a designer. It was like a roller coaster ride as it has been an exhilarating yet demanding experience.

Reflecting on my internship and part time work with DSA, I am immensely proud of my growth. There were moments of frustration and exhaustion, when obstacles seemed overwhelming. However, persevering through these challenges for a noble cause has been immensely fulfilling. Ultimately, my journey has been one of adaptability, resilience, and continuous learning. Each challenge has been an opportunity for growth, and I remain committed to refining my skills and approaches to better support and engage with those I work with.

Contributor: Noor Syafiqah Binte Mohammed Faizal (Training Assistant and previous intern, ADS)

Upcoming Events

MYSTIQUE 2024

DSA is pleased to announce the details of Mystique, our annual charity gala dinner. Confirmed for Saturday 5 October 2024, 6pm at Marina Bay Sands Convention Centre, we are honoured to have Mr Seah Kian Peng, Speaker of the Parliament of Singapore, as our Guest-of-Honour.

In keeping with tradition, Mystique will feature performances from our members that are sure to delight and captivate! There will be pieces that are specially made by our learners for auction, in addition to exclusive lifestyle items and experiences such as Taylor Swift and Lionel Messi memorabilia!

For ticket purchase and sponsorship, kindly contact Amelia at Amelia@downsyndrome-singapore.org or call 6500 9321.



Scan the QR code to register



Purple Parade 2024



Purple Parade is Singapore's largest movement to support inclusion and celebrate the abilities of Persons with Disabilities.

Every year, DSA marches as a contingent in this event as a show of support and solidarity for the community. This year, we are pleased to confirm the date for the Purple Parade to be on Saturday 12 October 2024.

Block your calendars and register early to be part of DSA's contingent!

Register here or scan the QR code: <https://forms.office.com/r/G0ziNgNem3>

Please email iris@downsyndrome-singapore.org or call 5600 9321 for more information.



Upcoming Events

KidZania Outing

For the September school holidays, DSA has planned an outing to KidZania on **Monday 2 September 2024** for our members aged 17 and below. There are limited places available. Please register your interest at <https://forms.office.com/r/Z0sWgw6QaA> or scan the QR code and we will contact you with more details.



Activities To Look Forward To In August and September 2024!

We have various activities for beneficiaries and caregivers. Details of each event will be shared closer to date. Mark your calendars first!

August	
3 Aug 2024	FSS RSVP National Day Baking
10 Aug 2024	National Day Heartlands Celebration 2024 @ Bishan
24 Aug 2024	FSS Embroidery Vol 2
28 Aug 2024	CSG - Basic Yoga
31 Aug 2024	IMSSA Session 3
31 Aug 2024	FSS Legal talk - Will Writing Workshop
September	
2 Sep 2024	KidZania Outing
3 Sep 2024	Keppel Club— Golf Session
14 Sep 2024	FSS RSVP - Mid Autumn Festival Baking
21 Sep 2024	DSA Open House
25 Sep 2024	CSG - Basic Yoga
28 Sep 2024	IMSSA Session 4

DSA Membership

Down Syndrome Association (Singapore) provides a range of services for persons with Down syndrome, caregivers and siblings. Refer a friend for new signup or renew your membership with DSA by scanning the QR code below!



To find out more about our programmes and benefits for members, please call +65 6500 9321 or email membership@downsyndrome-singapore.org.

DSA Annual Report

Please scan the QR code or click on the image on the right to access DSA's Annual Report for Year 2023. Our audited financial statements can also be found within the AR.

Note: The AR2023 has been updated to correctly reflect Mr Ando Yeo's last day of service with DSA as 30 June 2023 instead of 30 June 2024 in the copy earlier circulated to members.



DSA seeks your continued support so we can better serve our members and do more for the Down syndrome community. With their increasing lifespan, more support will be required to ensure that our persons with Down syndrome and their families, especially those facing financial challenges receive the support required to continue living lives with dignity and purpose.

Your donation and support will allow us to provide the necessary means to meet their developmental, social and emotional needs so they can achieve their potential and 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 appreciation from the DSA Board of Management, staff and our community of persons with Down syndrome!

DONATION FORM (NEWS/2024/7)

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.: _____

By Credit Card:

One-time Monthly Contribution

Visa/Mastercard 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.

You can also make your donation online:

<http://www.downsyndrome-singapore.org/Donate-DSA>



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

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