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DAS NEWSLETTER
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DAS Seminar Week 2010

**DAS Poster Presentation at the
International Dyslexia Association
Conference 2010**

**Tertiary Education through the
DAS Academy**

**Formula 1 Garage Tour
with Sir Jackie Stewart**

**Cover Story - Dyslexic Calvin Yio
Dreams Big and Lives Big**



Helping Dyslexic People Achieve

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DAS Seminar Week In Perspective: Specific Learning Differences (SpLD)

The DAS Seminar Week, was a first in Asia where topics on various aspects of SpLD such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, Aspergers and ADHD were delivered in a series of sessions over a period of 5 days. It was held from 22 – 26 Nov 2010 at the Suntec Singapore Convention Centre. Participants had an array of choices to attend from 10 day seminars to a 1½ day plenary session. Workshops were also conducted for parents in the evenings, providing valuable parenting tips and strategies specific to dyslexia, dyspraxia, Aspergers and ADHD.

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More than four hundred educators from Singapore and the region participated in the week-long events bringing the awareness of SpLD to another level. They had the rare opportunity to hear world renowned speakers like Dr Steve Chinn, Prof Rita Jordan, Mr Neil MacKay, Mr Fintan O'Regan and Dr Gavin Reid from the UK and Canada present their thoughts and ideas.

The Opening Ceremony of the Plenary Session on 24 Nov was graced by our Guest-of-Honour, the Director-General of Education for Ministry of Education, Ms Ho Peng. We were also honoured that

Mdm Thoo May Lan, the Senior Reading Specialist of the Psychological Services Branch of MOE presented a paper on "Preparation of Reading Teachers for the Instruction of Pupils with Weak Language and Literacy Skills: The Singapore Experience."

The week-long DAS Seminar week was made possible by the Lee Foundation who contributed a handsome sum of S\$50,000 supporting this event. This generous contribution helped DAS cover a major part of our costs for the event. Other sponsors included SPH Foundation and the Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple. Books and resource vendors such as Knowledge Tree Resources, Learning Needs Centre, Sage Publications, Kyzdedu and Texthelp Systems also supported the event by taking up table space to sell their books and resources at the DAS Seminar Week. Participants had the option of browsing and discovering various books and resources available to help children with learning differences under one roof.

Besides the paid seminars and plenary sessions, DAS also organised 2 free lunch time talks by iansyst Limited for its participants. iansyst Ltd is a partner of



DAS from the United Kingdom. iansyst Ltd specialises in providing technology solutions to help people with a variety of learning differences such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, visual impairments, etc.

The DAS also organised dyslexia computerised screening tests at Suntec in the afternoons on 24 and 26 November 2011 for children. Parents brought their children in for the tests to find out what could be the reason for their bright child lacking in school. Many parents left with the satisfaction that they finally knew what their child was struggling with and what they had to do to help their child. DAS organises these dyslexia computerised screening tests regularly for primary level students.

Read all about the feedback we received on our speakers who presented during the DAS Seminar Week:

About Fintan O'Regan

"Very good and useful tips. Please invite him back"

"Excellent manner in captivating interest and attention"

About Neil Mackay

"Really enjoyed the session. It reminded me of tactics that I had forgotten. Revitalized ideas to be used in a new way and gave me fresh ideas as well. Fantastic! I feel energized."

"I have thoroughly enjoyed Neil's sessions and will leave the conference fully charged up and ready to go back and face the challenges waiting for me back at work! A very good use of my time!"

About Rita Jordan

"Wonderful anecdotal examples. Great depth, insight and experience. Useful and realistic!"

"I liked her presentation as I can feel that she spoke from her heart"

About Gavin Reid

"Slides were highly visual and not wordy. Very good in retaining information. Enjoyed it Dr Reid!"

"The speaker is well prepared and experienced. The level of this seminar is appropriate to practitioners"

About Steve Chinn

"Steve is always so prepared and his sense of humour keeps seminar interesting"

"Great practical tips and checklist"

About DAS Educational Therapist

Mr Wong Chong Lee

"Good presentation of related learning issues"

"He showed real-life case studies to give us a perspective of the different learning difficulties they faced"

About DAS Specialist Psychologists

Ms Veronica Ng and

Ms Lim Boon Hong

"Good update on the reliability of screening risk in the local context"

"Great presentation of findings and succinct, intelligent observations."



DAS conducts training for Tung Wah Teachers in Hong Kong once again

In the fourth year running, DAS continues to train teachers from the Tung Wah group in Hong Kong. DAS Educational Therapist, Ms Arabelle Chan shares her experience about the training.



Ms Arabelle Chan - front row, 2nd from left

One small step for me, one giant leap for DAS.

Well that was the spirit I took with me to Hong Kong. I wasn't asked to travel to the moon like Armstrong. I was armed with the past few years of daily teaching practice of the Orton Gillingham(OG) approach and I was being seconded to a strong training team; I was filled with confidence and fear at the same time. So there I was, arm-strong myself. So I believed...

I was so lucky that the multi-sensory and creative instincts of OG took over on the first day of meeting the all-female cohort in Hong Kong, except for one male participant whom we ended up making the monitor of the batch – the consequence of being outstanding! The poised and diligent faces that looked at me as I stood in front of the room made me nervous – which isn't often – partly because we had already displaced them into unfamiliar zones of comfort; we had separated them from their familiar colleagues and friends. It was truly like the first day of school! And oh, how I wish I had watched more Cantonese drama serials with my mother to slip in one or two smart lines to get personal with them.

The ice-breakers, review games and pod group interaction slowly reduced the tension and discomforts as the days went by. For the first week, trainers and participants alike had little sleep. Everyone had to prepare for the next day's tasks and the mantra was the same for all: to tailor it to the student. I had five participants under my supervision. In a very personal way, I must admit that at the end of the course, we all had a change of heart and we took away valuable skills, experiences and anecdotes. For one, they

now associate me with "Ooh-la-la", model pose all included in the dramatic multi-sensory effect because of the often forgotten second 'u' sound that I had drummed into them daily.

In general, one thing is certain, Hong Kong (mainstream or special) educators wear sincere smiles on their faces and from the compassion of their hearts, they truly want to provide education to all their children to the best they know how. I am so glad I was a small part of this big experience to help them on that journey.

Word of Thanks from participant from Tung Wah, Ms Betty Liu

Belle,

Thanks again for your support in the course (esp. the oral test).

In these two weeks, though it is demanding to study intensively, I enjoyed it very much. I learnt a lot and was inspired by all the supervisors especially you.

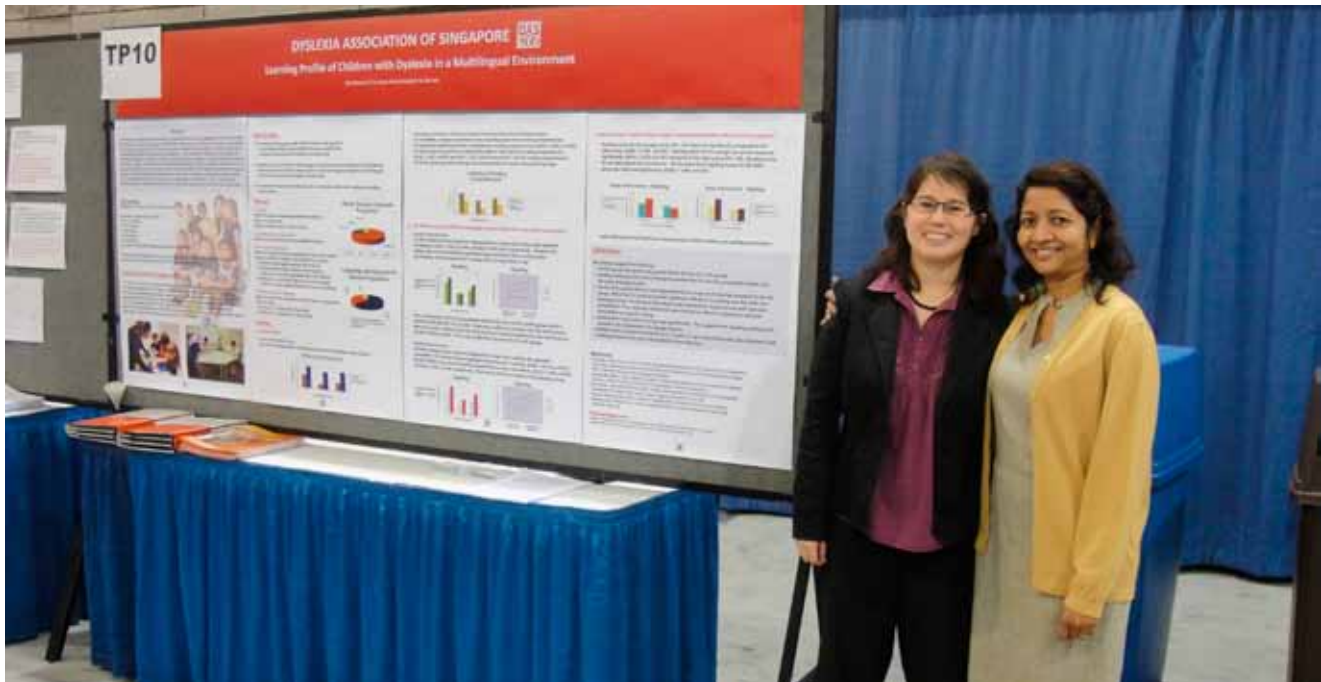
You scaffolded me so well that I was calm to show what I've learnt in the exam. You have set an excellent model to me as a teacher.

If you come to Hong Kong again, please let me know, so that I can have dinner with you and may be my family, too.

Keep in touch.

Best wishes,
Betty Liu

DAS Poster Presentation at the IDA Conference



A research conducted by DAS Specialist Psychologists, Ms Maheaswari S B, Ms Dawn Young and Ms Yau Shu Hui on *Learning Profiles of Children with Dyslexia in a Multilingual Environment* was selected to be displayed as a poster presentation at the Annual International Dyslexia Association (IDA) Conference. The Conference was held on 27 – 30 October 2010 in Phoenix, Arizona, USA. Our psychologists had also presented the results of this research at the DAS Conference 2009.

There has been growing evidence that early intervention is critical for the efficacy of specialist intervention. This is more of a challenge in multilingual communities. As children in a multilingual environment are exposed to more than one language at home and school, it is critical to examine their patterns and/or difficulties of learning a mainstream language, such as English. This would have implications for better intervention strategies in supporting a dyslexic child in a predominantly bilingual environment, like Singapore.

The research examined the following amongst children with dyslexia in Singapore:

- 1) the development of reading and spelling of those who speak English predominantly versus those who are bilingual and those whose Second Language is English.
- 2) their reading comprehension versus listening comprehension
- 3) if the age of entry into classes affects their reading and spelling progress

The results of the study showed that language fluency has an impact not only on reading and spelling abilities, but comprehension of written text as well. Results also showed that children who received early intervention improved their basic literacy skills greatly. Through this research we wish to stress once again the importance of early intervention and the role the DAS Educational Therapy plays in a child's development in reading, spelling and comprehension.

TERTIARY EDUCATION THROUGH THE DAS ACADEMY

The DAS has formed the DAS ACADEMY - a wholly-owned subsidiary of the DAS and a Council of Private Education (CPE) approved private educational institution. It will provide tertiary level programmes including the ongoing Masters in Specific Learning Differences. The prestigious Masters in Specific Learning Differences (MASpLD) course is offered jointly by the DAS Academy and the London Metropolitan University, UK. This programme has generated much interest from professionals and teachers who wish to support people with Specific Learning Differences (SpLD) in the field of Psychology and Education and is in its second year of running. The DAS Academy is housed in our ninth centre at :

DAS Academy

73 Bukit Timah Road, #05-01 Rex House, Singapore 229832

Tel: 6336 2555, Fax: 6643 9643

‘Ben Tan, Ben Can!’ - A video by DAS



A miniscule attempt by the DAS to produce a video to show what children with dyslexia go through on a day-to-day basis.



The video – ‘Ben Tan, Ben Can!’ is named after the central character, Ben Tan. The video shows various situations where Ben is misunderstood by his parents and schoolmates and faces difficulties due to his dyslexia. Ben’s parents finally seek help through DAS and Ben’s confidence starts to grow. DAS Educational Therapist, Panny Poh led the production of this video.

Panny shares her experience in the making of the video. ‘I found the making of the video ‘Ben Tan, Ben Can!’ both interesting and enjoyable. It was a co-ordination of various tasks from pre-production to post-production, script-writing, scheduling, logistics, filming and making sure the final edit was nothing less than perfect. It brought me out of the classroom and helped me to see dyslexia in a different light. The crew and actors I worked with for this project was impeccably professional and responsible. This is especially so for all DAS staff who took time out from their daily work and volunteered to be involved.’

\$100,000 RAISED AT ROTARY CLUB OF RAFFLES CITY'S FUND RAISING DINNER IN AID OF DAS



The Rotary Club of Raffles City (RCRC) held its 31st Installation Ceremony at the Grand Ballroom of the Hilton Hotel on Friday, 13 August 2010. The dinner was graced by Guest-of-Honour, Mr.S Dhanabalan, Chairman of Temasek Holdings.

The theme of the night 'Rotary in an integrated Singapore' – showcased the richness of various cultures in our multi-racial society. It was certainly a night worth remembering with song and dance performances.

Ambassador, Mr K Kesavapany, member of the RCRC and executive committee member of the DAS described the function as "the night of miracles". Indeed it was a night of miracles. The club had raised \$100,000 to be donated to the Dyslexia Association of Singapore and the Straits Times Pocket Money Fund at the dinner. And miraculously, they also received a matching contribution of \$100,000 from a donor, Mr Liem. Therefore, DAS is indeed much obliged with the kind donation of \$100,000 donated at the Charity Dinner.



Help More Dyslexic Children Achieve

Make a donation today! You can do so through a monthly Giro donation of \$5, \$10 or more. With your wholehearted support and contribution, we will be able to reach out to many more unidentified dyslexic students and provide subsidies to those from needy families.

Complete the form below and fax it to us at 6444 7900 or email us info@das.org.sg and we will send you the Giro Donation Form.

Name : _____

Address: _____ S(_____)

Tel: Home: _____ HP: _____ Email: _____

Do you have a child studying at DAS? No Yes (if you tick 'Yes', pl complete detail below)

Name of Child: _____ Centre: AMK /BDK /BJ8 /JPT /QTN /TPN /WDL/PWP

We Thank You

Formula 1 GARAGE TOUR WITH SIR JACKIE STEWART

Six DAS students won the chance to visit the F1 AT&T Williams Garage with Sir Jackie Stewart after competing in a F1 Quiz organised by DAS. The tour of the AT&T Williams Garage on 23 September was a dream come true for these six students, also big fans of the F1 Grand Prix.

The opportunity for DAS Students to meet Sir Jackie Stewart has been organised by the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) annually since 2007. By organising various types of events, RBS has given many DAS students a chance to participate in these activities together with Sir Jackie Stewart.



This time, besides enjoying the tour of the F1 Garage, our students were each given a digital camera, courtesy of RBS to snap photos of the tour for a photo montage (top right) to be shown in an exhibition.

They even got up, close with Nico Hülkenberg, F1 driver for Williams!



Our students shared with us their incredible experience at the F1 AT&T Williams Garage with Sir Jackie Stewart

This is the first time I came close to a legend like Sir Jackie Stewart. He inspires me because he didn't get help and support in Scotland but he still became a famous and successful F1 driver. I'm thankful that in Singapore there is DAS to help people like me.

Sir Jackie described all the parts of the F1 car. He also explained the purpose of the 23 buttons on the steering wheel. Each steering wheel costs about S\$70,000! I was shocked that that's just the cost of the steering wheel, not the car!

Sir Jackie also explained about the different tyres used for different weather conditions and when the driver should brake. I was shown the communication room and was amazed by the numerous controls in there. I don't think I can remember them all.

EDMUND PHUAH
(Tampines Learning Centre)

I could not believe what I was seeing. I was shown the different

tyres used and the numerous functions stored in the steering wheel! I even had the golden opportunity to see my favourite driver, Mr Felipe Massa amongst other F1 drivers.

I really have to thank the DAS for this wonderful chance to make my dream come true. It is one of the most memorable days of my life....
BUVANESWARAN S/O SELVERAJA
(Queenstown Learning Centre)

Sir Jackie Stewart is just like us-dyslexic! His teacher did not care about him and threw him at the back of the class. I felt a bit sad for him. I feel I am luckier. I get to go to DAS but there was no DAS in Scotland! I was shocked and sad for him.
HUGO WONG
(Tampines Learning Centre)

It was a once in a lifetime opportunity for me to step into an F1 garage. They showed us how an F1 car is assembled. We walked around the F1 garage and looked at all the equipments there. I also

took a photo with Nico Hülkenberg. It was an exciting trip, I would like to go there again.

THONEE
(Jurong Point Learning Centre)

I felt that going to the F1 garage was a great opportunity. It was awesome to be able to see the garage. I learnt about the different parts of the F1 car. The whole journey was very interesting and fun. I think Sir Jackie Stewart is a very kind person. At the end of the trip they said that all of us will be receiving a free camera, I was pleasantly surprised by this.

DEVIN LIN JING KAI
(Jurong Point Learning Centre)

I really enjoyed myself during the whole F1 tour including the speech by Sir Jackie Stewart which really inspired me. Being dyslexic does not mean I can't do well, I can.

JANE JOSHUA SADAYA MIEL
(Queenstown Learning Centre)



Allied Educators (AED) Graduation 2010



The Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS) and Autism Resource Centre Singapore (ARC) once again came together to celebrate the completion of training of the 4th cohort of AEDs by the respective agencies at a jointly organised Graduation Ceremony on Wed, 29 Sept 2010 at the Woodlands Library Auditorium.

Ms Sum Chee Wah, Director of Education Programmes, Ministry of Education graced the event and shared words of encouragement with the graduating AEDs, who would embark on their role as the support for students with special needs in schools. There were a total of 45 AED graduates from DAS and ARC.



Making a Difference, Empowering Lives

Ms Agnes Yuen, Allied Educator of Xishan Primary School, currently teaches literacy and behavioural coping skills to Primary 4 to 6 students with special needs. As the Valedictorian of the AED Graduation 2010, she shared her journey.

Looking back, even though it has been just less than a year ago, training at DAS has indeed been an enlightening and empowering learning journey for me, and I believe, for all who had the opportunity to attend the course.



Learning about phonics was a first for many of us, except for some who had pre-school teaching experience. I recall how the regular morning visual drills given by the lecturers made all of us sit up and got our brains ticking early in the morning! It really felt like we were back in school again. That made me reflect and realise how easy it is to take something as fundamental as learning to read for granted, as it does not come naturally to everyone. This realisation will always serve as a reminder to never assume that all students have prior knowledge and abilities when they come to us, but instead to always seek to understand their strengths and weaknesses so that we can help fill the gaps in their learning.

The professional yet friendly and helpful lecturers at DAS were really more like mentors guiding us in our learning process. The passion they had for their work came through in their efforts to make the course practical and meaningful. Not only did they make the learning atmosphere conducive, they also made sure that each module was packed with lots of useful notes and resources which we could take away for future references when we work with our students in school. Class activities at DAS were always interactive

and engaging, making learning fun for us as well. This made me realise how important it is to make learning fun and relevant to our students in school so that they too will feel motivated and engaged to learn.

Since we had barely begun our journey as Allied Educators at that time, hearing our lecturers' experiences were invaluable learning points. We are truly grateful to them for guiding us well and making our time at DAS such a fruitful and memorable one.

We all know that there is no better way to learn about our students and how best to support them and help them discover their strengths, than to work on the ground and spend time getting to know them. In doing so, we can establish a bond built on genuine care and concern. As Allied Educators, we can be proud to be playing a pivotal role in our students' learning journey, to walk with them, guide them, and share their disappointments and successes.

Life is never without obstacles, and when we do encounter them in the course of our work, we always remind ourselves that our goal is to make a difference in the lives of the children we work with and to empower them to become confident individuals.

I would like to thank, on behalf of all my classmates, all the lecturers at DAS for empowering us with the knowledge, skills and strategies needed to go forward in our careers as Allied Educators, with the common goal of developing our students' potential and empowering them with confidence to take on future challenges that lies ahead of them.



A Torch for YOG

Christa Tan from DAS Bedok Learning Centre took part in the “Million Deeds Challenge” online, sharing her deeds of Excellence, Friendship and Respect. The ‘Million Deeds Challenge’ is about doing everyday things with a great spirit. Everyone can make a difference to someone’s life or the community we live in through our deeds of Excellence, Friendship or Respect, regardless big or small. It was through this that the selection of Torchbearers for Youth Olympic Games (YOG) is done. This was how it all started for Christa, being part of the YOG history.



15 year old Christa from CHIJ Katong Convent is currently attending lessons at DAS Bedok Learning Centre. Her elder sister who is also dyslexic, attended lessons at DAS till she was Sec 3. Christa was one of the lucky 2400 Singaporeans selected as the torchbearer for a torch relay over six days, before the Youth Olympic Flame was lit at the Singapore 2010 Opening Ceremony.

The YOG Torchbearers are ambassadors of the Youth Olympic Flame, expressing the spirit of Olympism and inspiring others to connect with this ideal. A torchbearer for the Singapore Journey of the Youth Olympic Flame (JYOF) must live the Olympic values of Excellence, Friendship and Respect. Each torchbearer ran approximately 100m.

“It was definitely an exciting experience to look forward to when I was told that I was selected to be a torchbearer. At the starting point, as spectators were waving and cheering, I could feel the adrenaline rush when all the other torchbearers who had run before me were giving ‘high-fives’ to each other!” exclaims Christa with a glee.

An active sports enthusiast, the opportunity to

be part of the JYOF at the Olympic Games was something Christa never dreamt of. Christa is also an avid sailor, sailing since she was 8. She finds sailing fascinating as it challenges her in many ways. She trains in sailing at least four times a week and participates in competitions often. She is looking for opportunities to compete in large scale sailing competitions and would like to study sports science after school.

Besides sailing, Christa also finds horse racing an interesting sport. She found it amazing how the rapport between a horse and a jockey develops towards a race. This interest sparked off her taking up horse riding lessons. She moved on and also learnt horse grooming, and taking care of horse diets.

Christa draws her inspirations from those who compete in the Paralympics. Though physically challenged, Christa admires the strength and determination they display.

We wish Christa the best in her all her sports initiatives in the future.



The DAS Parent Support Group (PSG) once again organised a Parent-child team activity, this time with clay, using clay-pinching method. This is one of the fundamental modelling methods using the fingers and is very effective in training the children's motor-sensory skills.

Ms Felicia Yong, an experienced art therapist with stained glass and paper clay modelling shows the teams how to be creative with clay.



Parent and child teams turned up enthusiastically on Saturday, 18 September, waiting to try their hands on clay pinching. Ms Yong started off by explaining the various steps in clay-pinching and how you can get creative. Every team was given a picture to model and create. Within an hour or less, very creative wall murals made from paper clay were created by the various teams. The children were proud to show their individual creations which not surprisingly were all different from the picture they were handed out at the beginning. Certainly, because these children have the touch of creativity and have innovative ideas.

PSG Coffee Morning @ DAS Parkway Parade

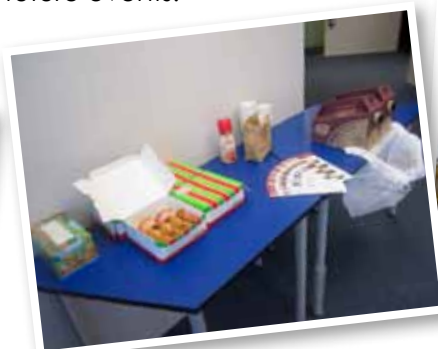
13th November 2010

The DAS Parent Support Group (PSG) held a coffee morning at the Parkway Parade Learning Centre to network and get to know more parents.



Parents were invited to join in casual discussions and enjoy some coffee and muffins. Flyers were distributed to inform them of events that the PSG committee had lined up for them in the coming year.

We look forward to seeing you at our future events!



Dyspraxia

“Clumsy Child Syndrome”

A workshop for parents by Prof Amanda Kirby

Dyspraxia is a developmental difference that affects coordination. Dyspraxia can overlap with dyslexia, Asperger’s Syndrome and ADHD.

Dyspraxia affects the way children and adults do practical tasks because of their difficulty with motor skills as well as general planning and organisation. Children with dyspraxia are commonly not identified and helped as there is very low awareness of this condition in Singapore. These children are generally seen as clumsy and careless. Unknowingly parents and teachers sometimes pressurise these children to do what they are unable to do.

DAS thus, organised a workshop on dyspraxia by leading expert Professor Amanda Kirby to provide understanding and help to parents, teachers and anyone else who comes into contact with someone who has coordination problems that could be dyspraxia.

Dyspraxia, which has also been called ‘The Clumsy Child Syndrome’, apparently affects up to 10% of a population, both children and adults and affects three times as many males as females. Prof Kirby calls it ‘The Hidden Handicap’ because in her view people with dyspraxia look

the same as others but have some significant problems, which affect many aspects of their lives.

Although motor skills are definitely the primary difficulty, they are by no means the only difficulty. People with dyspraxia also have difficulty with organising themselves and their tasks, managing their time, and mixing with others. These difficulties frequently result in people with dyspraxia having a lower self-esteem and experiencing a range of negative emotions, such as frustration, worry and fatigue.

Prof Kirby illustrated many day-to-day scenarios where children with dyspraxia have difficulties and how adults can help them. Prof Kirby who also has a son who is dyspraxic shared many situations where she helped relieve her son of the stress caused by the environment due to his dyspraxia. Simple strategies that parents and teachers can apply to help these children were also discussed.





Some common signs of dyspraxia:

- Difficulty in managing spoons or cups without spilling
- Difficulty in pulling on socks or learning other dressing skills
- Difficulty in holding pencils and copying simple shapes
- Difficulty in throwing or catching ball
- Poor balance
- Poor sense of direction
- Difficulty in hopping, skipping or riding a bike
- Sensitive to touch
- Confused about which hand to use
- Difficulty in copying from the blackboard
- Difficulty in finding their shoes, tie or other belongings
- Difficulty managing time - because of their difficulty getting themselves organised and their poor sense of time, often taking longer to do tasks than they expect to.

Feedback from Participants

"A thorough and comprehensive workshop"

"I love her enthusiasm"

"An innovative and educational workshop"

DAS Educational Therapists who attended the workshop shares their after-thoughts:

"The seminar held by Professor Amanda Kirby has given me a broader perspective on the term 'dyspraxia'. It is insightful as to what these children go through in their daily lives. It also highlights the fact that specific learning differences like dyspraxia, dyslexia, ADHD, etc do not stand alone on its own. There are common overlapping traits and symptoms. After the talk, I personally feel that I am now more informed as to what dyspraxia is, and how it can be related to other learning differences and I am also informed of the available resources." – DAS Educational Therapist, Sumathi D/O Krishna Kumar

"I had often wondered how best I could help my students who attends lessons looking unkempt, with messy bags and who did disorganised work. Prof Amanda Kirby had the answers. From her broad spectrum of strategies, I applied those that addressed these needy areas. Their magic worked. Now, these messy students 'sail' in trying to outdo one another in looking good, writing neatly and legibly on the lines and simply wanting to do everything good. A few words of praise and a smile from their teacher brought beams to their faces." – DAS Educational Therapist, Aishah Bte Abdullah



Courses & Workshops 2011

Note: School Holidays in 2010

- Saturday 13th March to Sunday 21st March
- Saturday 29th May to Sunday 27th June
- Saturday 4th September to Sunday 12th September
- Saturday 20th November to Friday 31st December

WORKSHOPS

February

Feb 26 (Run 1) Developing Your Child's Vocabulary

March

Mar 12 & 19 (Run 1)
Mar 26 (Run 1) Understanding Phonics Instructions (2 sessions)
Helping Upper Primary and Secondary Students Develop
Effective Study Skills

April

Apr 2
Apr 9 & 16 (Run 1)
Apr 30 (Run 1) Reading Fluency
Coping with Spelling (2 sessions)
Supporting Struggling Learners with Mathematics

May

May 7 & 14 (Run 1)
May 21 (Run 1)
May 28 Developing Self-Esteem in Your Child (2 sessions)
Developing Comprehension Skills
Developing Writing Skills

July

Jul 16
Jul 30 (Run 2) Unlocking the Power of Print
Helping Upper Primary and Secondary Students Develop
Effective Study Skills

August

Aug 6 (Run 2)
Aug 13 (Run 2)
Aug 20 Developing Comprehension Skills
Supporting Struggling Learners with Mathematics
Coping with Grammar

September

Sep 10 & 17 (Run 2)
Sep 24 & 1 Oct (Run 2) Developing Self-Esteem in Your Child (2 sessions)
Coping with Spelling (2 sessions)

October

Oct 8
Oct 15
Oct 15 & 22 (Run 2) Computer-Assisted Learning
How Words Work: Morphological Strategies
Understanding Phonics Instructions

DAS SPECIAL ACHIEVERS 2010

DAS Educational Therapists applaud their students who received the Special Achievers' Awards during the DAS 8th Annual Student Graduation and Special Achievement Ceremony.



JOEL LIM, 17 YEARS OLD, DAS BEDOK LEARNING CENTRE

Joel Lim is a diligent and enthusiastic learner. Joel has never failed to turn up for lessons, rain or shine. He showed unabated enthusiasm in attending DAS classes, rushing back after school field trips, no matter how late it was. In class, he is very attentive and religiously applies what he's been taught. His efforts have finally paid off.

Joel doubles our joy as he scores Grade 3 for his English in his 'N' level and an amazing B4 in his 'O' level. His desire for excellence leaves him never satisfied. He is re-taking his English this year as he strongly believes he can do better this time. Good job, Joel and continue to shine in your own unique way!" – Ms Shenmee



WONG KAIXU, ETHAN, 10 YEARS OLD, DAS PARKWAY LEARNING CENTRE

Wong Kaixu Ethan is a diligent and meticulous boy. His great inner strength makes him capable of riding out the many difficulties and obstacles he has faced.

Ethan also upholds his positivity and indomitable spirit in Taekwondo, a sport he has been actively pursuing. He is currently wearing a black-tip-red belt. He has since taken part in three Poomsae Competitions and emerged as the winner and clinched the Championship on two occasions!

Henceforth, Ethan has not only shown great optimism and tenacity against adversity in his work; he has also extended his beliefs in other areas especially in Taekwondo. He has also recently taken up a new sport, bowling! He is currently training hard to be in his school team next year. All the very best Ethan!"

– Ms Serena Abdullah



THANDAYUTHAM S/O NEELAGIRI ALIAS THANDA, 10 YEARS OLD, DAS PARKWAY LEARNING CENTRE

Thandayutham s/o Neelagiri alias Thanda was recommended for the Special Achievement award for the admirable and endearing fighting spirit he has uphold within himself, in wanting to excel despite having to go through lots of turbulences in his learning journey.

When Thanda first started at the DAS, he was a very weak student with low verbal ability. But that never stopped Thanda from striking up a conversation with anyone. His amicable and friendly characteristic makes him a very likeable person. An eager learner with positive learning attitude, Thanda's self-confidence has grown on witnessing his small successes along the way.

The mantra which Thanda uses in class is: "I will try again, Teacher."

On many occasions he will go the extra mile to revise the words taught to him. He will request to be tested on those words again the moment he arrives for the next lesson.

Thanda should be lauded for his sincerity and endearing fighting spirit which he always holds on within himself! I am very proud of you Thanda!"

– Ms Serena Abdullah

“Throughout my 8 years in DAS. I had the constant support and guidance of the dedicated teachers and staff”



DREAM BIG LIVE BIG - CALVIN YIO

DAS Graduate from year 2000, Calvin Yio is now also a graduate from Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia with a Bachelors in Games and Interactive Entertainment majoring in Games Design. Calvin shared his success story with parents attending the Learning Seminar during the Dyslexia Raise Awareness Week (DRAW) in May 2010. Currently working as an Associate Games Producer at Asiasoft Online Pte Ltd, Calvin shares more ...

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

At the age of 26, just a year out of university with one year plus working experience, I've come to realise that without the constant help and dedication of the teachers and staff at DAS in my earlier years, my life would have never been an adventure.

At the age of 8, I found myself not being able to keep up with the rest of the class. I was always relying on my twin brother to explain the lesson a second time to me.

I was then put through various tests at the Centre of Psychology, Singapore General Hospital. Back in those days, computer tests were not available and everything was done with image cards or blocks. It was then I was diagnosed to have dyslexia.

The next thing I knew, I was referred to the DAS by the psychiatrist consulted. At the young age of 8, I did not quite understand what dyslexia was and thought that DAS was another speech and drama centre my parents had signed me up for. Eventually, I came to understand the term 'dyslexia' after undergoing a few months at DAS and with some help from my mother who explained it to me.

MY SOURCE OF SUPPORT

I was having problems in practically every area - in reading, spelling and also verbal speech.

The bulk of the support I had throughout my growing years came from my mother mostly. Without this key support and undying love she showered upon me, I would not be where I am today.

I'm thankful to my school and teachers who built more awareness on dyslexia that most of the people around me grew to understand the nature of my condition. They were also constantly encouraging me as well as helping me in areas that I had difficulty understanding. Without which I think graduating from a university would have been a far away dream for me.

AT WORK

In my job, I plan new game projects, analyse game project statistics and implement effective strategies accordingly.

Though not many of my colleagues know about dyslexia, I took time to share more about it with them and they soon learnt to accept and understand me better.

I think the most challenging experience that I had encountered at work was the sending of internal and external emails to client, vendors, and partners as well as to colleagues. I feel that it is rather difficult for me to relate or relay a message to them in a way that both sides would understand one another.

A MESSAGE TO PARENTS

Please do not ever discourage your child just because they're different. Love and encourage them. Help them grow in strength with both your support and the guidance that DAS has to offer. One day they may be able to reach out to the world and share their dreams with everyone else.

TO FELLOW DYSLEXICS

Dream big and live big. Do not be afraid to take on challenges in life be it in studies, work or other areas. Without trying, you'll never know what you're capable of. And lastly never give up and put your 110% into all that you do. One day you will live your dream as I have.

Dyslexia did not affect me much as a working adult, but as a dyslexic, I feel I look at things from a different perspective as compared to others which has been an advantage in many ways.

“My mother had always been by my side helping me with my studies, explaining to others my condition as well as being the supportive pillar always encouraging me in her own special way.”



A Journey of Self-Discovery

26 year old Tan Min-Wei is a confident speaker and is forthright with his opinions. Yet, he has problems spelling even words such as 'field' and retaining short term-information.

Amidst these frustrations, Min-Wei struggled through his essays and exams to pursue his degree in Politics with the University of Nottingham, UK. As a young adult, he has learnt to accept and grapple with his dyslexia and continues to persevere.

While Min-Wei was doing his 'A' Levels in United Kingdom, his teacher noticed that the articulate young man had a lot of mistakes in his written work. There were too many spelling mistakes which contradicted with how fluently he spoke. He also needed more time than his peers during exams. This was when Min-Wei's teacher arranged for a psychological assessment and Min-Wei was diagnosed with dyslexia.

His Struggles

Min-Wei struggles to remember passages that he's finished reading. He would write out all the possible spellings of words before he recognises the correct spelling. Whenever he needs to prepare for an essay, he would write out various versions of the same essay with several different points and piece them together as one thereafter. Not only was this time-consuming but it was definitely exhausting to the brain as well.

Min-Wei's parents on the other hand, were actively researching on dyslexia after Min-Wei was diagnosed dyslexic. They joined several workshops and courses organised by the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS). It was then, when they approached the Director of Training at DAS, Mr Kevin Smith for advice on how to help their son. Kevin took a step further by contacting the Disabilities Counsellor from the University of Nottingham, advising on the possible types of difficulties they should look out for in Min-Wei in order to provide the appropriate support for him. After this, Min-Wei's struggles were recognised and accommodations provided.

Till today, Min-Wei has no idea what are the other issues he might face when he is out at work in the society but as a young adult right now, he is prepared to recognise any new struggles and resolve them the way he did during his earlier school days.

Interest in Politics

Min-Wei's parents have always tried to provide a good learning environment for him. He was encouraged to watch the news on television, which cultivated his interests in politics and current affairs. He analyses and discusses various news and happenings around the world. In fact, he finds Singapore's political situation unique and interesting.

His Inspiration

Min-Wei cites Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew as his main inspiration especially after knowing that he too, is mildly dyslexic yet achieving tremendous success. After living abroad for several years, Min-Wei appreciates what MM Lee has done for Singapore in terms of its infrastructure, living conditions, etc. It is with MM Lee's able leadership Singapore is what she is today.

Min-Wei was never diagnosed in his younger days, and thus never had any professional help with his dyslexia. Solely through his perseverance, Min-Wei defeated every issue that surfaced as he progressed through his studies. His vigour is indeed admirable.

Min-Wei was able to identify his strengths and develop on them. He also realised his weaknesses and countered them. More importantly, Min-Wei is blessed with the support of his family, friends and teachers.





TIPS FOR EDUCATORS/PARENTS

- ✓ Distribute notes to your dyslexic students before class. Give them sufficient time to highlight the notes beforehand so that they can work harder on listening to what you have to say instead of concentrating so hard on note taking.
- ✓ Compliment the child for trying something difficult no matter what the grade. Even small achievements are worth a praise.
- ✓ Avoid negative remarks such as, 'You are always so blur!', 'When will you learn?'
- ✓ Avoid ostracising a dyslexic student with statements such as, 'Why can't you do it when everyone in class can?', 'Do you want to be the last in class again?', 'Why can't you be as smart as him?'
- ✓ Emphasize to the child that their worth as a person is not related to their test scores or how well they did on a particular assignment.



- ✓ Dyslexic students find reading aloud in front of the class intimidating. Do not discourage them from it. Let the dyslexic student know two to three days beforehand if you need them to read aloud in class. This allows the child to practice at home or after school. This helps build up their confidence as they gradually cope with reading.

- ✓ Allow sufficient time; say a minute or so once you post a question to the class. This allows a dyslexic student extra time to concentrate on changing the words into pictures, then arriving at the answer, changing back to words and then articulating the answer.



- ✓ Entrust your dyslexic student with tasks that are of their interest or talents. Most dyslexic students tend to be creative hence tasking them to decorate the classrooms, design school event posters could build up their esteem level. Some dyslexics are competent in sports; hence, encouraging them to join sports events and competitions is a good boost to their confidence.

- ✓ Patience is the key to managing your dyslexic students. Do consult your Allied Educators, Learning Support Coordinators in your school for further advice if you are in doubt with managing dyslexic students

- ✓ Never give up. Your perseverance will pay off well.

DAS Students spread their joy during the festive seasons

Happy Holidays!



Ethan Lee, Irvin Tan, Joseph Lim P5 QTN



Raden Afiq Bin Raden Amran P6 BDK



Deepavali is a special day celebrated by Indians. It is also called the Festival of Light.

Deepavali is celebrated to show that good wins over evil. Indians usually eat Nasi Bryani and desserts.

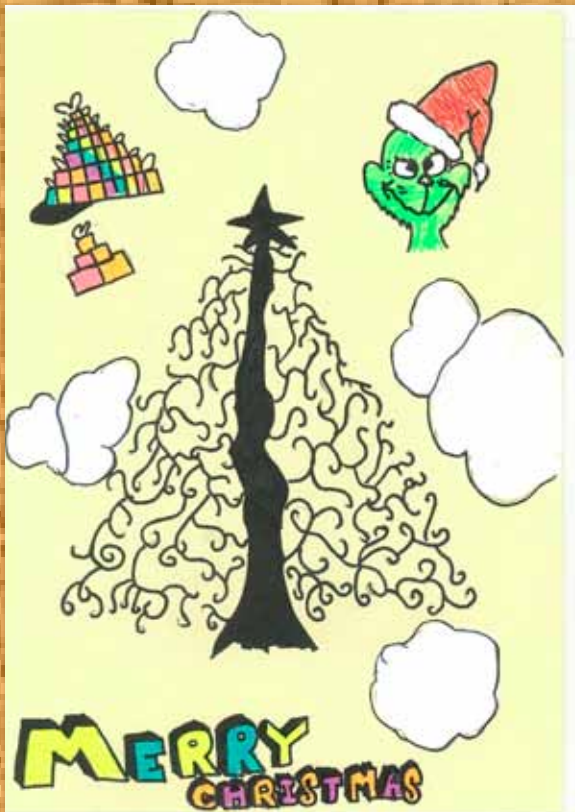
I like **Deepavali** food because it is yummy

Luke Thiam P3 PWP



Hasya Amryna Nur Adly S2 BDK

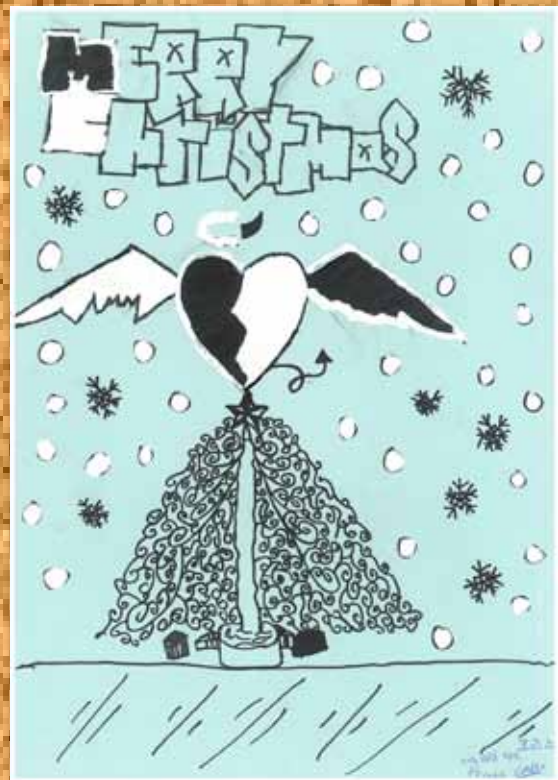
Happy Holidays!



Stepheno Tan, P5 BDK



Cecilia Tan, P5 BDK



Toh Wei Xue P6 BDK

