

FACETS

A publication of DAS
May-Aug 2011

**"We Are Created For
Greatness" says
ex-DAS Young Achiever,
Lucas Chia**

DAS DRAW 2011

**How To Be A Positive Force
In Your Child's Life Today!**

**New Zealand Teachers
Visit DAS**

**Find Out How You Too
Can Surf and Win
Attractive Prizes**



Helping Dyslexic People Achieve

DAS
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OF SINGAPORE

20th Anniversary

Issue 2, 2011 MICA (P) 119/04/2011

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DAS Dyslexia Raise Awareness Week 2011

The Dyslexia Raise Awareness Week (DRAW) was held from 28 May to 3 June 2011. The event which is in its third year running, features week-long activities that are aimed at raising awareness for dyslexia. The event was launched with an interactive seminar on 'Building Self-Esteem' at the Singapore Management University (SMU) on 28 May.

Seminar on 'Building Self-Esteem'

This was the first time DAS had organised an interactive seminar where a whole session was devoted to having open discussions on various self-esteem issues that children with specific learning differences normally face. The discussion was led by Ms Shobana Nair, an Educational Therapist with the DAS. The panel of experts who provided their input during this interactive session were, Ms Gaynor Brookes, psychologist and the Director of Specialist Services at DAS, Ms Cherry Lin, lecturer and Senior Educational Therapist at DAS and Ms Caroline Seow, a parent of a student at DAS. Participants were given equal opportunity to voice their comments and ask questions on how to protect the self-esteem of a child. The seminar also presented the three-dimensions of self-esteem, strategies on building self-esteem and examples of metaphors written by students of DAS which express the child's level of self-esteem.



Some feedback received on the Seminar

"Given me a better understanding of dyslexia and how important self-esteem is to parents and children. Thank you to Ms Shobana who made the interactive session more interesting."
- a Parent

"Good idea, appropriate scenarios from the child's perspective. Good to get a parent's view."
- a Teacher

"It is good as we get to hear from different perspectives."
- an Allied Educator

"A very nice speech/information for me to self-reflect and think about past actions, as well as how I can improve in the future."
- a Parent

Expo

A fun-filled expo was the other activity that was organised on the same day on 28 May, as part of DRAW. Held in the afternoon at SMU, there was something for everyone – games, popcorn, balloon sculpting, dyslexia awareness talk, demonstrations on assistive technology and computerised dyslexia screenings. More than 30 volunteers from IBM joined us at the expo to man the games stations, fill up the balloons with helium and also give away the balloons to the public. The special appearance by Y.E.S 93.3 DJ Cruz Teng further added to the carnival-like atmosphere of the expo.



Free Computerised Dyslexia Screening Test

During the DRAW week, free computerised dyslexia screening tests were conducted for children from Primary One to Primary Six at various locations. This test helps to identify children who have a high probability of having dyslexia. Thus, making it easier for parents to decide to send their child for a psychological assessment for dyslexia. The test was conducted at SMU, the premises of the National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC), and at DAS Learning Centres at Woodlands and Parkway Parade. Our psychologists and educational therapists were on hand at all venues to explain the test results to parents. Volunteers from IBM also helped out throughout the week at all the venues where screening tests were conducted.

Here are what some of the keen IBM volunteers had to say about their volunteering experience:

“It was a meaningful event and I feel good to be part of this volunteer work.” - Iris Ng

“Before this experience I had no knowledge of what DAS does. It was an eye-opener to learn how the centre helps children overcome their learning difficulties. It gives hope to the children and their parents too.” - Jasline San

“The experience provided a good insight for a common person to understand Dyslexia through interactions with children on the programme.” - Cheng Wee

NTU's Carnival for DAS



'Wance Upon A Time' was a charity carnival organised by the Arts From The Heart (AFTH) group of the NTU Cultural Activities Club (CAC) in support of DAS on 29 May 2011 – the 2nd day of DRAW, at the Lot 1 Shoppers' Mall Roof Garden. This carnival was part of the CAC's fundraising efforts for DAS. The event was graced by Mr Michael Palmer, MP for Punggol East SMC.

Participants at the 'Wance Upon A Time' carnival enjoyed fairytale-themed games and performances thanks to the 25-strong member committee who feel that giving back to society through performing arts is important.

Jocelyn Tan, the Chairperson of AFTH shared that the experience of planning this carnival was amazing. Additionally, she goes on to say, "I am glad my team and I had this opportunity to adopt DAS as our beneficiary and be part of this fund raising drive. More interestingly, working with DAS gave us the opportunity to learn more about dyslexia. I am grateful for the opportunity to help DAS." The AFTH team raised over S\$3000 for DAS.

About Arts From The Heart (AFTH): AFTH is a NTU CAC Special Project that aims to raise funds and create awareness for its chosen beneficiaries. The committee was formed in 2004. DAS is honoured to be their adopted beneficiary for 2011.

Sengkang Learning Centre Opens

The Dyslexia Association of Singapore is proud to announce the opening of its 9th Learning Centre at Sengkang. The new DAS Sengkang Learning Centre is conveniently located opposite CompassPoint Shopping Mall and Sengkang MRT.

Located in the void deck of Blk 257C, the DAS Sengkang Learning Centre was opened to cater to children living in the North-East zone of Singapore. The centre has already started classes for 60 children proving the accessibility of the centre. Classes are taught by our qualified and experienced Educational Therapists.



Sengkang Learning Centre
Block 257C Compassvale Road
#01-545
Singapore 543257
Telephone: 6881 2072

Introducing DAS International

The Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS) is proud to announce the introduction of DAS International Services Ltd which is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the DAS. DAS International focuses on a wider range of learning difficulties, apart from dyslexia. It also caters to children with dyspraxia, dysgraphia, ADHD, asperger's syndrome, autism, sensory issues, etc. These services are formulated with the primary focus of supporting Singaporean and expatriate students on a one-to-one basis.

Psychological assessments are conducted by qualified educational psychologists to assess children with behavioural, developmental and psychological issues. Specialist tuition is individualised and tailored to each student's learning needs. Tuition provided is based on the profile of the child obtained from specialist assessments and consultation with parents and educators. Our experienced team of Specialist Tutors, Speech and Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists are available to cater to your child's learning needs at DAS International.

DAS International Services Ltd
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Phone: 6336 2555
Email: info@dasint.org.sg
Web: www.das.org.sg/dasint

MOE Renews Training Contract With DAS

The Ministry of Education (MOE), Singapore has awarded the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS) a second five-year contract to train MOE Allied Educators (Learning and Behavioural Support), of both Primary and Secondary schools in the Diploma in Special Education (Dyslexia Studies). This contract signifies MOE's continuing efforts to ensure special needs students in mainstream schools are given the extra help they require to achieve their full potential. The DAS is proud to have been awarded the contract and hope that more students struggling in schools get timely help.

Allied Educators Graduation 2011



32 Ministry of Education (MOE) Allied Educators, Learning and Behavioural Support (AEDs), graduated with a Diploma in Special Education (Dyslexia Studies) and the certificates were handed out by the Dyslexia Association of Singapore's Chief Executive Officer Robin Moseley. The ceremony was held on 25 May 2011 at the National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre. The newly minted AEDs were the 5th batch to graduate from the Dyslexia Association of Singapore. At the end of the Diploma in Special Education (Dyslexia Studies), the participants would better understand dyslexic children and be familiar with suitable approaches to cater to their specific needs.

DAS Graduation 2011

9th DAS Student Graduation And Awards Ceremony

25th June 2011, Saturday

Guest of Honour

Mrs Lim Thian Loke

Deputy Director, Psychological Assessment & Research Branch
Deputy Director, Psychological Services Branch



It was an afternoon of excellence and well-earned achievement as a total of 88 DAS students received certificates that served as testimony of their ability to manage and overcome their struggle with dyslexia.

The DAS Graduation Ceremony was held on 25 June 2011 at the Genexis Auditorium at Fusionopolis. The event was graced by Guest of Honour, Mrs Lim Thian Loke, Deputy Director of Psychological Assessment and Research Branch, Ministry of Education. Also present were the Vice-President of DAS, Mr Eric Lee and Chief Executive Officer of DAS, Mr Robin Moseley.

A highlight of the annual event was the headlining inaugural Young Achiever Award that was presented to DAS graduates Rini Tan, Lucas Chia and Teo Heng Hao. A DAS first, this award honoured individuals who excelled and shone in various areas such as the performing arts, academia or even sports. Another group of students who also received special mention were the Special Achiever Award recipients. These students were recognised for their exceptional performance while at DAS.

Beaming from the audience were proud parents who eagerly watched and waited for the perfect snapshot moment of their child receiving their certificates from Guest of Honour Mrs Lim Thian Loke. The program also included a high octane hip-hop dance performance by youths from the Buddhist Fellowship, of which two of our DAS students were also part of. Students of Hwa Chong Institution's Project Shine group also trained some of the DAS students to sing and together did a song performance. This year's graduation concluded on a high note as our proud DAS graduates ventured forth, confident and motivated, to pursue their aims.



New Zealand Teachers Visit DAS Jurong Point Learning Centre



On 20th July 2011, DAS Jurong Point Learning Centre hosted a trio of teachers from the Awakeri School located in the Bay of Plenty of New Zealand. The visiting group comprised of Principal Peter Fitzgerald and teachers Julie West and Sara Elliot. They spent a fruitful afternoon observing a lesson conducted by Educational Therapist Panny Poh and were given an overview of the Learning Centre by Centre Manager Sujatha Nair.

The teachers were keen on observing and learning the teaching methods used by DAS to help their students. "We are interested in Singapore's education system as well as the support for dyslexia here. We chanced upon the DAS website on the Internet and found it to be comprehensive and informative" said Principal Fitzgerald.

Both Julie and Sara also work with special needs children hence their motivation to learn methods that are best suited to aid dyslexic children. The enthusiastic trio expressed their admiration with what DAS does for dyslexic children in Singapore. "We wish we had a DAS in New Zealand", said Principal Fitzgerald.

Mother's Day @ HUGGS



A special group of unsung heroes were treated to a sumptuous and well-deserved breakfast at the chic HUGGS café on 30 April 2011. Mother's Day celebration, was organised by the Dyslexia Association of Singapore's (DAS) Parent Support Group (PSG). This event by mothers for mothers, aimed to celebrate the pillars of strength whose tireless efforts and support for their dyslexic children never cease to amaze. The appreciative mothers spent the morning networking and forging stronger bonds with the PSG members. Not to mention some fathers too turned up to celebrate this moment.

A goodie bag was also presented to each of the mothers as a parting gift, thanks to our sponsors. The goodie bag was filled with a 'Simply Her' magazine from SPH, Lipton English Breakfast Tea Bags from Unilever, a one hundred dollar voucher from Mary Chia and a carnation from one of our DAS parent, Linda Choe. The group was surprised by Mdm Saadiah who delighted each of them with 2 cupcakes. It was simply an unforgettable breakfast session.

Look out for future PSG activities coming your way. If you are interested to help out at any of the PSG activities, please contact Felicia at 96544675.

Charity Champions



RBS Adopts DAS

The Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) has selected the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS) as one of four beneficiaries of its 2011 Community Investment Program. The charity champions garnered S\$2,356 over a month of fund raising at their office premises.

In collaboration, a team from DAS conducted a lunchtime awareness talk for keen RBS employees on 24 June 2011. The talk on dyslexia was held in the RBS office at One Raffles Quay.

WongPartnership Donates to DAS

The law firm, WongPartnership donated S\$150,000 to the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS) in conjunction with the inaugural 'WongPartnership Golf Invitational and Charity 2011' which was held on 10 July 2011. The event was graced by Guest of Honour Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong.

The funds will be channelled towards scholarships for students from lower-income families, with a focus on DAS preschool services. In addition, funds will also be directed towards the research of dyslexia in the Chinese language, which has seen an increasing demand in recent years.

IBM Provides Grant to DAS

Computer giant, IBM, awarded the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS) a grant of US\$5,000 to purchase a SMART Board, an essential and highly interactive tool used to engage students who are mainly suffering from Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). To commemorate the corporation's Centennial year, IBM employees worldwide aim to set a record for community service by volunteering in over 5000 projects in a 120 countries. DAS is honoured to be one of its selected beneficiaries.

Citi-YMCA Youth For Causes 2011

A group of Hwa Chong Institution youth volunteers participating in the Citi-YMCA Youth For Causes programme has chosen the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS) as the Voluntary Welfare Organisation (VWO) of their choice. This community initiative was launched by Citi Singapore and the YMCA of Singapore in 2002.

Selected VWOs like DAS stand to benefit from the youth group's sustainable social entrepreneurship ideas and business models which are the main goals of the programme. The Hwa Chong Institution group's project, 'Pun 4 Fun' aims to raise funds and awareness of dyslexia in the society through the hosting of carnivals and weekly street sales. The Citi-YMCA Youth For Causes 2011 project kick-started on 19 May 2011 and will wrap up with an awards ceremony on 19 November 2011.



IN RECOGNITION OF DAS STAFF DEDICATION

The Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS) presented the Long Service Award to five dedicated staff members who have not only witnessed the steady growth of DAS but also contributed to its journey of progression over the years. Read on as these five committed individuals share their thoughts with us.

Tey Ching Ching, Head of Logistics
Length of Service, 15 years

How does it feel to be one of DAS' longest serving staff?

I have never been in a state of 'counting my days'. Although I have contributed to DAS for 15 years, it doesn't feel as though much time has passed. Mostly, developments here seem quite new and fresh to me - DAS is still a healthy growing 'body'.

Share one little known fact/information about yourself.

Most people are surprised to know that I am a mother of three wonderful children.



Kharyati Kamsani, Jurong Point Learning Centre Office
Manager & Personal Assistant to General Management
Length of Service, 15 Years

Describe the most memorable moment in your career with DAS.

I found everything to be new and memorable after returning to work after the birth of my second child. Some of the most memorable moments are the ones that involved our supportive parents. They are always very encouraging and it is heartening to see them eagerly helping out at our events.

How has DAS transformed over the years that you have been here?

DAS has transformed from a 20-plus staff to the current 153-strong employees. Most of the senior staff roles have also evolved with the transformation of DAS.



Roslan Saad, Director of Education
Length of Service, 10 Years

What inspired you to pursue the career path of an Educational Therapist?

Teaching, to me, is about understanding the student's needs, personality, aspirations, motivations, and also their fears and insecurities. My strong sense of commitment to understanding them and meeting their needs has led me to a career with the DAS. As a trained Educational Therapist, I get great satisfaction when I am able to respond to my student's needs.

Based on your extensive teaching experience, what concerns most dyslexic children and how can they be motivated?

Dyslexic children often feel pressured to perform beyond what they are actually capable of. Unless their learning needs are understood and they are given proper help, they can be easily demoralised by the unrealistic expectations set for them by teachers and parents. Early identification of dyslexia is crucial so as to provide an appropriate form of intervention.

Sujatha Nair, DAS Jurong Point Learning Centre Manager
Length of Service, 5 Years

Describe a highlight of your time as Centre Manager at DAS.

The setting up of the DAS Jurong Point Learning centre was indeed a highlight of my time as Centre Manager (CM). Previously, I was CM of an already established Learning Centre but Jurong Point Learning Centre was a brand new set-up and I am proud to have watched it flourish from the first day.

What is your advice for the new Centre Managers who have recently joined us?

Firstly, build a relationship with your team and bring them together to make good things happen. It is important for the new CMs to observe classes, chat with your Educational Therapists and also speak with the parents. This will help you to truly understand the centre, its operations and most importantly the children and the Educational Therapists who are instrumental in shaping the centre.



Maanvili Jaganathan, Senior Specialist Psychologist
Length of Service, 5 Years

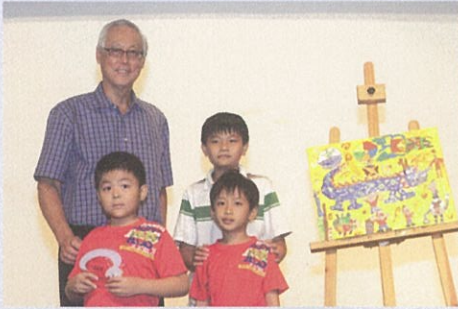
What is the most rewarding aspect of your work as a Specialist Psychologist?

It is extremely rewarding to know that I have played a part in effecting positive change in students' lives through appropriate assessment and intervention. Another rewarding aspect of my work is that I have colleagues who are supportive and inspirational role models who have professional characteristics that I strive to emulate.

What, in your opinion, is the biggest misconception of dyslexic children?

Dyslexic children are often misunderstood as being of below average intelligence. Dyslexia is simply a learning difference that can prevent students from acquiring appropriate literacy skills and achieving their full potential.

The Boy Who Dreamt Big



Clement Tho Zhi Kun from DAS Tampines Learning Centre dreamt big and his whimsical imagination won him the first prize in the individual category of the "I Have a Dream for Chingay 2012 – Kiddies Wonderland" Naïve Art Competition. In celebration of Chingay's 40th anniversary, this event was held on 11 June 2011 at the Marine Parade Community Club and was graced by Guest of Honour, Emeritus Senior Minister, Goh Chok Tong.

Jointly organised by People's Association (PA) Life Skills and Lifestyle Division, Singapore Chingay and Events Network Division and supported by Lee Foundation and Aseana Gallery, this art competition aims to ignite children's creativity and more importantly celebrate the dreams of children of all races and backgrounds.

The theme that inspired the vivid imaginations of the young participants was 'fantasy wonderland', which required them to portray air, sea and land elements in their art. Clement was also part of the winning team that clinched the second prize in the group category. The group included participants from Anglo-Chinese School (Junior). All submitted artworks will be featured at next year's Chingay in an arts and culture public exhibition.



Support The Dyslexic Child

Make a donation today! You can do so by an optional regular donation of \$5, \$10 or more through a monthly Giro donation. 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 at info@das.org.sg and we will send you the Giro Donation Form. We thank you.

Name: _____

Address: _____ S(_____)

Tel: Home: _____ HP: _____ Email: _____

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

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

'We Are Created For Greatness'



Lucas Chia was one of three DAS graduates to receive the inaugural Young Achiever's Award at this year's DAS Graduation Ceremony held at Fusionopolis on 25 June 2011. The award came as a surprise to this hardworking young man. "I am very honoured to be chosen and I am glad to be a role model for the kids who are graduating. Seeing them graduate, I was reminded of myself when I was younger and used to struggle with language difficulty", says Lucas when we spoke with him recently.

Lucas shares with us his journey in overcoming dyslexia. Read on as Lucas relates his story in the hopes of encouraging those struggling with dyslexia and also to inspire all dyslexics to live confidently and successfully.

The Discovery

It all began in Secondary 1 when I failed my English paper, only attaining 23 out of 100 marks. Before

this, I had never failed English. It was especially shocking since I come from an English-speaking home. My result seemed strange to my teachers and my Mum, so we decided to take some educational psychological tests to figure what was going on.

During the tests, I encountered many difficulties in the areas of sequential memory and spelling. This has been affecting my ability to handle English comprehension questions and cloze passages.

It was then that we realised I had dyslexia. I remember going through a long period when I struggled deeply with insecurity and self-consciousness after I discovered I was dyslexic. I no longer felt comfortable with spelling and reading aloud. I did not have the confidence to believe I could ever do well in school.

DAS Lends a Hand

I then enrolled into DAS where I met the Director of Education Services and Educational Therapist Mr Roslan Saad. He told me that there was nothing wrong with being dyslexic and thus began the process of rebuilding my confidence.

Mr Roslan patiently spent time finding strategies that worked to overcome my difficulties with English comprehension and essay writing. My three years with DAS helped me tremendously. Through Mr Roslan's dedication, guidance and support, I scored B3 for English at the GCE 'O' level examination and attained 18 points under the L1R4 subject grouping.

I then gained entry into Singapore Polytechnic where I pursued a Diploma in Architecture. I was never great academically, so, to me this was a huge miracle!

Onwards to Greater Heights and Success

This newfound confidence and success motivated me to achieve greater heights. Growing up, I always had a passion to perform. I knew there was hope for me when I discovered that many prominent Hollywood celebrities such as Tom Cruise, Orlando Bloom and Keanu Reeves are dyslexic too. Even though I can't read as well as others it did not mean I can't excel with my talents.

I began to get involved in many theater productions and I worked very hard. Over time, my hard work was rewarded. I even landed some leading roles. The next highlight of my life came towards the end of my academic journey at Singapore Polytechnic (SP). My lecturers

appointed me the School of Design and Environment's valedictorian speaker for the graduating cohort of 2008 at the SP graduation ceremony. It was a great honour to be selected out of hundreds of students.



After graduating from SP, I decided to challenge myself and hence auditioned for acting and hosting gigs. My first big break came when I was selected to host weekend programmes for Kids Central (now Okto). This led to a lead role in an Okto series titled 'The Band'.

But the biggest opportunity of my life came in 2009 when I

was selected as one of the main singers for the inaugural Youth Olympic Games Opening and Closing Ceremonies held right here in Singapore. The chance to perform at one of the biggest events in the history of Singapore was something I never imagined I'd have the chance to do. Definitely not when I was struggling with the discovery of my dyslexia at the tender age of 13.



Reflections and Gratitude

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my Mum for single handedly raising my brother and I. She has constantly showered me with love and support through all my difficult years dealing with dyslexia. I also appreciate and thank DAS and Mr Roslan for their persevering belief in me and in my ability to succeed.

Words of Encouragement

I always thought dyslexia was a disability. But it is through dyslexia that I found myself and identified my true talents and abilities. I believe all of us are created for greatness. Never let dyslexia stop you from pursuing your dreams and always have faith in yourself.

Lucas plans on furthering his studies at a university next year. Meanwhile, he will be taking a year off after National Service to work and gain some professional experience. Says Lucas, "This would motivate me and breathe new meaning into my studies when I continue next year." We wish him the very best with his future endeavours!

In Pursuit of a Masters Degree in Dyslexia

Children struggling with learning difficulties often require tailored and specialised teaching approaches that enable them to push past their limits and truly achieve their full potential. In light of this, it is crucial that teachers are equipped with the appropriate skills to facilitate the learning process of these children.

The Master of Arts in Specific Learning Differences – MA (SpLD) offered by the DAS Academy and validated by London Metropolitan University (UK) is specifically designed to equip individuals with knowledge that is relevant in meeting the needs of children with learning difficulties.

One such individual who is currently in pursuit of the MA (SpLD) is Jeannie Ko Chin Chin who is a Special Needs teacher at Chiltern House. Jeannie's decision to enrol in the programme was sparked by her desire to not only harness her foundational knowledge on learning differences but also extend her teaching to children struggling with it.

An advocate of early intervention, Jeannie stresses that, ideally, this should begin from age five. "Unfortunately, most pre-school teachers are not adequately trained to look out for children with learning differences. In addition, most pre-schools do not provide early intervention programmes for struggling learners either", expresses Jeannie.

While the journey to achieving the MA (SpLD) is a fulfilling one, it has also not been a walk in the

park for Jeannie. "It was not easy to juggle work and study especially when my assignments were due during the peak period of my work schedule, for example, when we had to prepare our school term reports", says Jeannie. Nevertheless, this committed Special Needs Teacher is determined to complete the MA (SpLD) so that children who need help can receive it.

Jeannie shares how she has benefitted from the programme. "I enjoyed the Maths module which was taught by lecturer Karen Wong. She also shared her teaching experiences and resources with the class which I feel helps me to better teach children encountering difficulties in Maths. Practical solutions to aid learners were also shared and discussed, allowing for a free exchange of information and ideas in class." Jeannie plans to apply the skills learnt to her teaching and is equally eager to share the newly acquired knowledge with her peers.



The MA SpLD programme is registered with the Council for Private Education and validated by the London Metropolitan University. The programme offers teachers, educational professionals and those seeking mid-career change a unique opportunity for continuing professional development in the field of dyslexia and other specific learning differences. This is the first specialised Masters degree in SpLD with an Asian focus. Upon successful completion of the programme, among other things, students will be equipped with the following:

- A body of knowledge and theories on SpLD
- The ability to assess learners with SpLD
- Knowledge and ability to teach a SpLD child or adult literacy and study skills

How DAS teaching approach ELA helped my Son and I

Have you ever encountered children struggling with language difficulties and wished you were equipped with the right skills-set to help them overcome their struggle and achieve their full potential?



The Essential Literacy Approach (ELA) course offered by the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS) can help you do so. The course employs the principles of the Orton-Gillingham (OG) method. The OG approach is a language-based approach which is used to teach dyslexic individuals the key

essentials of the English language. Says Ms Geetha Shantha Ram, Assistant Director and Lecturer of DAS Academy, "The ELA course is based on current teaching principles that can be applied to any teaching situation. It will enable participants to support their learners, irregardless of whether they have dyslexia or any other learning differences with literacy development. This course will benefit teachers, parents, pre-school teachers, professionals working with students, allied educators, caregivers as well as international school teachers."

Meet Azlinah Abdul Aziz, a former student of the ELA course who shares with us her experiences undertaking this programme.

Her passion for helping children with learning difficulties, combined with the discovery of her 7-year-old son's mild dyslexia in December 2010, fueled her motivation to pursue the ELA course. At present, Azlinah is a curriculum officer at Madrasah PERDAUS, an Islamic religious school.

This former early childhood educator used to teach phonics in class. Azlinah exclaims, "After attending the ELA course, I realised there was more to phonics than I initially thought. I didn't know that the 26 letters in the alphabets have a total of 44 varying sounds!" While the course comprised of intensive modules, it was also an "eye opener" for this young mother.

Besides equipping Azlinah with the right methods to help struggling learners of the English language, the ELA course also gave her an opportunity to meet fellow students who are also parents of dyslexic children. "While the intensive modules were informative, the informal sharing sessions during lessons also helped mums like myself worry less. It is reassuring to know that I am not alone", shares Azlinah.

The useful knowledge gained from the ELA course also allows me to better assist my son in his studies. The methods taught by the lecturers were useful in helping my son improve in comprehension. For example, "The kids were asked to read the questions first before attempting to read the comprehension passage. I was a happy parent when my son was able to answer three out of five questions correctly. It was indeed an achievement!" recalls Azlinah. Working in an education system provides me with the window of opportunity to share with fellow educators information on dyslexia as well as knowledge picked up during the ELA course.

I have to say that I found the six key principles of the OG approach very important and beneficial to my son and I, especially the segment on 'Emotionally Sound' and 'Diagnostic and Prescriptive' teaching. I strongly believe the strategies, methods and activities taught during the ELA course can definitely help struggling learners learn independently.

THERE IS MORE TO AN EDUCATION...



The School-Based Remediation Centres (SBRC) Programme has helped many children take the first few steps towards improving their studies. Kwok Jing Kai is one such student who has been attending the SBRC programme and he has greatly benefitted from it.

Read on as Kai's mother, Sherry, shares with us her thoughts on her son's experience with the SBRC programme.

The SBRC programme is a 2-year pilot project started by the Ministry of Education in January 2010. 98 Primary three students from 13 primary schools receive support from DAS Educational Therapists at Ahmad Ibrahim, Gan Eng Seng and Zhenghua Primary Schools. The SBRC programme mainly focuses on the learning of literacy skills such as reading and writing.

At age four, Sherry's son Kwok Jing Kai was diagnosed with slurred speech and had to undergo speech and occupational therapy at the Child Development Unit of the National University Hospital of Singapore (NUH). Kai's speech has since improved.

Sherry still felt that something was amiss with Kai. She believed that Kai's understanding abilities was below his chronological age. Despite skepticism from others, she sent him to KK Women's and Children's Hospital (KKH) where he was diagnosed with severe receptive and expressive language disorder.

This meant that Kai faced difficulties understanding what was said to him and he also had trouble using spoken

language. He needed long term speech therapy. Sherry was devastated and worried about her son's future.

Shortly after, Kai began attending the Speech and Language Therapy classes at the DAS. Over time, his mother noticed an improvement in his reading ability.

Kai was later identified for the SBRC programme by his teacher, an Allied Educator (Learning and Behavioural Support) at his school. Now, age 10, the Bukit Panjang Primary School student who attends the SBRC programme, has made improvements in his reading. Says his mother, Sherry, "Before the SBRC programme, Kai would only pretend to read by flipping the pages of books. But the classes have helped his reading skills." Bright and energetic, Kai has a positive attitude towards learning.

Sherry would like to share a little message with all parents. "There are many things that parents can do. But I feel that there is more to an education than simply achieving great results. I believe that an education should be used to create value in life. An education is about accepting one's differences and becoming a better person in the process."

"I believe in celebrating each of Kai's successes no matter how small"

"Parents should also make it a point to be there for their children every step of the way. Parents, especially those with special needs children, should keep abreast of the latest developments to help and better understand their kids."

"I feel that Kai's positive attitude is key to helping him cope in school. I think making mistakes is part of the learning process. It is important for him to enjoy going to school. I believe in celebrating each of Kai's successes no matter how small because it's his effort that truly counts."

Courses and Workshops 2011

WORKSHOPS

August

Aug 6	Developing Comprehension Skills
Aug 13	Supporting Struggling Learners with Mathematics
Aug 20	Coping with Grammar

September

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

October

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

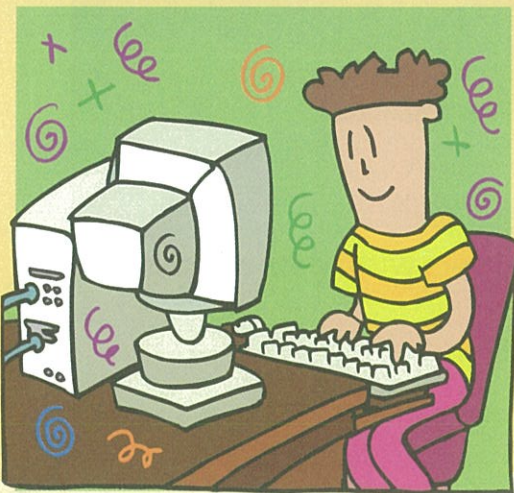
COURSES

5 Lecture	Foundation in Dyslexia Studies October 29 – November 26 (Weekly Delivery)
6 Lectures	Essential Literacy Approach November 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26 (Block Delivery)

For more details of the DAS Training Courses and Workshop, you may visit us at <http://www.das.org.sg/training-services.html> or email us at register@das.org.sg

DAS Training Division

73 Bukit Timah Road #05-01 Rex House Singapore 229832 Tel: 6336 2555 Fax: 6643 9643



Have you taken part in the Dyslexia Association of Singapore's (DAS) first ever online viral contest yet? The 'Surfing Dyslexia' contest debuted on 21 May 2011 on DAS' website and will continue till 19 September 2011. This online contest was launched with the purpose of increasing awareness of dyslexia amongst the public. To earn points to win, simply complete the monthly surveys and refer your friends as participants of this online contest.

The top referrers each month stand to win a Toshiba netbook NB520 and the runner-up wins a Mandarin Orchard hotel dining voucher. Look out for the Grand Lucky Draw which will be conducted on 19 September 2011 where one lucky participant will win a coveted Toshiba Satellite L745 laptop worth \$1259. Do surf the DAS website at www.das.org.sg for complete details of the contest. Take part today and increase your chances of winning!

Surf and Win!

WINNERS IN THE MONTH OF JUNE 2011

Top referrer – Darrell Neo wins a Toshiba netbook NB520



Runner-up – Mingyong Lee wins a Mandarin Orchard hotel voucher



WINNERS IN THE MONTH OF JULY 2011

Top referrer – Lee Woon Wei Steven JJ wins a Toshiba netbook NB520



Runner-up – Tay Zhi Kai wins a Mandarin Orchard hotel voucher



Be a Positive Force in Your Child's Life

Parenting a dyslexic child is as challenging as it is gratifying. Children struggling with dyslexia often require your utmost care and attention which is important in helping them cope with their condition. As a parent of a special needs kid, there may be days when you would feel as lost as your child; there may also be other instances when you feel the satisfaction of being able to help your child successfully.

The obstacles faced daily may not cease, however, there are ways to ease the stress on both you and your child today by simply being a positive force in your child's life. Being a positive force immediately reaffirms your child's belief in him or herself and dispels any negative thoughts he or she may harbour.

Here Are 4 Ways To Be A Positive Force Today:

Tip #1 Be Positive

Consider carefully his strengths and his weaknesses and find out all you can about the reasons for his non-achievement, and ways of alleviating it. Discuss the problem with his teacher and with him. Urgently and determinedly seek appropriate assessment of his difficulties and appropriate teaching help. Both parents need to be involved in all consultations, etc. Find the person in whom you have faith and stick with him.



Tip #2 Be Patient and Persevering

Be patient and persevering with your child - patiently teach him to do things for himself; to tie his shoe laces, to dress himself correctly, to tell the time, left from right etc. Be patient also with the progress he makes once he is receiving appropriate teaching help - no miracles will happen; it takes time, determination and hard work. Teach him independence and how to help himself.



Tip #3 Teach Your Child To Persevere

Perseverance is most often the key to lasting success. Make it clear to your child that mistakes are only a part of the learning process and it should be accepted. You can model, through good-humored acceptance of your own mistakes, that mistakes can help you find solutions.

Tip #4 Respect and Challenge Your Child's Natural Intelligence

Most children with dyslexia have average or above-average intelligence that can be challenged by parents who encourage their intellectual growth. Be honest with your child about his or her disability. Explain it in understandable and age-appropriate examples and terms while offering unconditional love and support.

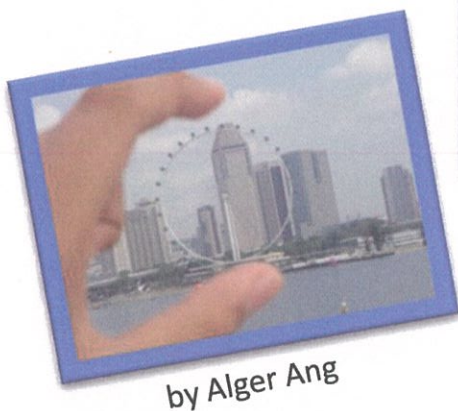
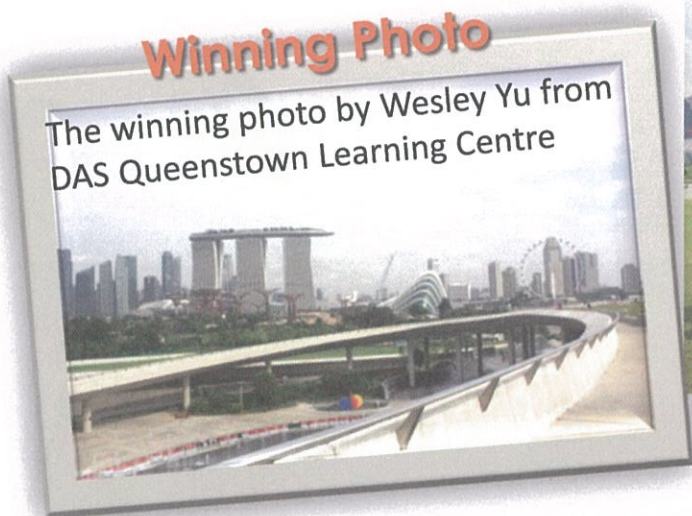
The information presented in this article has been adapted from the following web sources:

<http://www.beingdyslexic.co.uk/pages/information/parents-guardians/helping-your-child/basic-ways-to-help-in-every-day-life.php>

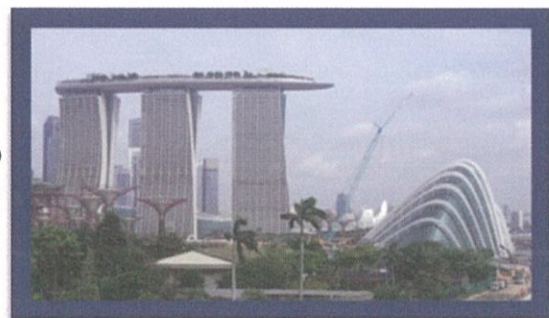
<http://children.webmd.com/tc/helping-your-child-with-dyslexia>

Photo Fun @ marina barrage

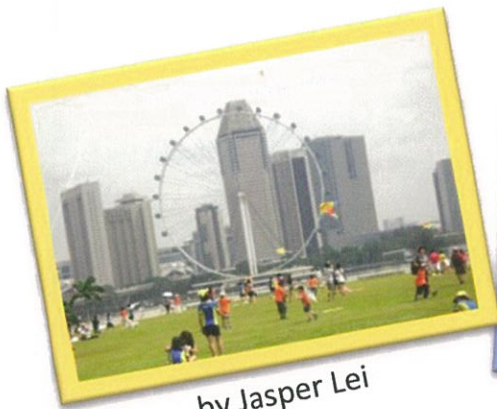
On 30 July 2011, an excited group of 15 students from the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS) were treated to a fun-filled morning of photography workshop at the iconic Marina Barrage. This event, organised by the DAS Parent Support Group (PSG), gave the young shutterbugs an opportunity to develop and hone their photography skills. Thomas Tan, an expert photographer was on hand to share some tricks of the trade as well as guide these eager photo enthusiasts as they busily captured snapshots of their scenic surroundings. Enjoy the display of photographs shot by our creative young photographers.



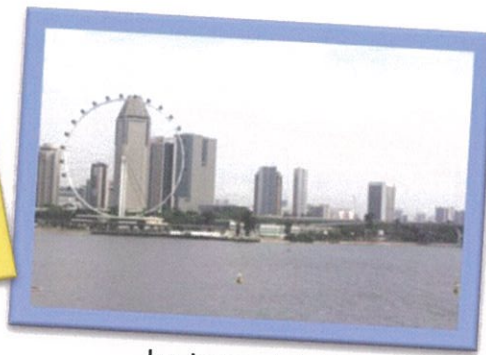
by Tabitha Cho



Student Gallery



by Jasper Lei



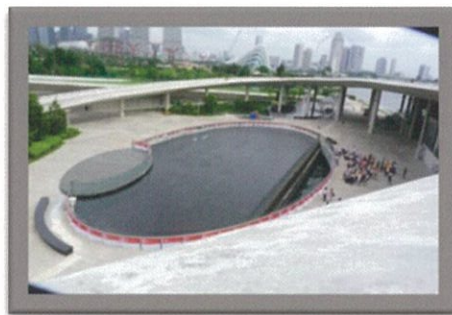
by Jeremiah Tan



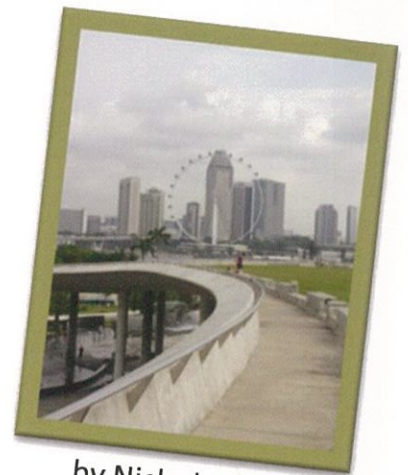
by Kevin Conceicao



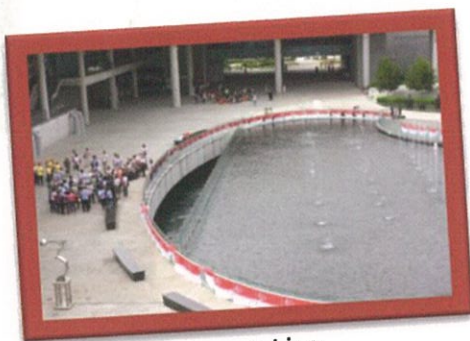
by Mohd Latif Aladin



by Mohd Rashid Le Xi



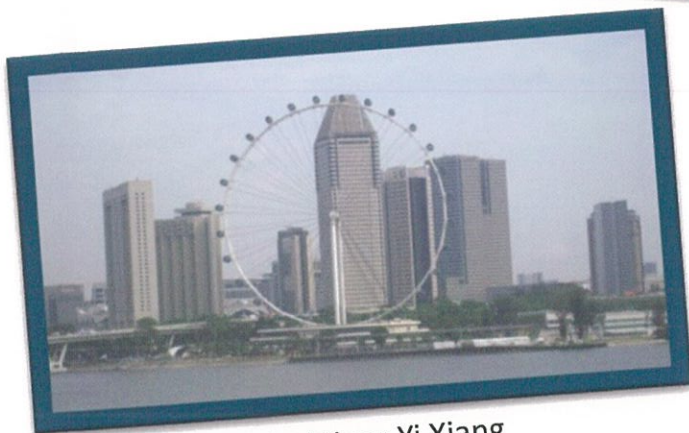
by Nicholas Ng



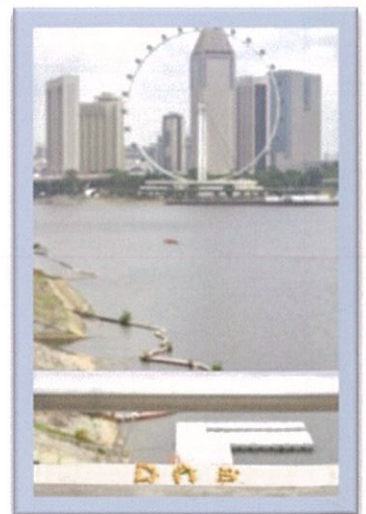
by Megan Lim



by Teresa Gomez



by Wong Yi Xiang



by Lee Zhen Yu

Help Dyslexics Achieve!



Give your support & volunteer for the Dyslexia Association of Singapore Flag Day 2011

Date: Saturday, 1 October 2011

Time: 10am to 2pm (1st Shift)

2pm to 6pm (2nd Shift)

***Collection & Returning Points:
Orchard, Parkway Parade,
Bishan Junction 8, Woodlands and Jurong Point.***

****Commendation Letters and CIP Hours will be
awarded to volunteers.***

For more info & to volunteer please visit:

<http://www.das.org.sg/flagday.html>



<http://www.facebook.com/DysSG>

Or contact: Sean Lau Tel: 65940 314 or Email: sean@das.org.sg

