

Celebrating Children's Day: Empowering Children with Knowledge



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慈光福利协会
METTA WELFARE ASSOCIATION

Caring For Our Communities
关爱我们的社群

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Celebrating Children's Day: Empowering Children with Knowledge

Every first Friday of October is a day of celebration of all children in Singapore. Observing Children's Day is not just a day for children to celebrate their youth, innocence and vitality, but a tribute to childhood. Children are the world's valuable resource and the best hope for future generations. Notably in Singapore where natural resources are limited, children aid in citizenship renewal to an ageing population as every person can play his part in contributing back to our society.



Every child deserves a chance to realise their dreams. At Metta Preschool and Metta School, we believe in nurturing and developing our children to their fullest potential through an enriching curriculum regardless of their level of ability, race or religion. Designed with their holistic development in mind, our curriculum encompasses programmes that equip these children with the skills and abilities necessary for further education. Early diagnoses of their disabilities coupled with appropriate intervention programmes, a good support and training can help them cope with the disabilities and prevent the conditions from deteriorating while maximising their development and capabilities.

Our society has a role to play in assuring that children have the opportunity to reach their potential. Children with special needs can contribute back to society with the sufficient training and support through proper guidance by parents and teachers. Improving that level of care is where Metta, together with the support of the community, can make that difference.

With Triple Gems Blessings
Venerable Shi Fa Zhao BBM
President of Metta Welfare Association



Metta Charity Run 2016 – The Run That Binds Ties

"Sunshine after the rain" is an adage that holds true for the recently ended Metta Charity Run 2016. The 7th annual sporting fundraiser saw good success amidst the initial stormy weather that looked to hamper the enthusiasm of our runners. Despite that, the determined and selfless spirits of the runners and volunteers showed through as everyone huddled close together under tentages and ensuring that no one is left out in the rain. Held on 10 September 2016 with 1,250 runners supporting the event, the charity run saw more than \$82,000 raised.

"Running helps us to stay healthy and bond. The Metta Charity Run is non-competitive that allows one to run at your own pace, and to really enjoy the run with family and friends. This embodies the spirit of harmony, peace, family bonding and friendship. I would

like to take this opportunity to thank the participants, corporates and sponsors for their support and our staff and volunteers for their hard work and passion to make this event a success."

*Ms. Felicia Wee,
Deputy Executive Director,
Metta Welfare Association*

It turned out to be showers of blessings as the delayed flag-off saw eager runners making a beeline to the start point with the cool weather ambient in working up a sweat for the runners. Adding on to this year's Run is the memorable experience of having students from Metta School and clients from Metta Home for the Disabled joining the runners, as merry beneficiaries from Metta Day Rehabilitation Centre for the Elderly cheered everyone on with brightly coloured pom poms. Gracing the event was Guest of

Honour, MP of East Coast GRC, Ms. Jessica Tan who also gave out the Tokens of Appreciation to our key contributors including Singapore Pools, Changi Simei Grassroots Organisations, Big Splash, Singapore Police Force Training Command and Vu Marcoms.

The non-competitive run consisted of 3 categories of 10km, 5km and a Parent & Child 1.5km Fun Run. The 1.5km route was packed with challenging games and activities that engaged the family. A convivial mini carnival greeted the runners after their run. In addition to the food and games, there was also a Milo truck that provided free-flow of chilled Milo to the participants and a photo booth set up to capture the moments as parents and children each took home a Pikachu or Bulbasaur balloon. Entertainment highlights by Metta School's Stomp Warriors who gave an exuberant Bahiana Funk performance, another group of Metta School students provided an exciting Wushu performance, together with many other multi-racial performing talents. The Triskelion Singapore Council, a Filipino community whose members work in various industries in Singapore, were also there to perform their versions of popular contemporary songs.



Bowling Good Times

2016 marks the 3rd bowling tournament of Metta Welfare Association since its inception. Held at Orchid Bowl at Downtown East, this bowling tournament has corporates joining in for a good camaraderie with clients and students from Metta Day Activity Centre for the Intellectually Disabled and Metta School respectively. It was an exciting challenge as corporates and professional student bowlers pit their skills against one another for the grand championship title and bag home prizes sponsored by Aerogaz, York Hotel, Citrusox, Singapore Pools, among others.

Gracing the event as our Guest-of-Honour is Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Mayor of South East District, Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman who handed out the prizes to the winners and the grand championship trophy title to Team Crowne Plaza Strikers



METTA CHARITY BOWL 2016

22 October 2016
Orchid Bowl @ Downtown East

METTA CHARITY MOVIE SCREENING 2016

Saturday, 26 November 2016, 4pm
At The Cathay Cineplex, 2 Handy Road S(229233)



The Ocean Is Calling

Sailing into local cinemas for families and children is an enchanting CG-animated adventure from Walt Disney Animation Studios of a spirited teenager, Moana, who sails out on a daring seafaring mission to save her people and uncover her own identity.

Organised by Metta Welfare Association, this epic action-packed adventure starring Dwayne Johnson as the voice of demigod, Maui and Auli'i Cravalho as female protagonist Moana is an exciting animation not to be missed.

Now you can help the less privileged simply by watching a movie at the Metta Charity Movie Screening 2016. Show your support to the community when you bring your family and join us for this event in November. Ticket sales will go towards funding of Metta's programmes and services for its beneficiaries.

HURRY! What are you waiting for? To book your tickets, please visit: <http://www.metta.org.sg/mettacharitymovie2016>

Scan the QR code below to watch the official trailer to Moana.



*Allocated seats. Limited seats available for each category.



A Mid-Autumn's Love of Sharing and Caring

26 August 2016

Staff volunteers from Deloitte & Touche LLP spent a memorable afternoon with clients from Metta Day Rehabilitation Centre for the Elderly when they came down to interact and create mid-autumn crafts with our beneficiaries.

Deloitte staff briefly picked up the art of snowskin mooncake making from Metta's kitchen chef, Ms Jessica Feng, and proceeded to teach and guide the clients with their new found skills. Over 60 beneficiaries were each accompanied by a Deloitte staff who assisted the clients in creating pretty rainbow-hued snowskin mooncakes with yam or green tea flavoured lotus seed paste and snowskin pastry. On top of the confectionery craft, Deloitte staff also assisted the clients in decorating paper lanterns with punch art paper butterfly embellishments. This CSR activity not only serves as a bonding and social interaction moment, but also acts as an occupational therapy for the elderly clients as it trains their motor skills.



What's Up Kids!

Children's Day Celebration@PreSchool Punggol

A little 'Angry Bird' and 'Pig King' dropped by at Metta PreSchool@Punggol to delight a group of our preschool children on Children's Day. Entertaining hosts from Fantasy Parties enthralled the little ones with engaging game activities using coloured balls, bright cheery play mats and a kids' tunnel challenge. The hosts put up an entertaining Angry Birds Show and handed out themed goodie bags of snacks, candies and bubble blowers to the delights of the children which made the party a memorable Children's Day for everyone. The celebration is fully sponsored by Mr. Poon Cher Hock, who personally believes in giving back to the community.



Run, So Others Can

Runninghour Cooperatives Limited

Research findings have contributed to a constructive debate in Singapore on the inclusion and education of children with special needs, according to a study commissioned by the Lien Foundation: (Ng, Jing Yng. (2016, July 4). One in three special-needs children faces insensitive treatment: Survey. TODAY Online. Retrieved from <http://www.todayonline.com>.) Although the study found many Singaporeans supporting the idea of inclusive public spaces, far fewer were willing to interact with the special needs community, indicating some disparity between Singaporeans' tolerance and actual acceptance.



Jenny, mother of 16-year old Ryan, knows better. Ryan (above in yellow) is a student with Metta School's ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) programme. Jenny had hoped that Ryan would be able to join his peers in outdoor sports activities for better social interaction, fitness and acceptance. Upon the introduction of Runninghour by a Metta School teacher, Jenny enrolled Ryan for the programme immediately.

Runninghour is an inclusive running club that promotes the integration of PWSNs (People with Special Needs) into society through running. It also provides the platform for PWSNs to interact with their peers, ordinary youth and adults to build bonds and enlarge their social networks. Unlike most mainstream running communities, Runninghour's fitness training are geared towards helping PWSNs get accustomed and cope with the high impact sports activity. Its trainers are experienced running guides who volunteer their time to run alongside a PWSN.

Founded by John See Toh, a Metta School teacher, the running club has made significant progress to the overall wellbeing of its members since its inception 7 years ago.

"Running is more than just a sport. Aside from running, our members get to be mentored by responsible adults in areas such as life skills. Through the participation of mainstream activities, they gain confidence and social skills to operate in the community setting."

John See Toh
Founder of Runninghour Cooperatives

Being a special needs educator, John and Runninghour co-founder, Jan, first initiated the idea to form an interest group catering to a small group of students who graduated from Delta Senior School. The inclusive running club was then set

up on 18th of April 2009 by John and a group of fitness enthusiasts. These enthusiasts act as buddy runners every Saturday morning to special members who are mildly intellectually challenged. Its members are mainly students, ex-students from APSN (Association for People with Special Needs), CFA (Center for Adults) as well as Metta School students and their caregivers. Runninghour has been supported by Central Singapore Community Development Council (CDC) as a Healthy Lifestyle Club (HLC).

Presently, Runninghour has 15 Metta School students and 6 caregivers among its pool of members. Running sessions inclusive of an overall fitness training are organised thrice weekly. The initiative was warmly received as caregivers of the students noted the improvements in their charges and signed up as the club's members and volunteer guides. Among the club's members and advocacy is Kelvin Tan Wei Lian (陈伟联), a visually impaired local Mandopop singer, who went on to participate in the 10km run of the Singapore Marathon.

As for Ryan, things have never been the same since he joined Runninghour. The regular sessions gave the boy a fitter appearance and better discipline in following instructions from his mentors and fellow mates. Thanks to an inclusive running club like Runninghour, the hopes for parents with special needs children to get involved in healthy outdoor sports activities is a dream turned reality

He Ain't Heavy, He's My Son

Metta School student Eddison Tan (above, left) is only 17 years old when he took part in the Runninghour. He is currently with Metta School's vocational training programme for Students with Mild Intellectual Disability and is an active member of the inclusive running club. Eddison's father, Daniel Tan (above, right), speaks about the improvements on his son's progress through the sporting initiative.

What spurred you to enrol Eddison with Runninghour?
Daniel: I found out about the club when my wife and I attended our son's Kota Tinggi pre-camp briefing session at Metta School in September 2015. We decided to join RunningHour as we believe that running can build our child's determination and confidence which in turn brings about better health and happiness as endorphins are released.

What did you like about Runninghour's programme?
Daniel: During the first running session, I was amazed and deeply touched to see so many passionate individuals come together. Eddison and I felt really good as the members are a cohesive group of like-minded enthusiasts giving strength and encouragement to their buddies along the way.

How has Runninghour made an impact on your child's life?
Daniel: Eddison has become more confident, sociable, independent and happier since he joined Runninghour. And he is always looking forward to the next running session.

What advice will you give to people who are thinking of joining Runninghour?
Daniel: Just drop by during one of the running sessions and experience it for yourself. A thousand miles start with the first step!

Please share any other thoughts that you may have about Runninghour.
Daniel: The members are cherished people of different races with a big and kind heart, voluntarily/giving their time and effort to this social cause that they all believe in. That changed my perspective towards society. I'm now convinced that we are no longer a *kiasu* society.

My Story: A Brighter Tomorrow

15-year old Amirul Syafiq Bin Mazlan is not just your average shy kid on the block. The Metta School student has mild intellectual disability (MID) and autism since birth. Life isn't easy for Amirul and his family. The low-income household situation has made the family live from hand to mouth. Amirul's father is the sole bread winner of the family of five. Amirul's mother is a housewife and both his older sisters are currently furthering their education at a university.

In a personal struggle with MID and autism, Amirul finds much difficulty in interaction with strangers. He is not able to open up comfortably as would most normal teens of his age. This would be a stumbling block for Amirul's social life and his parents are concerned that it might hinder

his capability at work in the future. Despite his reticence, Amirul is a determined and courteous boy. He puts in much effort in learning, unafraid of new tasks and is always willing to help peers who are less abled than himself.

As luck would have it, things looked up for Amirul when he joined Metta School in 2009. Among Metta School's regular training programme, Amirul is able to grasp job-related skills from personal grooming, interpersonal skills, vocational behaviour and communication skills, to generic hard skills such as packaging, assembly and sorting of packages, etc... For students like Amirul, each skill is broken into small tasks to ensure mastery and acquisition before moving on to the next challenging level. Amirul's learning experience is also enhanced

as a result of working with diverse types of materials and items in the course of his training. Among the vocational curriculum that Amirul learnt are housekeeping, laundry and various pre-vocational skills. Tasks assigned to him are simulated as close to real life for his familiarity when he goes out to work. Amirul is presently attending pre-vocational training to prepare him for possible future job attachments.

Being a student of Metta School is not the only joy for Amirul and his family. As a Metta School student, Amirul is eligible for the School's financial assistance scheme. Under the scheme, Amirul's educational needs are fully met, of which includes the provision of school uniforms, shoes and stationeries. He is also receiving full subsidy for transport allowance. In addition, Metta Welfare Association provides the family with a \$40 NTUC Voucher Grocery Assist and other staple items on a monthly basis. At Metta School, we believe a child can learn better when their basic needs are met.

With the new skills gained, Amirul's parents hope that he will be more independent and eventually be gainfully employed. Through the support from Metta School, the community, Amirul's family and his own perseverance and efforts, Amirul will be able to lead an independent and meaningful life moving forward.

To find out how you can help students like Amirul, contact us @ 6580 4612.



Beat The Heat With Homemade Healthy Fruit Popsicles

The past few weeks have been a sweltering inferno in Singapore and naturally, most of us would love to quench ourselves with cold sodas and sweetened drinks. But sweetened drinks and sodas are bad for health, causes hyperactivity in children and are known to promote tooth decay. Here's what our creative teachers at Metta PreSchool Punggol did as an alternative to quench the thirst, excite the taste buds, educate and train the motor skills of our pre-schoolers.

"Traffic Light Ice Lollies" is a colourful ice popsicle of frozen blended fruits that teaches the children to differentiate the colours for road safety. Through touch, smell and sight, the young pre-schoolers learn about the various types of fruits and the concept of coolness to the touch. The motions of peeling the fruits, scooping and cutting them up with a blunt-edged knife promotes eye-hand coordination skills at the same time.

Try this with your child the next time you need a good cooling boost!

Ingredients:

- Strawberries
- Mangoes
- Kiwis
- Honey (optional)

Tools:

- Blender
- Popsicle moulds
- Popsicle sticks
- Spoons (for scooping)

Method:

- Step 1:** Peel the skin of the kiwis and mangoes.
- Step 2:** Cut all the fruits into small pieces.
- Step 3:** Separate the fruits into different bowls according to their colours.
- Step 4:** Put the fruits into a blender and drizzle some *honey to taste. Blend the fruits in separate batches according to their sorted colours.
- Step 5:** With the assistance of an adult, blend the fruit chunks into puree.
- Step 6:** Carefully spoon the pureed fruits into popsicle moulds accordingly red, yellow and green (strawberries, mangoes and kiwis).
- Step 7:** Insert a popsicle stick or an ice-cream stick into the filled individual popsicle mould.
- Step 8:** Chill the popsicles in the freezer until frozen.

Once frozen, the yummy rainbow-coloured ice popsicles are ready to eat!

TIPS: You may omit the honey if you do not want the popsicle to be too sweet for your child.

