

OUTDOOR LEARNING COMMITTEE

The Outdoor Learning Committee, led by ECDA and the Ministry of National Development (MND) was set up in early 2018. It aims to enhance outdoor learning for preschool children by:

1. Enhancing opportunities for children to learn and play outdoors in park, preschool and residential spaces; and
2. Equipping EC educators with the skills and resources required to facilitate quality outdoor learning experiences.

The Committee comprises EC professionals, preschool operators, and government agencies, including

1. EC and education professionals from Singapore University of Social Sciences, and National Institute of Education
2. Health Promotion Board
3. Housing Development Board
4. Ministry of Education
5. National Institute of Early Childhood Development
6. National Parks Board
7. NTUC My First Skool
8. PAP Community Foundation
9. Sport Singapore

GROWING TOGETHER WITH KIDSTART

The GROWING TOGETHER with KidSTART initiative aims to deepen partnerships between the community and Government in giving children on the KidSTART programme a good start in life. This is in line with the Singapore Together movement for Singaporeans and the community to partner the Government to jointly develop policies and deliver programmes.

GROWING TOGETHER with KidSTART will provide a more systematic way for corporates and individuals who wish to foster deeper and more sustained giving relationships with KidSTART children and families. They can partner a KidSTART community through regular service volunteering and/or contributions and follow the progress of KidSTART children in the community through regular updates.

From early next year, interested corporates or individuals can approach ComChest on providing regular contributions for KidSTART children in their chosen community. These contributions would help with providing families with essential items such as milk and diapers, transport for children to attend preschool or KidSTART programmes, and children's learning resources. The contributions could also help with top-ups of KidSTART children's Child Development Accounts (CDA). These top-ups will be matched by the Government, up to the CDA matched savings caps. Community partners can also choose to volunteer regularly in the community to support the KidSTART families.

ENHANCED OUTDOOR LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Outdoor learning spaces in parks, preschools and in HDB estates

1. Where will the prototypes be located and will all HDB preschools be able to have such enhancements?

The prototypes will be developed at two preschools in Bukit Batok's West Ridges precinct and the Jurong West Street 93 precinct. The preschools are located in HDB void decks. We will monitor the effectiveness and impact of the prototypes, with the possibility of scaling up in the future. Updates on the prototypes will be provided at appropriate junctures.

2. What are nature playgardens and how do they help outdoor learning? Where can I find them?

Playgardens are set within nature and use natural materials and curated play features to engage children in child-directed spontaneous play. Such playgardens encourage creativity and decision-making amongst children as they get to choose what and how to play. Amid nature, they develop a sense of adventure and discovery, which can increase their independence. NParks has developed playgardens in HortPark, Jubilee Garden in Fort Canning Park, Lakeside Garden in Jurong Lakeside Gardens, and is developing playgardens in Sengkang Riverside Park, Pasir Ris Park, and the Gallop extension of the Singapore Botanic Gardens. In deciding where to develop biophilic playgardens, NParks will accord priority to locations that are within easy reach of preschool children.

Training and support for EC educators on outdoor learning

3. What can educators expect from the outdoor learning courses at NIEC, and when does registration open?

The courses are targeted at in-service teachers and educators who wish to (a) deepen their knowledge of outdoor learning principles and approaches, (b) gain skills to plan, design, facilitate outdoor experiences, and (c) learn to assess and manage risks in the outdoor environment. The CPD workshops will be open for registration in 2020. NIEC will provide more details at a later date.

4. Where can the online resources for outdoor learning be found?

They can be found on ECDA's corporate website at the link:

<https://www.ecda.gov.sg/Educators/Pages/Outdoor-Learning.aspx>.

GREATER SUPPORT AND DEEPER PARTNERSHIPS FOR KIDSTART

Partner a Community

1. Which KidSTART communities can interested parties partner?

The current KidSTART communities are in Kreta Ayer/Bukit Merah, Taman Jurong/Boon Lay and Geylang Serai. Starting next year, ECDA will expand KidSTART to more locations in regions where MSF is running the Community Link (ComLink) initiative to support families in rental housing, such as Kembangan-Chai Chee and Marsiling. There would be a few clusters within each community to which corporates or individuals could contribute.

2. How are the expanded clusters selected?

The clusters are selected based on the concentration of low income families in each precinct and may vary in size.

Volunteering Opportunities

3. Are volunteering opportunities only open to corporates and not individuals?

We welcome both corporate and individual volunteers.

4. What are the volunteering opportunities that are available?

Our current volunteering opportunities include providing child-minding support at KidSTART Supported Groups on a weekly basis or at our monthly Group Connect sessions. Past volunteers have also co-organised events and co-created programmes for

KidSTART families. We welcome ideas from volunteers. For more information on the available volunteering opportunities and to sign up as a volunteer, you can visit: www.Giving.sg/Community/KidSTART.

Fundraising and Donations

5. Can individuals donate to this relationship-based giving model?

Yes, individuals can provide support to children from low-income families by making contributions to ComChest.