

EMBARGOED UNTIL TUESDAY, 28 MARCH 2017, 10.00AM

Little ones show care for nature by setting up a garden right inside their schools

Preschoolers as young as five year old will get creative with nature at their first ever Mass Terrarium Workshop on **Tuesday, 28 March 2017 at 10.00am at Multi Purpose Hall Blk 663E Jurong West Street 65 Singapore (643663).**

Organised by Kidz Meadow Early Childhood and Development Centres, owned by the Association of Muslim Professionals, this event aims to instil interest among preschoolers to set up their own gardens in their schools and to care for nature.

Senior Minister of State for Home Affairs and National Development and Member of Parliament for Jurong GRC, Mr Desmond Lee will grace this event as the Guest of Honour. He will also be joining the preschoolers in making the terrariums.

The *A Garden in Every Preschool* project is in partnership with Association for Early Childhood Educators (Singapore): AECES, Preschool Market and Lifelong Learning Council, and supported by Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA) and National Parks Board (NParks). In conjunction with 'Start Small Dream Big' (SSDB) 2017, the preschool teachers from Kidz Meadow Early Childhood and Development Centres have conceptualised and developed an Educator's Guide which will be included in the Gardening Starter Kit.

The Educator's Guide is conceived from a children's book titled *The Curious Garden* that is written and illustrated by Peter Brown, a nature enthusiast. Concepts from *The Curious Garden* will be interwoven into the Educator's Guide, which will also include activities stemming from Art and Craft, Music and Drama, among others.

An accompanying Activity Book titled *Adventures in the Garden* will be used by teachers to gain ideas on integrating 'Garden Time' into their daily curriculum after setting up gardens at their preschools. Both the Educator's Guide and the Activity Book will be displayed at the Educator's Guide Booth together with a showcase of activities and craftworks related to plants and nature. 200 preschools that are participating in the SSDB 2017 will each receive a Gardening Starter Kit. The kit comprises of the book *The Curious Garden* by Peter Brown, the Educator's Guide, Activity Book, simple gardening tools and seeds.



Mdm Norliza Amin, Senior Manager for Early Childhood, Kidz Meadow, cheered on this new project, “It is time to redecorate our preschools with greenery. Our young inquisitive children are like the seedlings that are waiting to sprout out their leaves and flowers, beautifying the world they live in. The preschools will be the garden of knowledge for them.”

Dr Christine Chen, President for the Association of Early Childhood Educators (Singapore), shared, “It is evident that the guidebook was written by practitioners who have been creating gardens with their children. I believe it will be a hit with all ECE teachers in Singapore.”

Close to 200 preschoolers will gain a greater appreciation for plants and nature through making their own terrariums. NParks will be supporting the Mass Terrarium Workshop with 100 pots of *Fittonia* species which will be part of the terrariums.



We invite members of the media to join us at the Launch of the Educator’s Guide and the Mass Terrarium Workshop on Tuesday, 28 March 2017 at 10.00am at Multi Purpose Hall Blk 663E Jurong West Street 65. Please find the event programme enclosed in the Annex. Kindly contact Ms Liyah at **6346 8301 / 8121 0167** or email liyah@merculearning.com to confirm your attendance.

END

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LAUNCH OF EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

MASS TERRARIUM MAKING DAY

Tuesday 28 March 2017

Multi Purpose Hall Blk 663E Jurong West Street 65 S(643663)

Programme

9.50am	Arrival of Guest of Honour <i>Mr Desmond Lee</i> <i>Senior Minister of State</i> <i>Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of National Development</i> <i>Member of Parliament for Jurong GRC</i>
10.10am	Launch of Educator's Guide
10.25am	Tour of the Educator's Guide Booth <i>(Photo & Interview Opportunities)</i>
10.30am	GOH will join the children for the Mass Terrarium Making session 1 <i>(Photo & Interview Opportunities)</i>
10.45am	Reception for GOH
11.00am	GOH takes his leave
11.15am	Mass Terrarium Making session 2
12.15am	End

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About MERCU Learning Point

Set up in 1999, MERCU Learning Point is a private education company which is wholly owned by the Association of Muslim Professionals. It offers a comprehensive range of programmes and services for children aged 2 months to 12 years.

Its Early Childhood unit has one kindergarten and five childcare centres under Kidz Meadow brand. MERCU also runs ten primary school-based student care centres. MERCU serves close to 2,500 children monthly both in private sectors and in government schools. MERCU prides itself in establishing a collaborative environment between parents and schools as we believe they are important catalysts in the development of the children. Programmes are robustly designed with the aim to maximise children's capabilities and propelling them to greater heights. Hence, *Starting Young, Aiming High*.

About AECES

The Association for Early Childhood Educators (Singapore) - AECES is a professional body committed to promoting professional development and collaborating with the community for the well-being of children and families. For more information, please log on to www.aeces.org

About Preschool Market

Preschool Market is a social enterprise that supports early childhood practitioners, children & parents through meaningful projects and engagements. Believing that PLAY as the highest form of learning for children, Preschool Market contributes to children's development by providing play opportunities. The heart of Preschool Market is to benefit children by enhancing the quality of early childhood in Singapore. It also does so by building a community of support for early childhood practitioners & parents. For more information, please log on to www.preschoolmarket.com

About Lifelong Learning Council

The Lifelong Learning Council is a community-led council supported by the SkillsFuture Singapore. The Council aims to inspire and lead community efforts to promote lifelong learning. The Council also spearheads community partnership by integrating efforts across communities, employers, unions, education and training providers, trade associations and the Government, to make learning more pervasive. The efforts of the Council support the SkillsFuture movement.

About “Start Small Dream Big”

‘**Start Small Dream Big**’ was initiated by the Early Childhood Development Agency in 2015 to celebrate SG50 and the President’s Challenge’s 15th anniversary. Its aim is to build an early childhood community that inculcates good values in our children and encourages them to give back to society. ECDA works with participating centres to design and implement community service projects over a period of six months. In 2016, over 300 centres and 20,000 preschoolers participated in ‘**Start Small Dream Big**’. We believe that children are never too young to contribute to the community. “No one can do everything, but everyone can do something.” More information on Start Small Dream Big can be found at : <http://www.growatbeanstalk.sg>.