



Outstanding Youth in Education Award

HELPING STUDENTS PICK A CCA THEY LOVE

By Ms Chan Wen Hui

Ms Chan Wen Hui's sports journey as a student has driven her to introduce wide-ranging changes to her school's co-curricular activities as a teacher.

My CCA journey

As a child, I had dreams of becoming a beautiful dancer. When I was in Primary 6, I watched my friends dance gracefully on stage and I wished I could be among them. However, at the time, I had to focus on my studies. Extra-Curricular Activities (ECA), as they were called back then, were not compulsory. So my dream took a back seat.

In secondary school, I became interested in netball so I joined the Netball Training Squad as my Co-Curricular Activity (CCA) and I hoped to represent my school one day. No matter how hard I trained, my peers who played the sport since primary school were way too skilful and I was no match for them. Even after four years of intensive training, I could not make it into the school team.

As the saying goes, the third time is the charm. In junior college (JC), I decided to choose an activity that placed everyone on a level playing field, which gave me a better chance to represent the school in inter-school competitions. There it was! My time had come. Finally, I could be part of the school team, representing my JC in Touch Rugby. Imagine my joy!

When I reflect on my own CCA journey, I realised that my CCA experiences formed such an important part of my school life. I strongly believe that CCAs are wonderful avenues for students to explore their interests and develop their skills but how can students be guided to make more informed CCA choices?

More choices, better choices

When I became a teacher, I wanted to address this issue. I started with the slate of CCAs available in my school. Some schools offer CCAs in fields they are traditionally strong in, others offer CCAs that they think students may like. I decided to go one step further and conducted a CCA interest survey among Primary 3 students. Over the past few years, some new CCAs such as Cookery Club, Sewing Club and Board

Games Club were started as a result.

While this was a good thing, another issue emerged. With more CCAs emerging from students' suggestions, and vying for attention, how would students know enough about each one to make their choice? In 2015, I introduced CCA Day for Primary 3 students, providing a platform for CCA leaders to share personal experiences, highlights, and values they had learnt through their CCAs. Participants also got to try some simple hands-on activities in the school hall.

After CCA Day, many students were spoilt for choice and wanted to join everything that seemed fun to them. That made me realise that they might need to participate in an actual CCA session to experience what would be offered. Since 2017, I have introduced CCA sampler sessions for Primary 3 students, where they could try a session of one to two recreational CCAs of their choice. This would help them choose a CCA that truly matches their interests.



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Ms Chan passing on her love for Touch Rugby to her student

Giving back to the community

CCAs benefit students in many aspects. Besides learning new skills and values, they can also be vehicles for students to give back to the community.

I set the wheels in motion to incorporate Values-In-Action (VIA) into the school's CCA programme. In 2016, the Brownies visited the elderly at Orange Valley Nursing Home, bringing donated items from students and teachers. They also interacted and sang songs with the residents. In another CCA VIA, students from the Sewing Club made pouches containing cookies baked by those in the Cookery Club for the elderly at Radin Mas Community Club. Through these projects, students have become more aware of their community and are eager to use their talents and skills to benefit others.



Sewing Club is one of the new CCAs started by Ms Chan

When kindergarten children came to the campus to experience primary school life, some sports CCA leaders were tasked to plan and carry out games for the little ones. This involved 30 minutes of playing simple warm-up activities like “Simon Says” and relay games such as passing a ball or throwing a beanbag at a target. One of our sports CCA leaders shared, “it felt great to be able to use what I’ve learnt in Gymnastics and lead the kindergarten children in simple exercises and games”.

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