ABSTRACT
While parents nowadays can easily be equipped with parenting skills, the emotional needs of parents are commonly being neglected by the society or even by the parents themselves. The project tends to examine the correlation between parents’ emotional health and parenting efficacy. While offered leisure groups to parents, the project closely monitored the responses of participants on their self-awareness, social support and parenting efficacy. Positive results had been found and it’s convincing for the project to continue the offering of leisure programs as a holistic approach for parent supporting service.

INTRODUCTION
Findings suggest that parents’ abilities to manage and reduce behavior problems is a critical target for interventions for young children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and in order to improve child functioning and decrease parenting-related stress (Estes et al., 2013). While alike most studies and researches that looked at the parents’ parenting abilities, the project believes that the emotional well-being of parents is also crucial on efficacy parenting but can be easily neglected by the society and even by the parents themselves. Truly parents of children with special education need (SEN) and other disabilities are more likely to experience depression and distress than other parents. It is observed that parents of children with SEN tend to allocate most of their resource and strength on their children; but studies (Rizzo, Schiffrin & Liss 2012) have shown that child-oriented parents are easier to suffer from negative mental health. It’s under this idea the project provides varies of parent-centered activities such as Yoga, Dance and Quiet book DIY besides parent talks and workshops for parents to enjoy. To further enhance the efficiency of the programs, social worker who works as a facilitator would be involved in the program activities and assist the parents to replenish themselves through self-disclosure and group sharing.

OBJECTIVE
To explore the effectiveness of parent-centered leisure programs on improving parenting efficacy of parents of children with special educational needs.

METHOD
Overall, 25 parents took part in leisure group programs. Parents’ view on self-awareness, social support and parenting efficacy after participating in the programs were captured by post program open-ended questions respectively.

MAIN RESULTS
- Self-Awareness:
  Positive feedbacks and responses have been gathered from the participants. Participated parents shared that they have come to realize the importance of taking good care of themselves.

- Social Support:
  Participants have also found it meaningful for the creating of a sharing platform for parents to share with others who are having the similar experience.

- Enhance of Parenting Efficacy:
  All of the participated parents expressed that the programs have directly enhance their capability of carry out positive parenting.

IMMEDIATE RESPONSES
- “... allowed me to experience the fun and joy of crafting a Quite book and at the same time provided a way out for stress and chance for emotional adjustment.”
- “... ease our pressure through interest activities, and peers’ sharing on our children’s situation.”
- “I’ve learnt ways and gained confidence to raise my son with ASD from other parents.”
- “The support from other parents who are in the same shoes are priceless.”
- “The sharing among parents had really lightened things up. After all it’s not only learning how to make a Quite-book, but also learning how to raise my child.”

CONCLUSION
Most of the parents were not aware of the need of taking good care of themselves; Based on this study it’s proved crucial for services to include the element of assisting the emotional need of parents of children with SEN; Parents expressed that they have become more capable to cope with the challenges caused by the special needs of their children.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT
As for the project’s development, voluntary activities such as parents’ ambassadors will be organized in order for the participated parents to deepening and internalizing the experience. At the same time, CBT groups will also be offered for parents who would like to further deal with their in-depth emotional needs.

MAIN REFERENCES