



策劃及捐助 Initiated and funded by:



香港賽馬會慈善信託基金  
 The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust  
 同心 同步 同進 RIDING HIGH TOGETHER

主辦院校 Host Institution:



Faculty of  
**Social Sciences**  
 The University of Hong Kong  
 香港大學社會科學學院

合作夥伴 Partners:



香港聖公會福利協會有限公司  
 HONG KONG SHENG KUNG HUI WELFARE COUNCIL LIMITED



東華三院  
 Tung Wah Group of Hospitals



教育局  
 Education Bureau

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

JC A-Connect: Jockey Club Autism Support Network ('JC A-Connect') is a community-based project. The project supports children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in three cross-sectoral components by way of school support, family support and public education.

More than 500 mainstream primary and secondary schools have benefited from the school support programme so far. The professional trainers of our partner NGOs join hands with the educators of the schools to deliver school-based coaching programmes for students with ASD. To empower students' ability to engage with the community, the NGOs also offer transition training and various activities to build up their confidence and enhance interactions between the students and the community. In this newsletter, Caritas – Hong Kong and the New Life Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association (NLPRA) share their activities held in schools and with the business sector last summer.

Not only students with ASD, but also their parents and caregivers are of our prime concern, as they play a critical role in the development and well-being of their children. Also featured here, the family support component of JC A-Connect is adapting and localising the World Health Organization Caregivers Skills Training Programme (WHO-CST) for Families of Children with ASD or Developmental Delays for the Hong Kong community. Currently being adopted in more than 30 regions worldwide, this international model will be piloted in about 360 families to fit the needs of the community.

Promoting social inclusion and raising public awareness and understanding of ASD in the community is one of the three major pillars for this project. Echoing the latest global trend, JC A-Connect is proud to introduce and champion the first-ever ASD-friendly cinemas for sensory sensitive children in Hong Kong. The public education team also brought the general public and individuals with ASD together through various activities to promote social inclusion in the community. This newsletter showcases the above-multifaceted public education activities of JC A-Connect.



# SELF-MANAGEMENT • EASY JOB

Caritas – Hong Kong



We often hear parents saying: 'My kid is ok in the coaching group, but I am not sure if he/she could employ the skills afterwards'. To address this concern and to allow students to apply the concepts, we arranged events such as visiting the Ocean Park, film production, and joint-school cooking competitions last year. Our senior secondary students took these opportunities to improve their executive functioning skills and self-advocacy.

'Self-management • Easy Job' was a training group based on volunteer service. The group focused to train students' executive functioning skills including work planning, time management and prioritisation. Students were asked to visit the venue of the proposed volunteer service to obtain details about the site, facilities and service users. They discussed, planned and prepared an activity for the younger children there, teaching them how to make snacks. During the programme, students practised how to work on plans, to cooperate and to solve problems, thereby gaining sense of achievement and self-confidence.

In another training group, we cooperated with the business sector. The group allowed students to practise 'self-advocacy': understanding themselves, identifying and realising objectives, making choices and adjustments based on reality and available resources. Collaborated with Li & Fung Group and Morgan Stanley, a series of activities were arranged. Students visited these companies to know more about their working environments, understand their operation and the functions of different departments. The staff there shared their experiences with the students. Through these activities, students could better understand the concepts learnt in the coaching group, enhance their understanding about themselves and the available resources around them.





## STUDENTS' FEEDBACK

- We made a lot of preparations for this event. I was deeply impressed by what we had planned for younger children from the beginning. Everyone worked hard to explore activities suitable for children. To impress the children, everyone made their best effort on the day of the event. It also made me understand that it is so efficient to work together with unity.
- I was thrilled to have participated in this event because I could see children smiling during and after, which made me feel fulfilled.
- I broadened my horizons in the financial services through visiting such a large company with so many people working together. The volunteers were kind enough to teach us how to interview. I understand that there is no need to be nervous during the interview, just be myself.
- I don't know which career path I want to pursue in the future. The volunteers introduced different areas of their work. I learnt more about different types of work and had a chance to talk with the volunteers. I now have more confidence in the future. I want to develop my profession and interest.

# DEMONSTRATING TALENT IN CAMPUS

New Life Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association



**New Life**

Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association  
新生精神康復會

Adhering to the 'strengths-based' value and principle, New Life Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association organised the 'Demonstrating Talent in Campus' campaign for students with ASD. The campaign emphasised empowerment of the students with ASD. Students designed activities and invited other classmates and teachers to join, demonstrating their strengths and potential. The activities included: 'Escape from Campus', 'Label-tearing Orienteering Competition', souvenirs (bookmarks and key chains) and a mini-movie production, as well as volunteer services (flag days and community activities).



All students became experts in event management. They utilised problem-solving, communication and negotiation skills learnt in the coaching programme in preparation of the events. Their creativity, scientific knowledge, aesthetics, mathematics and logical thinking were shown to the teachers and classmates. Teachers and classmates were impressed with the students' abilities and performances. A student who had been silent in class became more confident to speak up and presentable during the presentation of game instructions to participants. Another student who had learnt to become more flexible offered hints to participants and facilitated them to pass the game.



## TEACHERS' FEEDBACK

- Students had made significant progress in expressing themselves, accepting others' opinions, negotiating with people, and involving in activities; they could remind themselves with some smart slogans. They were also more willing to listen and accept others' opinions and become more positive while dealing with conflicts.
- Students were more courageous to interact with classmates outside the group context and they initiated to extend invitation to their classmates to join the activities.
- The training content of the coaching programme was appropriate to address the needs of the students. The coach was delicate to observe the group dynamics and collaborate with the school personnel for an effective intervention plan.
- The outings and peer activities facilitated students to practice the skills they had learnt and they could apply the skills in other social contexts.



## PARENTS' FEEDBACK

- The programme helped children to be mindful of their emotions and enabled them to kick-start conversations with other students more easily. Children were more active in group discussion and were more confident to express their opinions.
- The programme provided a wide range of group activities that effectively enhanced children's confidence and cooperation with others.



## STUDENTS' FEEDBACK

- I enjoyed the group and it made my school life more fun.
- I enjoyed working with others to complete the tasks.
- I learnt to be humble, more compromising, and gentle from the group.
- I appreciated myself for negotiating with others in group discussion.

## **World Health Organization Caregiver Skills Training (WHO-CST)**

for Hong Kong Families of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder or Developmental Delays.

### Why did **WHO** initiate the **WHO-CST**?

Parents play a critical role in the optimal development and well-being of their children; this applies particularly to the caregivers of children with ASD or developmental delays. However, many of them have neither the knowledge nor the tools to face the challenging parenting tasks. Thus, children's well-being often suffers. With support from WHO, experts, parents' associations and Autism Speaks (an autism advocacy organisation in the United States), the WHO Caregiver Skills Training (WHO-CST) for families of children with ASD or developmental delays was developed, and it is currently being implemented in more than 30 regions worldwide.

### What is **WHO-CST**?

The WHO-CST has both individual and group sessions between the participated families and professionals. The WHO-CST intends to enhance children's communication and adaptive behaviours, prevent or reduce the incidence of their challenging behaviours, and promote the caregivers' well-being. The programme also aims at teaching primary caregivers how to successfully engage, and have good quality shared time, with the children under their care. The principal distinguishing characteristic of the WHO-CST is that a formal diagnosis of any childhood disorder of the children is NOT required as a prerequisite for the caregivers' entry into the programme.

## WHO-CST in Hong Kong

In the past year, the JC A-Connect Family Support Team from The University of Hong Kong has been conducting a pre-pilot run for the WHO-CST in collaboration with various government parties and NGOs. Adaptation meetings were held to seek advice from advisory professionals, and a forum was held to explore the parenting needs of the families concerned. Trainers from WHO trained 12 Master Trainers (MTs) from different organisations; a number of them have started to run group sessions for caregivers, which will be evaluated for the preparation of the pilot run in mid-2020. Meanwhile, the team has recruited and trained 40 facilitators. Once the facilitators are qualified to deliver the WHO-CST, they will administer group sessions to 360 caregivers; consequently, these caregivers can then train their children with ASD or developmental delays during their daily home and play routines.



## CAREGIVERS' Feedback

- My child and I had more communication and interaction after participating in the WHO-CST. He spoke more. Even our relatives recognised his obvious improvement in sociability within three months.
- The instructions for caregivers were simple, clear and suitable for the child's age. They helped me a lot.
- I had learnt from the WHO-CST the skills to handle my child's emotional behaviours, as well as to observe my child's interests.





## **A Glimpse of ASD-friendly Activities Worldwide**

'ASD-friendly' means being aware of social engagement and the environmental factors affecting people with ASD. Modifications must be made to communication methods and physical space to minimise sensory stimulus. This includes adherence to a standard routine and structure, creating a low arousal space, and having a positive, empathetic attitude towards people with ASD.

As the prevalence of ASD increases globally, ASD-friendly activities are becoming more common. Theatre and stage performances are adjusted for people with ASD. There are quiet areas in the theatre and reduced strobe light use and noise. If it becomes too stimulating, there are areas where audiences can perform an activity outside of the theatre. Social stories that explain the experience will be made available before the performance. These adjusted performances are also available in Hong Kong.

Movie theatres are becoming more ASD-friendly too, with brightened lighting, reduced volume and managed queues to prevent crowding. In the United States, ASD-friendly movie nights are provided monthly. JC A-Connect is championing more ASD-friendly movie screenings in Hong Kong.

To enhance outing experience, some foreign malls and theme parks allow children with ASD to visit them without queuing and having to contend with crowds. They open early to allow entry only to families with children with ASD and provide a booklet to them to explain the process. 'Quiet hours' are arranged in toy shops in the UK to offer a calmer shopping environment with the lights dimmed. There is no background music or announcements during the quiet hours. ASD-friendly signage is put in place, and quiet zones are provided. Training was given to employees to ensure that they have the necessary skills for communicating with people with ASD.

For people with ASD going on vacation, airlines or airports may allow a dry-run before the trip. Through the use of activity modifications and assistive technology, people with ASD are given the opportunity to participate in sports and/or other recreational pursuits alongside their non-disabled peers.

# EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



Virtual Easter Egg Hunt with AR technology



Draw the Future – co-creation of a mega pavement chalk painting



Photo with Dino – photo-taking with dinosaurs in animation



The Starry HKU – digital projection of coloured drawings

To celebrate the United Nations World Autism Awareness Day on April 2, JC A-Connect organised the second Family Fun Day on March 31, 2019. A deeper understanding of the needs of individuals with ASD was accomplished through our innovative activities utilising IT technology. In attendance were over 1,000 family members and friends of children with ASD, together with members of the general public.

Two ASD-friendly movie days were held on April 21 and 28, 2019 for more than 500 children with ASD, in addition to their families and friends. Currently in Hong Kong, it is difficult for them to go to movies in cinemas. A less stimulative cinema was created to avoid sensory overload of the children. The unique space included a peace corner, lower lighting effects and volume levels. Participants were allowed to make noise and have body movements during the movie. Our goal is to have similar ASD-friendly activities held more frequently in Hong Kong, enabling a better understanding of ASD and promotion of social inclusion in the community.

## Participants' Feedback



- This event allowed children with ASD to explore the world apart from their daily life.
- The virtual 'Easter Egg Hunt' was innovative, while 'Photo with Dino' was interesting. The staff were very friendly.



- The theatre was brighter. We could watch the movie comfortably. We would be afraid if the environment was too dark.
- The volume was moderate for this time. I did not have to cover my ears.
- When children were overloaded with sound, parents could take them to the peace corner.

### Theme 1: Emotion Regulation (Primary and Secondary sessions)

#### 主題一：情緒理解及調控（小學及中學）

December 5 and 7, 2018



*When providing coaching groups, I learnt how to narrow down the content to teach and understood how to intervene in students' emotional problems.*

在提供情緒訓練小組時，我學會了如何收窄教學內容及了解如何介入學生的情緒問題。

Attending teacher 出席教師

### Theme 2: Communication Skills (Primary and Secondary sessions)

#### 主題二：溝通及交談技巧（小學及中學）

February 22 and March 1, 2019

*The role-play session helped me to learn more about the challenges faced by students with ASD.*

角色扮演環節幫助我更了解自閉特色學生面對的困難。

Attending teacher 出席教師



### Theme 3: Communication Skills (Primary and Secondary sessions)

#### 主題三：社交思維（小學及中學）

April 9 and 11, 2019



*Discussion with fellow workers let me absorb their experience and ideas and reflect if there is room for improvement in my current practice.*

與同工討論能吸收別人的經驗和想法，思考和檢討自己現時的做法有否再進步的空間。

Attending teacher 出席教師

### Theme 4: Communication Skills (Primary and Secondary sessions)

#### 主題四：當 SENCO 遇上 ASD

June 28, 2019



*I learnt to analyse students' difficulties from a questionnaire in order to set the goal of a coaching group.*

我學懂從問卷分析學生的困難，從而訂定小組目標。

Attending teacher 出席教師

### Professional Training Seminar 2019

#### 睿智研討會 2019

April 27, 2019

*A clear understanding of the resource package's classification and considerations gives me a more comprehensive reference for setting the objectives of a coaching group or an activity.*

清晰了解資源冊的分類及注意事項，令我在訂製小組及活動目標時有更全面的參考資料。

Attending teacher 出席教師



## Forum on Parenting Needs for Family of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Developmental Disorders or Delays in Hong Kong

世界衛生組織推介的實證分享暨論壇：  
自閉症譜系障礙、發展障礙／遲緩兒童的育兒需要

January 26, 2019



*The demand for service is tremendous; the training suggested is very worthy.*  
服務需求巨大；建議的培訓非常有價值。

Participant 參與者

## Movie Sharing: Comic + Film in Spain: Intimate Accounts of Autism and Alzheimer's — Maria and I

電影座談會

March 27, 2019



## Co-creation of Art Piece in Kam Tin Mural Village

錦田壁畫村——共融壁畫創作

Spring – Summer 2020

Participants will include JC A-Connect students and families, students and elderly nearby and the local inhabitants.

參加者將包括「賽馬會喜伴同行計劃」的學生和家庭、鄰近的學生、長者及居民。

## Drawing Competition 「喜伴同行樂容融」繪畫比賽

December 2019 – April 2020

To promote social inclusion and demonstrate talents, students with ASD are invited to showcase their creativity through drawing. They are welcome to participate in group or individually.

為了推廣關愛文化，並展現才能，歡迎自閉特色學童以小組或個人形式參加繪畫比賽，一展創意。