

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

KidSTART Stories to help parents build children's language foundation through storytelling

KidSTART Singapore, SP Group and Etonhouse Community Fund support 1,800 families with resources



(From left to right) KidSTART parents Mdm Jayavalli Shanmugam, Mdm Junaida Binte Jasuni and Mdm Jasleasha Ong at the official launch of the KidSTART Stories initiative with their children. Photo credit: KidSTART Singapore

Singapore, 15 October 2022 – Under the Growing Together with KidSTART partnership, KidSTART Singapore, SP Group and EtonHouse Community Fund (ECF) have launched **KidSTART Stories** to equip more than 1,800 families with resources to support parents in the early childhood development of their children through storytelling and reading. This is another initiative in KidSTART Singapore's ongoing #AGoodStart initiative to create awareness on the importance of child development in the early years.

KidSTART families will be gifted with a mini-library comprising a bookshelf and a set of specially selected age-appropriate books sponsored by SP Group and ECF. The mini-library will facilitate families to create a conducive space at home for children to explore books and enjoy reading sessions with parents. Parents will have access to a series of videos produced by KidSTART



Singapore to guide them on techniques for storytelling and conversational reading to infants and young children and how they can inject fun and learning in the activities through pictures, songs and dance.

Mdm Jasleasha Ong, mother of a 2-year-old, shared that through the encouragement of her KidSTART practitioner and the resources provided by KidSTART Stories, she now enjoys reading with her child and looks forward to discovering more about her child's learning abilities through their reading sessions. "Before attending KidSTART, I thought my daughter was not interested in books. I tried reading to her, but she would flip through the pages quickly. I was surprised she was so engaged when the KidSTART facilitator read books during the KidSTART Group sessions. I learnt that it was about choosing age-appropriate books and I am grateful for the set of books and the bookshelf given as part of KidSTART Stories where we now have our very own family reading corner. My daughter is now always so excited when it is reading time, and even comes up to me to request for me to join her at the reading corner. She is very imaginative and it's such a joy to see her pretend to be part of the story."

Another KidSTART mother, Madam Junaida, also shared that the KidSTART Stories resources have been useful in helping her son learn about shapes and colours. "I didn't read many books when I was young, and I was really happy to receive the mini library from KidSTART. The video guides were also very useful as I learnt different ways of telling the stories to my son. We now spend more time reading together as a family, which has been rewarding as he really enjoys looking at the colourful animals in his favourite book. I look forward to exploring more books with him."

Madam Rahayu Buang, Chief Executive Officer, KidSTART Singapore said, "We want the newly launched KidSTART Stories initiative to give families the confidence to engage their young children in reading adventures that will spark their language abilities and at the same time cultivate a lifelong love for reading. We are grateful to our 'Growing Together with KidSTART' partners SP Group and EtonHouse Community Fund for their generosity in providing the books and bookshelves, as well as the volunteer manpower to distribute the reading materials to KidSTART families. We look forward to more collaborations with corporate and community partners to further sustain and expand the KidSTART Stories, so that more children can have a good start in life."

Group CEO of SP Group Mr Stanley Huang said, "SP Group has been working closely with KidSTART to provide children access to suitable educational resources in their early years and establish a strong foundation in their learning. As part of our \$1.1 million donation to KidSTART this year, we are pleased to go further, in creating a conducive home environment to cultivate good reading habits, hone healthy curiosity and foster strong family bonds. These will empower them with skills for enriching and holistic growth in their formative years."

Mrs Ng Gim Choo, Founder of EtonHouse Community Fund, says, "Reading should be a joyful experience, and books should be perceived as toys. When children love to read, they excel academically. Reading enhances concentration and cognitive development, it strengthens language and creative thinking skills, and opens the world to children. Reading offers adults a precious opportunity to bond with children. It is also a sustainable way to bridge the gap between lower and higher-income children. ECF is delighted to support this project with KidSTART and play its part in impacting the community."



KidSTART Stories was launched today at Keat Hong Community Club, with **Ms Sun Xueling**, Minister of State, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Social and Family Development in attendance as a Guest of Honour. Approximately 320 KidSTART and eligible parents and their children enjoyed an interactive storytelling session by the Minister, along with stage performances that brought storytelling to life and post-show arts and crafts and play activities.

Moving forward, KidSTART is looking to collaborate with various partners to create more video reading guides and sponsorship of new books in the pipeline. Recently, KidSTART had also launched an interactive play KidSTART Sea Adventures, adapted from a storybook written by KidSTART's early childhood specialist. The KidSTART Sea Adventures play will be restaged across different neighbourhoods around Singapore to reach out to more families.

The event images can be found [here](#), and for more information, please visit the KidSTART website [here](#).

About KidSTART

KidSTART Singapore is a dedicated agency that provides upstream support to eligible pregnant mothers and children up to 6 years old. As a national programme, KidSTART empowers low-income families to build strong foundations for their children and foster positive child development outcomes by supporting caregivers with guidance on child development and monitoring the developmental progress of children from birth onwards.

Click [here](#) for more information on KidSTART.

About SP Group

SP Group is a leading utilities group in the Asia Pacific, empowering the future of energy with low-carbon, smart energy solutions for its customers. It owns and operates electricity and gas transmission and distribution businesses in Singapore and Australia, and sustainable energy solutions in Singapore, China, Vietnam and Thailand.

As Singapore's national grid operator, about 1.6 million industrial, commercial and residential customers benefit from its world-class transmission, distribution and market support services. These networks are amongst the most reliable and cost-effective world-wide.

Beyond traditional utilities services, SP Group provides a suite of renewable and sustainable energy solutions including solar energy solutions, microgrids, cooling and heating systems for business districts and residential townships, electric vehicle fast charging and green digital energy management tools for customers in Singapore and the region.

For more information, please visit spgroup.com.sg or follow us on Facebook at fb.com/SPGroupSG, on LinkedIn at spgrp.sg/linkedin and on Twitter @SPGroupSG.

About EtonHouse Community Fund

The EtonHouse Community Fund (ECF) is an independent charity launched by EtonHouse International Education Group in 2015 based on the organisation's strong belief in the importance of education and that every child regardless of his or her background should have access to good



quality education. Today, it is an IPC charity and a member of the National Council of Social Service (NCSS).

The ECF has over the years championed causes that have benefitted children and youth from low-income families and received the MSF Cares Award in 2019 for many of its initiatives.

ECF is also a partner of KidSTART and has helped to set up playgroup sites around Singapore, providing families with access to learning resources, learning kits, and excursions.

This year, in support of the Year of Celebrating SG Families, ECF has launched Treasure Quest - a series of 10 challenges outdoors to reconnect families with the beautiful green spaces in their neighbourhood.