



Cause Kit

The Buddy by Jason Lee

What do you need to know?

The Ministry of Education (MOE) describes autism spectrum disorder as a group of developmental disabilities which affect a person's ability to communicate and interact with others. Children with ASD have difficulties in three key areas – difficulties in communication, difficulties in social interaction, and impairments in interests, activities and other behaviours.¹

According to data from KK Women's and Children's Hospital (KKH) and National University Hospital (NUH), from 2010 to 2014, there was a 76% increase in the number of children diagnosed with developmental delays, learning difficulties and autism spectrum disorders (ASD) in Singapore.²

As a result, more efforts, such as extra remedial lessons, have been made to provide support for children with mild learning disabilities, such as ASD, at the pre-school level preparing them for mainstream schools.

Why should you care?

Despite efforts to support students with ASD in mainstream schools, only 30% of Singaporeans agree that Singapore is an inclusive society when it comes to children with special needs due to a lack of understanding and awareness.³

The challenges faced by children with ASD extend to the parental stress associated with raising a child with ASD as well. In 2015, a study by the Institute of Mental Health examining the psychological well-being and coping strategies of parents of children with ASD in Singapore, found that parents of children with ASD reported significantly more parenting stress and depression symptoms than parents of typically developing children.⁴

Where is help available?

Autism Association (Singapore) provides a range of services for people with autism in Singapore to maximise their potential, helping them lead meaningful, quality lives in

¹ MOE ['How Do I Know My Child Has Special Needs'](#)

² Straits Times ['Changing public perception of invisible disabilities'](#)

³ Lien Foundation ['Inclusive Attitudes Survey Part 1'](#)

⁴ IMH ['Coping and Well-Being in Parents of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders \(ASD\)'](#)

society. Services provided include educational support, early intervention, advocacy and employment training support.

Inclusion Therapy, a nonprofit, provides quality and affordable services for children with ASD by providing additional support in their everyday learning. They provide mainstream shadow support, where a learning support consultant shadows a child with SEN in a mainstream classroom environment and support teachers and peers in engaging with the student. The shadow support program is free for low-income families.

How can you help?

Be a donor

Donate to the Eden Care Fund under Autism Association which supports low-income students with ASD, covering their programme fees, food, transport, uniform and learning expenses.

Find them on giving.sg.

Be a volunteer

Volunteer with the Autism Association's Eden Activity Club and support various activity programmes such as art & crafts, and monthly outings.

Find them on giving.sg.

Be an advocate

Help to change perceptions of persons with ASD and spread awareness about the lack of social inclusion. Host a screening of 'The Buddy', and use it to begin a conversation about how persons with ASD are viewed in society.

Access the screening kit on www.15shorts.com/learn