

Summary

This interview features one of our Award Winners, Eunice Tay, who has been awarded the ECDA Outstanding Early Childhood Teacher Award in 2018. Tay is currently a Deputy Centre Lead at My First Skool PCC 07. In this interview, Tay shares how she navigates working with children and their parents, as well as implementing NTUC First Campus (NFC)'s relationship-based curriculum (RBC).

Tay first identifies three aspects that would allow her to meet the needs of an infant or a toddler. She emphasises the observation of a child is based on his or her "relationship with their educarers, their interactions with their peers, and the home-school partnership between parents and educarers." Tay believes that these relationships extensively support the development of children in various aspects, such as inculcating "strong language skills, creativity, empathy, communication and confidence."

As an early childhood educator, Tay finds that being reflective is important as it allows "[educators] to be more aware of [their] own teaching practice, the children's needs, their temperament, preferences and interests." Through reflection, educators form an informal, yet critical feedback loop based on the children's responses to their lessons. The necessary modifications and improvements to lesson plans can then be made to further suit the children's needs.

Tay also discusses RBC and how she implements it in her teaching. The RBC focuses on the child's well-being, learning outcomes, sense of autonomy and independence through developing strong relationships between the child, the educator, and the child's family. Tay shares some of her RBC practices in the classroom, which include encouraging the children to choose their own activities, and engaging them in basic routines such as handwashing, putting on and taking off their shoes, and learning to remove their own mattress covers. Patience is also of utmost importance as Tay emphasises that the children are not rushed when carrying out their activities.

Parents' involvement is part of RBC as educators take the time to update parents on their child's well-being. Tay occasionally shares strategies with parents. She encourages them to implement the suggested strategies at home as strategies are most effective when carried out consistently. Strong communication between the educator and parents is also crucial in supporting the child's development. With RBC philosophy in mind, Tay not only communicates with parents in the centre but also shares photos of the

child's progress in the centre through email. Hence, Tay builds stronger relationships with the families that she works with.

NFC also conducts termly curriculum trainings which have enabled Tay to "better understand and implement the curriculum". She highlighted that these trainings, as well as curriculum meetings, offer educators the opportunity to share good teaching practices with one another. Tay's Centre Leader and Deputy Centre Lead have also supported her journey by guiding and mentoring her through coaching sessions. Such experiences ultimately helped Tay gain new insights and strengthen her professionalism as an educator.

To find out more, you may email [us](#).