



STEM is for Everyone: Science Centre Singapore Kickstarts Long-Term Ambition Towards Total Inclusiveness and Accessibility this World Autism Awareness Day

31 March 2021 – It is estimated that one out of 150 children today is diagnosed with autism, while close to 400 new local cases are diagnosed annually in Singapore. As an institution that inspires and fosters learning, Science Centre Singapore believes that creating a holistic and inclusive environment can offer a wealth of informal learning opportunities for young guests, including those who have autism spectrum disorders (ASD).

This World Autism Awareness Day, Science Centre Singapore is making a commitment and kicking off its long-term ambition to foster total inclusivity with a series of curated experiences aimed at raising awareness and providing support for guests with diverse needs.

“Science is for everyone. Likewise, as a leading institution for public STEM education in Singapore, Science Centre Singapore strives to create equal opportunities for all learners to safely and comfortably immerse themselves in the wonders of STEM learning. Through steady infrastructural and programmatic changes suitable for learners with special needs, we’re committed to leading the change for institutions of public education and places of visit to come together and create more inclusive learning environments in Singapore, where all learners can thrive,” Associate Professor Lim Tit Meng, Chief Executive of Science Centre Board said.

The Centre’s focus on supporting young learners with autism on World Autism Awareness Day marks early, yet significant steps in the right direction of being a truly inclusive STEM institution. In tandem with the rollout of these activities are a host of long-term, integrated initiatives aimed at providing structural changes for true inclusiveness to unfold, including:

- **The formation of the Inclusion Amoeba Team**, a dedicated group of staff tasked to build an inclusive and accessible learning environment within the Centre.
- **Specialised training for in-house science educators and curators**, in understanding learners with special needs, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Universal Design for spaces, to ensure future programmes and exhibitions are organised by professionals who can effectively engage all learners.
- **Partnerships with Special Education schools in Singapore**, to develop online and physical learning resources for learners with special needs.
- **Rethinking exhibition spaces** to ensure that programmes and events are open-ended, hands-on and sensory-rich to support a variety of different learning styles.

In commemoration of World Autism Awareness Day, the Centre has developed and launched access guides on its official [website](#), allowing guests to identify sensory-friendly exhibits and facilitate visit planning. To better prepare children with autism prior to their visit, social stories will be available for download on the Centre’s [website](#) as well. From 2 April onwards, guests will also be able to loan sensory bags during their visit to Science Centre Singapore. The sensory bags include earmuffs to block out noise, fidget toys to occupy hands and visual schedules, a graphic representation that provides visual support for children. These efforts have been carried out in consultation with Lily Yip, Head of Pre-School and Curriculum, Research and Innovation Development at the Association for Persons with Special Needs (APSN).



To initiate learning in early years, KidsSTOP™, Science Centre Singapore's dedicated Children's Science Centre, has been offering programmes for learners with special needs. Under the *CURIOUS Explorer* programme, KidsSTOP™ offers workshops with multi-sensorial experiences that help learners to understand science concepts. The workshops are also customisable to cater to students with different learning profiles.

To commemorate World Autism Awareness Day, the Centre has in store a weekend of on-site activities. KidsSTOP™ will be hosting an interactive, drama-based workshop that follows Bob, a fish puppet, on an oceanic adventure to find his place among a sea of friends. Titled "Can Bob Be Your Friend?", the 30-minute workshop will also feature Pepper, one of the five KidsSTOP™ mascots who represents learners with diverse needs, to share the importance of embracing diversity among young audiences.

On 22 April, KidsSTOP™ will also host an exclusive learning journey for students from SPED schools, which will see 38 students from Grace Orchard School participating.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.science.edu.sg/visit-us/accessibility>

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About Science Centre Singapore

Science Centre Singapore, a non-formal educational institution and leading regional Science Centre, along with its group of attractions, brings out the wonders of science, technology, engineering and mathematics through its unique blend of exhibitions, educational programmes and events. A custodian of creativity and innovation, Science Centre Singapore has captured the evolution of scientific developments for nearly four decades.

The Centre and its partners have played a pivotal role in transforming the way students and the public interact with and learn about science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Since 1977, the Centre has welcomed over 30 million visitors and inspired them with more than 1,000 exhibits spread across 14 exhibition galleries and outdoor exhibition spaces.

The Centre's group of attractions include Omni-Theatre, Snow City and KidsSTOP™. The Omni-Theatre is an immersive dual-technology edutainment destination fitted with Southeast Asia's largest seamless dome



screen and featuring the latest and brightest 8k digital full dome system in the world. Snow City is Singapore's only permanent indoor snow centre offering an Arctic inspired experience at Singapore's first ice gallery and snow chamber. KidsSTOP™ - Where every child gets to Imagine, Experience, Discover and Dream - is Singapore's first children's science centre offering an enriching experience through purposeful play for children aged 18 months to 8 years old. For more information, please visit www.science.edu.sg.

About KidsSTOP™

KidsSTOP™ is Singapore's first science centre for children between 18 months to 8 years old. Being innately curious about the natural world, young children develop and understand how to use essential process skills by actively engaging with the environment. KidsSTOP™ aims to enhance these skills of inquiry, investigation and innovation so that they have the Power to Create.