

# Why is Service Learning important to Character Education?

Ang-Oh Chui Hwa, Principal of Far Eastern Kindergarten



*"To educate a person in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society."*

Theodore Roosevelt

*"Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all."*

Aristotle

*"Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of education."*

Martin Luther King, Jr.



# Start Small Dream Big

PRESIDENT'S  
CHALLENGE  
2015



PRESIDENT'S  
CHALLENGE 2015  
We Care

Celebrating  
15 years of  
giving &  
caring



Early Childhood  
Development Agency





# Walk your Talk



*Stay Connected Make a difference*

# How do children learn?



## SERVICE



## LEARNING



Service-learning is a pedagogy that is “grounded in experience as a basis for learning and on the centrality and intentionality of reflection designed to enable learning to occur. It is based on the work of researchers and theorists on learning, including John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Kurt Lewin, Donald Schon, and David Kolb, who believe that we learn through combinations of action and reflection”

(Jacoby, 2003, p. 4).

# SSDB is a Dream come true when children can Learn as they Serve















- Service Learning projects (SLP) should develop children's character in **fun** and **meaningful** ways.
- **Empower teachers** to incorporate SLP as part of school curriculum or holiday programme (Childcare Centres)



# Direct Service



# Direct Service

 <h2>Generosity Project</h2>  		
 <p>I will write a thank you note to my friend.</p> 	<p>I will upcycle something in my house that is no longer used to something useful.</p>	<p>I will record an audio message to send to my aunt or uncle.</p> 
<p>I will turn off my water while brushing my teeth.</p> 	 <p>I will bake something for my Grandparents.</p>	<p>I will stay happy the whole day.</p>
 <p>I will finish all my food on my plate without complaining.</p>	 <p>I will water my plants.</p> 	<p>I will video call a friend whom I have not spoken with for a week.</p> 

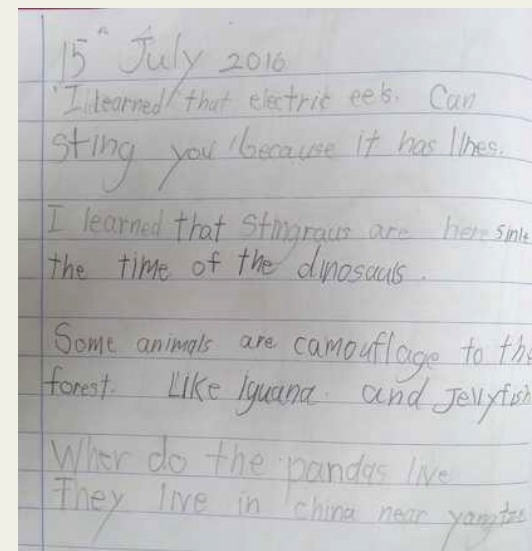
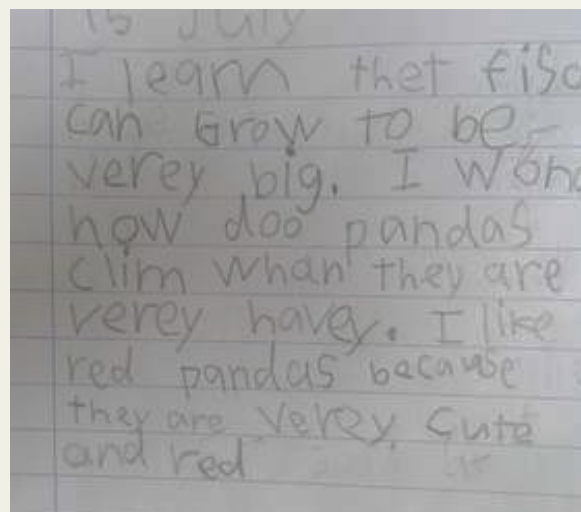
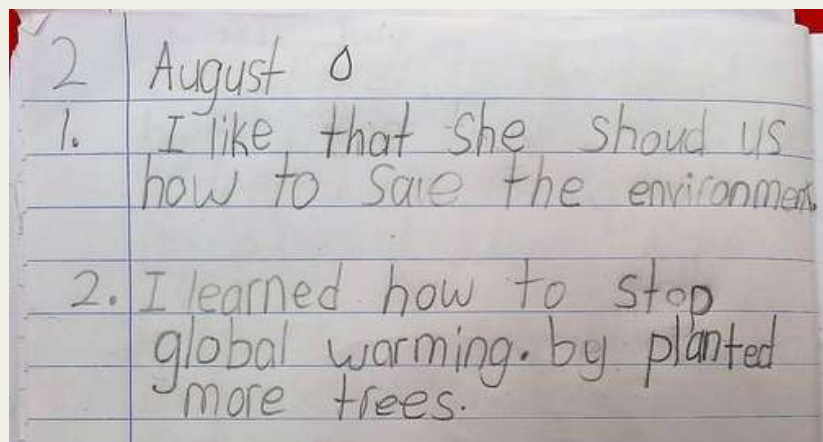
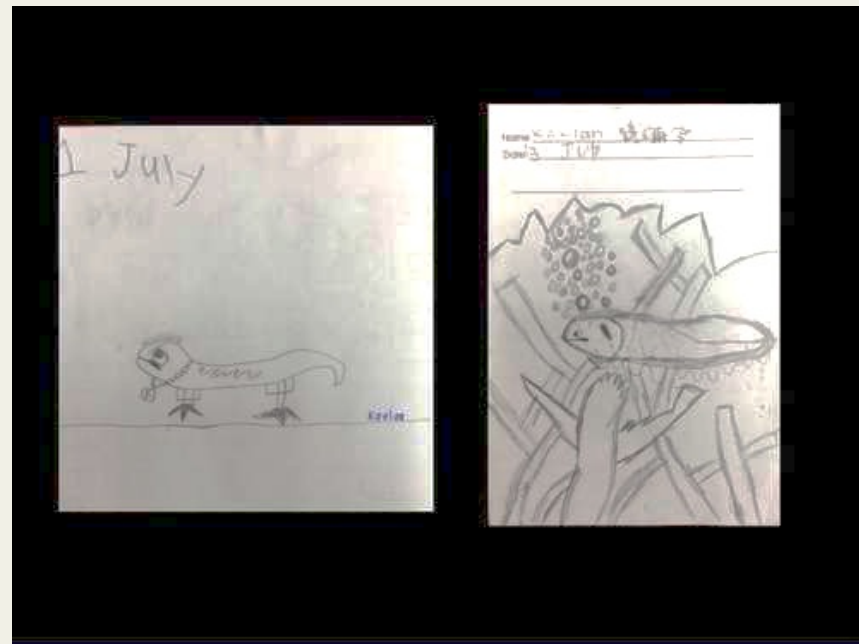
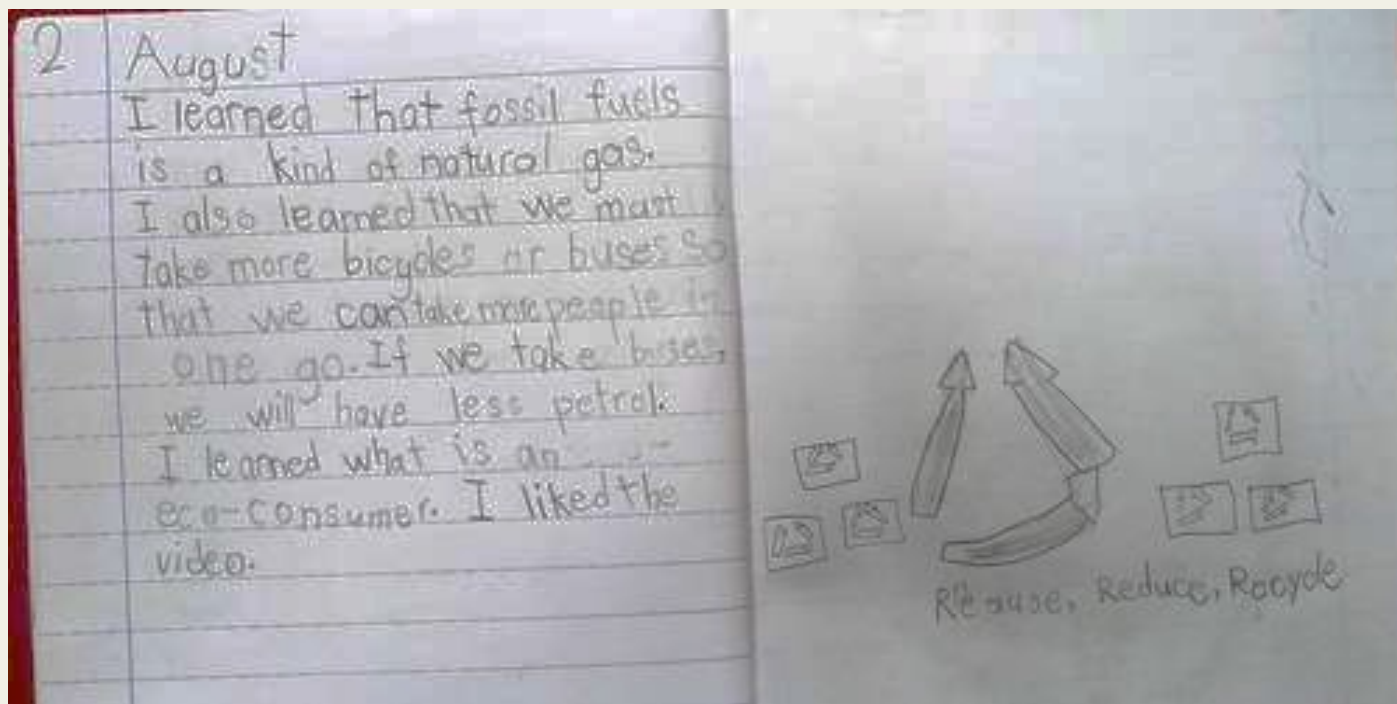
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# Indirect Service



# Research





# Advocacy





Service Learning must be **AUTHENTIC**. It must be part of your belief system. It must be part of your everyday living. It must be natural. It must be your **school culture**. Above all, the teachers must own it – they must **LOVE** the ideas. The SLP must be **meaningful** and **relevant** to the children's learning. It must evoke **a positive change in children's character**.



# ECDA Fellows' Inquiry-Based Action Plan (IBAP)

## Designing a Character-based Curriculum via Service Learning Framework

Ang-Oh Chui Hwa, Principal of Far Eastern Kindergarten

Ms Ava Wang, Senior Quality Specialist, My First Skool

# 2016 to 2020 Findings

Year & Batch	Delivery Format	Number of Participants	Achieved 75% & Above Attendance	Confidence in Conducting Service Learning
2016 (1 Batch)	1 day Workshop + 3 NLCs (Network Learning Community)	9	7	N.A.
2017 (2 Batches)	1 day Workshop + 2 NLCs	34	34	75%
2018 (2 Batches)	1 day Workshop + 1 NLC & Coaching/Online community	60	55	98%
2019 (2 Batches)	As above	63	60	100%
2020 (2 Batches)	As above	50	48	100%



## Sample Qualitative Data – Identified Themes

### Motivation/Inspiration:

- The sharing sessions with other participants are very effective and meaningful as we are able to learn and exchange ideas to improve on the projects for SSDB.
- They provided us with lots of ideas on how to do service learning. They were very friendly and knowledgeable. Approachable and always ready to advise us.
- I like that this a very real training and not one that has all the politically correct answers.
- There's a network where I can share and seek help as I am not alone.
- I hear fabulous ideas from other centres which is inspiring. It is also encouraging to know of others who have faced similar issues and have succeeded eventually. It's also a good platform for sharing resources.
- It empowers me.
- Yes i think it is necessary as like-minded teachers come together to collaborate, share ideas and improve for the better. Through the community, everyone not only can input their ideas, but they can also learn something new through the sharings.
- As a community of learners, we need to provide support to stay relevant. "No Man is an Island". We need to tap on each other for renewal of ideas and even words of encouragement and support.

### Best Practices/Strategies/Theory to Practice:

- They are never short of ideas and sharing of experiences, understands us well.
- Learning how to incorporate service learning into my centre curriculum.
- I learned different projects, practices from other leaders in different organisation.
- I learnt to develop stronger leadership, collaboration and communication skills.
- The specific explanation given during the feedback has helped me to understand the importance of focussing on Character Education - embedding it into the curriculum.
- Through reflections and questions asked, I am able to better come up with time line and reflect on other things that can be done with the children and to think out of the box.
- I personally feel that the Service Learning Model helps us to put our ideas on paper and how we can relate it to our team
- The Service Learning Model helped me to systemically design a character-based curriculum project to integrate into our programme.
- It has helped me to streamline the process better. I understand how to integrate it into my current curriculum and hopefully will turn it into a culture in the centre.
- Making the curriculum exciting building on children's character and helping them to think of possibilities amid changes

## Resources:

- Engaging community partners to develop character in children alongside with parents; ensuring the sustainability of the project.
- We can share our ideas and receive suggestions/feedback from one another.
- It provided a platform for rich exchange of ideas.
- The generation of ideas from a large group of like-minded individuals will certainly be more than can be generated by a single person alone.
- Collaboration with other centres
- It gives me more ideas and how other principals introduce and carry out Service Learning.
- Exchange ideas and resources at the finger tips.
- We can seek the community for more ideas and suggestions and even problem solve and brainstorm for solutions.
- Networking enhances the quality of my centre's curriculum.
- We see many challenges and possibilities. We see successes and courage. This gives us hope and confidence that we can overcome challenges and hurdles ahead

# Why do you need this IBAP?

“When we think about the kind of character we want for our children, it’s clear that we want them to be able to judge what is right, care deeply about what is right, and then do what they believe to be right – even in the face of pressure from without and temptation from within.”

Dr Thomas Lickona

Based on the data generated from about 216 participants of the Building ECCE Leaders’ Capacity in designing a Character-based Curriculum project, it is observed that these preschool leaders were positive towards the Service Learning Model as a framework to teach Character Education.

Most of these leaders just needed to be inspired and affirmed in order to adopt a new approach. The general principles and the Framework help them to be more intentional in their curriculum design. The co-construction of a Service Learning Project process was useful and provided an inspiring platform for leaders to network and share their ideas.





# Usefulness of the model to concretise Service Learning

2018 Batch 4	69%
2018 Batch 5	73%
2019 Batch 6	75%
2020 Batch 7	100%

Year	Project Emphasis
2016	Parenting for Character: Epstein's framework of 6 types of Parental Involvement
2017	Designing a Character-based Curriculum via Service Learning
2018	Co-construct a localised Service Learning Module
2019	Service Learning as a Culture
2020	Sustaining the Service Learning Culture
2021	Sustaining the Service Learning Culture



“Effective character education is not adding a programme or set of programmes to a school. Rather it is a transformation of the culture and life of the school.”

Dr Marvin Berkowitz

# The small picture is the BIG PICTURE

Alvin Pang (Singaporean Poet)

