

拥抱的力量

EMBRACE



在繁忙的日程中，人们时常忽视日常生活中的时刻和经历。我们的项目-拥抱的力量，让我们放大和思考在日常生活中的自己，以及在校内和校外与别人的日常互动，去意识到底有哪些时刻与经历，在背后影响着我们。在探讨着这些无法计量的时刻与经历，是不是很有趣呢？

我们项目的主题，以调查的方式，去意识自我及学习换位思考去意识他人。这无形中也揭示了我们每个人都是多层面的，从而思考我们所认为的自己与另一个人有多么的不一样，这也包括老年人，有特殊需要的人，还有我们周围的同学。

Our Embrace project invites us to pause, magnify and ponder on day-to-day interactions within ourselves, our school walls and outside, that we often push to the back of our consciousness. Isn't it interesting how these uncalculated moments inadvertently shape who we are?

This project investigates the subject of self-awareness and the awareness of others – learning to walk in the shoes of another. It also reveals each of us to be multi-layered – we are more than what we seem. We are challenged to reconsider how different we actually are from another person be it a senior citizen, a person with special needs, or our classmate.



*Project by teachers Rachel Huang, Zhang Xuan Hong
& their dearest Starlight 3 (25 students) and Starlight 7 (19 students)*



Walking side-by-side, after some compromises on each other's walking speeds



Guiding hand-on-hand the best way to jump rope



Embracing herself by choosing her eyes as a favourite part. She can appreciate beautiful things



Accompanying a friend who fractured his arm as he was resting alone. Offering to give a massage



With closed eyes, enjoying the feelings of a sincere embrace



Relishing the companionship of friends, soaking in the atmosphere of every Friday's whole school gathering



With closed eyes, enjoying the feelings of a sincere embrace



Observing and coming up with ideas of what the injured bird might need to rest well



Being a friend, making a new friend feel welcomed in a big school like St. James'



"Don't worry, I can help..." Initiating help to a friend who met with a difficult vocabulary



Offering last bits to Teacher Rachel because she "looks hungry"



Delighting in the company of a friend by mirroring each other's humorous ideas

Our Ideas of *Embrace*



a little more info

What sparked our project?

In a dynamic class like ours – we had children with Down Syndrome, ADHD, Global Development Delay and suspected social anxiety – the class was already including their friends in their own unique ways. What we wanted to do was to tap on how they are already scaffolding their friend with special needs' learning and expand the scope of our study (and practice) of inclusion.

How did we collaborate with the community?

It was a 10-weeks long project work. To understand others, we need to understand ourselves first. So, we began exploring emotions before moving onto with the simplest ways of human-to-human interactions: hugs, smiles, handshakes, expressions. This

Here's a quick glance of us in action...



How did we include everyone in the activities?

As with every child in the class, and more so with the children with special needs, we observed and incorporated the children's interest into the activities.

Here are some examples:

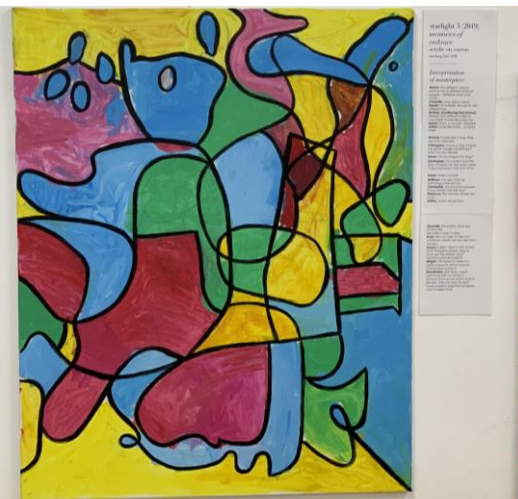
- ✧ **Painting** was especially therapeutic for our student with Down Syndrome
- ✧ **Maps** was exceptionally intriguing for a student with ASD. Thus, we showcased how our feelings were connected to different parts of the school by using Google Maps (as suggested by the student) to trace out a realistic outline of the school.
- ✧ **Touch** was the worst fear of a student with ASD, so we investigated hugs through sketching others hugging and describing the outline of a hug'. The child described the shape of hugging as "2 countries making peace and becoming 1." More conversations and deeper investigation helped to lower his defenses and by the end of the year, he could give gentle side hugs.

Our reflection?

Inclusion is such an abstract topic that is so relevant to all of us. We all yearn to belong, to find a safe space. This is why this project proved to be so important because we began discovering ways in which we are already including or not including others, and we begin to feel the heart of another. To see the children developing empathy, a sense of justice and open-mindedness was so rewarding at the end of the project. They may not remember the content of the lessons but I hope, as they graduate, they continue to uphold these values dearly as they navigate the weathers of life.



How did we expand the scope of our study (examples of activities) + how did we collaborate with the community?



"...the music goes into both my ears. Then, to my brain, then, it slowly travels down to my heart. It makes my heart pump very fast and gives my legs power! It makes me dance!"



Embracing those around me:

Defining embrace through its most basic meaning – hug. Through analysis of our 5 senses during the hug, sketches of hugs which became an inspiration for a community art activity (of which the paintings were auctioned off for SSDB – 2 paintings of \$180 \$ 150 each!)



Embracing myself:

Understanding myself through a series of discussions, self-portraits using loose tools, creative arts and movement activities of which all ideas stemmed from the children's conversations.



How did we expand the scope of our study (examples of activities) + how did we collaborate with the community?

Expert Talk + SSDB Launch Party:

Filmer, an 18-year-old entrepreneur of Filmer's Cake, shared about how he persevered in his baking endeavors despite being unable to use his left hand.



Excursion:

Ghim Moh Hawker Centre & Inclusive Playground, Act3 International Drama School



A Study on Interviews:

Having a conversation is interviewing in the most casual state. In order to get to know people better, we began to polish our 'interview' skills. We interviewed Joyce, a visually-impaired friend, our school general worker and a classmate's grandmother.



Collab with Superhero Me!

SHM's values resonated very much with our project, so we contacted SHM for possible collaboration opportunities.



How did we expand the scope of our study (examples of activities) + how did we collaborate with the community?

Sharing about our learning through writing a book and a newspaper.

We wanted to tell everyone about how we can embrace each other. We decided to publish a book and a newspaper. In light of the SSDB fundraiser, all proceeds went to Superhero Me!





Monkeys, 1-2-3,
cha-cha-cha!



Giraffes, do the
Scottish reel!



Zebras, sashay
as you dance ballet!

透过 *through* 郊游 *field trips*



Giraffe Dance-Off!

Roleplaying, perspective-taking, reading nonverbal cues – these skills are imperative to begin embracing and understanding others on a deeper level. The most fun way possible to pick them up was through drama! Giles Andreae's *Giraffes Can't Dance* guided us to find our very own dance.



Wise crickets sway
in the breeze.



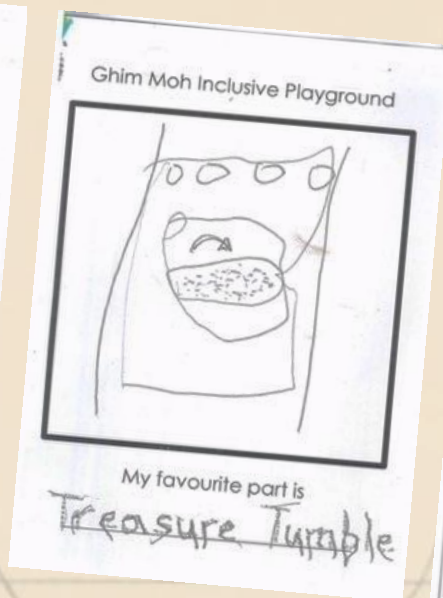
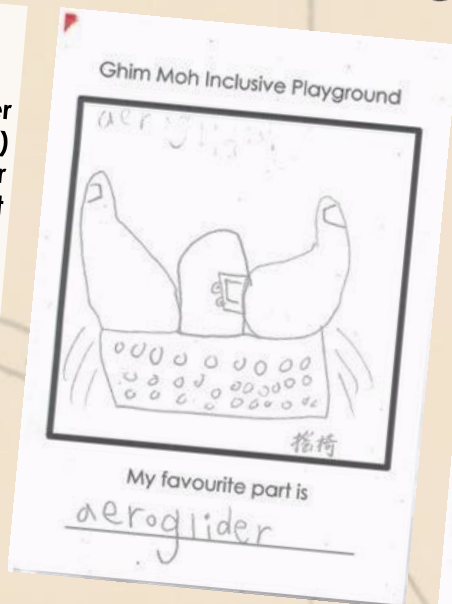
Do your
clumsy dance!



Exploring Ghim Moh Inclusive Playground & Our Favourite Parts of it

"...the aeroglider (2nd photo) is a BIG swing for everyone to sit on. It is so big so that even 10 people or people on the wheelchair can fit on it!"

-Matthew



"...I have never seen a playground with such a big walking ramp (3rd photo) – even the merry-go-round too (1st photo)!"

"...I think it's for people who need to use the wheelchair. People who are very big[-sized] too, maybe?"

- Zhexi

Notes that we made

Yoonsun: The toilet is for little girls, mummy and daddy and for people [sitting on the] wheelchair.

Tessa: Sometimes, I don't know if [the person] is Malay or Indian... or both?

Cory: Most of the cleaners are like my grandpa and grandma. They look tired and a little sad.

Jayden

I observed

a Malay old man.

I felt

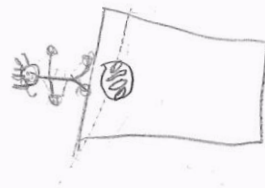
happy because he was eating

spicy noodles. He told me

about being Muslim and

I wanted to eat the noodles.

People-watch at Ghim Moh Hawker Centre



I observed a Malay old man. I felt happy because he was eating spicy noodles. He told me about being Muslim and I wanted to eat the noodles.

Amelia

I observed

an old lady on a wheelchair

I felt

excited

because she is

active even though she is old

People-watch at Ghim Moh Hawker Centre



I observed an old lady on wheelchair. I felt excited because she is active even though she is old.

Immersing in + Observing Ghim Moh Hawker Centre's Morning Buzz



a circle of little people



After our people-watching session at Ghim Moh market & playground, we sculpted out our interpretation of the people whom we observed. We had been working on clay several months prior and continued to work and rework on our sculptures in order to achieve precision to our satisfaction.

in works of
雕塑clay





of encounters & conversations

the language of silence

Apart from our different means of communication, how different are we, really?

Joyce taught us simple sign language, picked sign names based on our interests and we got to interview her! Initially we were **“a little shy because [we] didn't know if she will be too different.”** **“Her favourite food is Hokkien mee, which is so funny because Hokkien mee is so popular at the food court!”** We realized we shared more similarities than differences!

as quoted by Ruth & Asher



“My sign name
is ‘Evan’
because I enjoy
carrying babies.”



“My sign name
is ‘Nicodemus’
because my
favourite animal
is gorilla!”



“My sign name
is ‘Amelia’
because I like
to eat grapes.”



“My sign name
is ‘Adam’
because my
favourite food
is rainbow cake!”



“My sign name
is ‘Yoonsun’
because my
favourite thing
is the stars!”



“My sign name
is ‘Mira’
because I like
rabbits!”



you were once me

You weren't always a senior citizen. Tell me your stories. Are we more alike than we are different?

Hayley's grandmother's fascinating childhood stories and sharing of how she takes care of fellow senior citizens was enlightening. She was once a 6-years-old, just like us. She was once working, just like our parents.

“How can you help senior citizens? Hold their hands, talk to them, help carry shopping bags, cross the road with them. Don't worry too much. It's a great joy to the elderly when you have love in your heart.”



“When I was younger, I worked as a school principal.”



We got comfortable with our very own Auntie Zhuma, or as the children call her, 朱奶奶 (Grandma Zhu). She delighted us with stories of her childhood in her Kampong, eating chicken she reared and fish in her own pond! She loved to run and make mischief – very much like us.

Collaboration with Superhero Me:

Planning & Blueprints of Our Own Inclusive Playground/ Classroom

Now that we have visited Ghim Moh inclusive playground and met many experts on the topic on Embrace, how can we, as constructors of Singapore's future, plan to shape our community into a more inclusive place?

SL3 decided to plan out our very own unique **Embracing Playground**, while SL7 decided on **Embracing Classroom** because embracing sounds nicer than inclusive."

As quoted by Zhexi & Asher



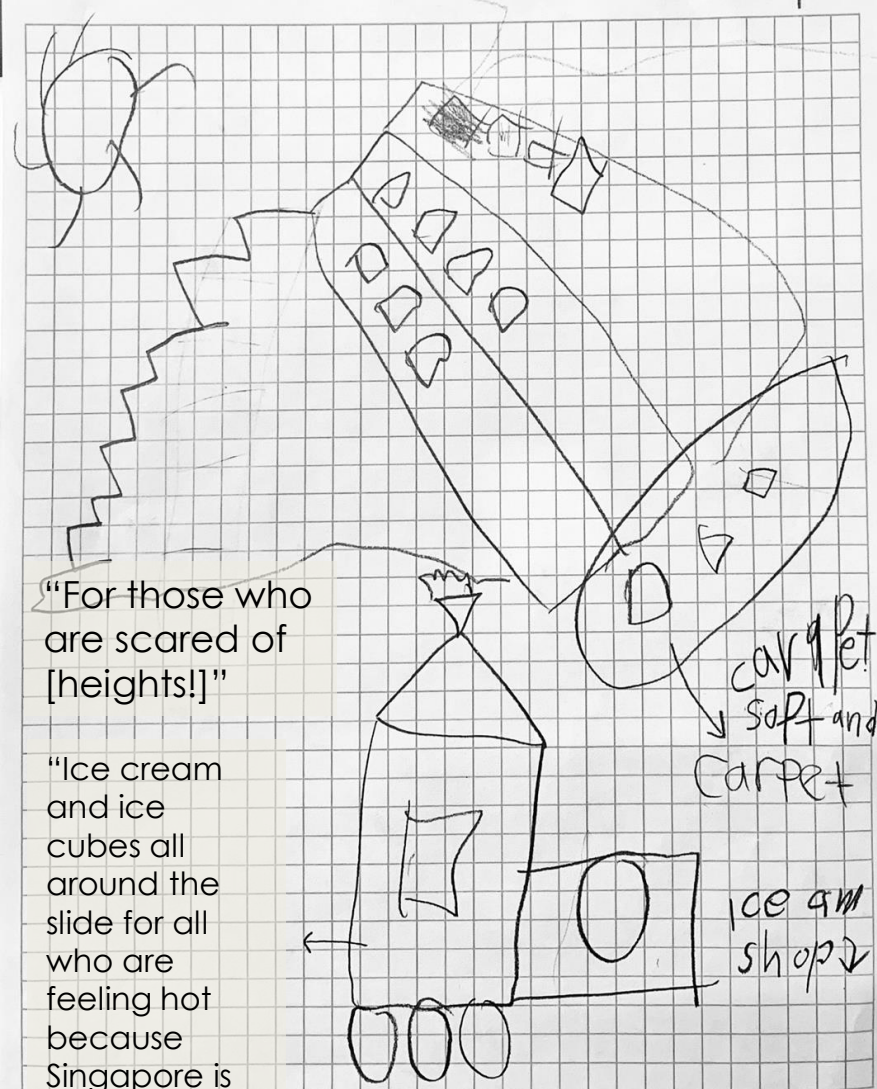
Superhero Me's Captain Kyna, Captain Hongshin and Captain Jovan, an artist with Autism, shared with us about Superhero Me's cause and illustrated an embracing playground/ classroom based on our ideas.

We were in charge of coloring and scribing out the purpose of each aspect of the playground/ classroom.

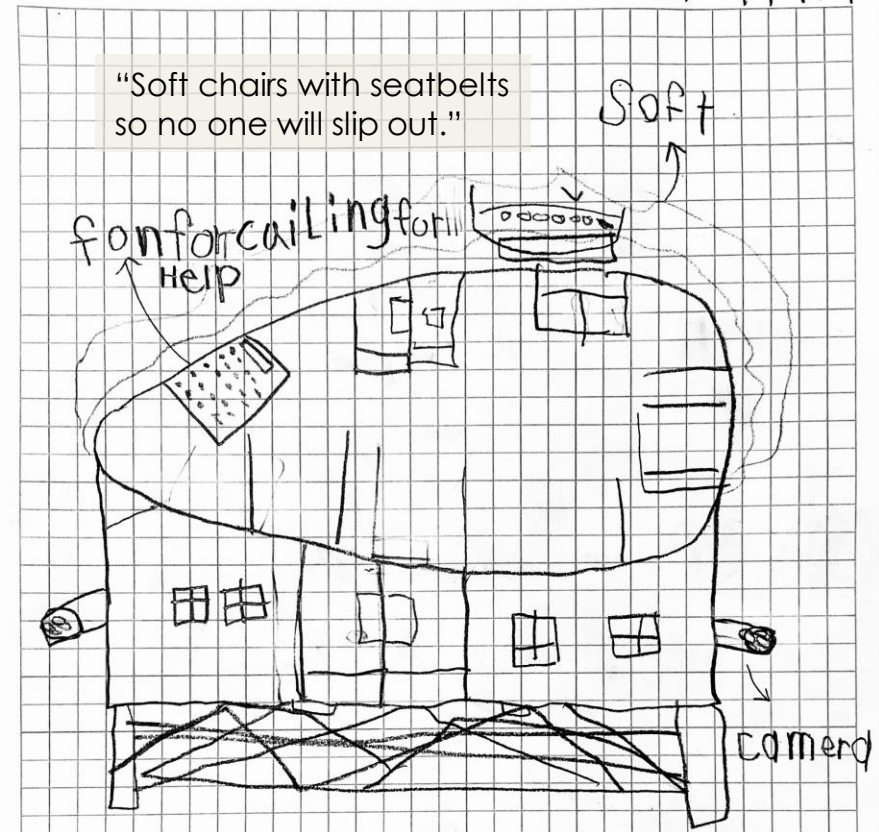


Examples of Blueprints of an Embracing Playground

3 level slide Blueprint



merry-go-round Blueprint



"CCTV camera is to keep an eye on everyone. No one will dare to steal your things!"