

WELCOME ADDRESS BY MS TAN PUAY HOON, PRESIDENT OF THE RESTROOM ASSOCIATION (SINGAPORE) (RAS) AT THE LAUNCH OF THE HAPPY TOILETS @ PRESCHOOLS ON 3 FEB 2015, 2.30PM, AT THE ENVIRONMENT BUILDING

A very good afternoon to:

Our Guest of Honour Ms Low Yen Ling, Parliamentary Secretary for Ministry of Social and Family Development

Partners, principals, teachers and valued stakeholders.

We are delighted to welcome all of you to our Happy Toilet Preschool Seminar, which aims to provide you with handy information about our new Guide to Better Preschool Toilet Design, Maintenance and Education and Happy Toilets @ Preschools Programme.

A gracious society must be fostered from young

The vision of the Restroom Association (Singapore) or RAS is to foster a gracious society embracing excellence in restroom culture. However, this can only be actualised if we start to inculcate proper restroom etiquette in children from a young age. Adoption of proper restroom etiquette not only promotes a gracious society but also improves personal and public hygiene.

The Happy Toilet School Education for Preschools (HTSEP) was launched in 2007 by former Health Minister Mr Khaw Boon Wan to raise the hygiene and cleanliness standards of preschool toilets, and to reduce the spread of

communicable diseases such as Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (HFMD). However, the HTSEP only focussed on the Education phase without the Design and Maintenance phases, that is to say, cleanliness of toilets and training of toilet cleaning attendants and caretakers.

Happy Toilets @ Preschools Programme

Modelled after the Sustaining Toilets As Restrooms (STAR) Awards Programme for primary and secondary schools, the Happy Toilets @ Preschools Programme we are launching today will replace the previous HTSEP. It will adopt a more holistic approach of looking at preschool toilet design, maintenance and education.

We received the support from two preschools that were previously on the old preschool programme to pilot with us on this new programme. Generation Kidz @ Limau and PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Telok Blangah displayed their strong commitment to achieve the highest accreditation of completing the three phases on Design, Maintenance and Education. We wish to warmly express our heartiest gratitude and congratulations to them for their exemplary achievements.

Guide to Better Preschool Toilet Design, Maintenance and Education

At the Singapore Water, Sanitation & Hygiene or WASH Conference on 19 November 2013, we launched the third edition of the guide on public toilets. As there is no comprehensive information on preschool toilets, we feel there is a need to develop a guide on preschool toilets. The new guide can serve as a

reference for preschools to effectively engage building contractors for new construction or renovation works. This guide also provides handy information for preschools to equip its cleaning attendants or caretakers with the fundamentals of toilet maintenance.

Last year, we continued to engage the 10 government, non-government and private organisations that had worked with us on the public toilet guide to develop this preschool toilet guide. Although preschool toilets are not covered under the National Environment Agency's (NEA) Code of Practice on Environmental Health (COPEH), preschools are strongly encouraged to adopt the guidelines so as to meet the minimum basic design criteria. The Building and Construction Authority's (BCA) Code on Accessibility in the Built Environment places greater emphasis on universal design concepts and provisions to benefit a wider spectrum of people including preschoolers. The standards and requirements for water fittings stipulated by PUB and fittings, appliances and products registered under PUB's Mandatory Water Efficiency Labelling Scheme are also mentioned. This new guide not only covers some of the codes of BCA, NEA and PUB, but also best practices and good examples of preschool toilet design, maintenance and education.

Apart from the 10 organisations which included BCA, NEA and PUB, the two preschools namely Generation Kidz @ Limau and PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Telok Blangah Blk 44 were approached to seek their comments on this preschool toilet guide. We wish to express our sincere appreciation to all representatives for contributing their expertise, time and effort towards the publication of this guide.

We are well aware that there is still room for improvement to this guide and we are prepared to work with more organisations including the Early Childhood Development Agency to publish the second edition of this guide. The purpose of this seminar also serves as a platform for you to provide your valuable feedback to us so that we can reinforce this guide together to benefit all preschools. We hope participating preschools at the seminar today can still benefit from the first edition of this guide and apply some of the best practices and good examples mentioned in this guide.

Conclusion

Finally, I wish to express my deepest appreciation to the Guest of Honour Ms Low, partners and distinguished guests for taking time to attend this event. I wish to again congratulate the two preschools for your strong commitment. I hope after the seminar today, more preschools will follow suit to achieve higher preschool toilet standards for many years to come. Together, let's build a more gracious society, embracing excellence in restroom culture.

Thank you.