

This story was printed from [channelnewsasia.com](http://www.channelnewsasia.com)



Title : Pathlight School trains autistic students to operate newly-opened cafe
By :
Date : 19 January 2006 2126 hrs (SST)
URL : <http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/singaporelocalnews/view/189009/1.html>

SINGAPORE : Pathlight School, a school for autistic children, has opened a cafe to teach its students simple work skills.

The "special" Starbucks Coffee outlet is in fact the first of its kind here.

Taking orders and making sandwiches are some of what Huang Kaisong has learned to do at the Pathlight Cafe.

Kaisong, who is 14, was diagnosed with autism when he was about three years old.

"I can work at the cashier station and I can shout the orders to the beverage and the food people, and also like to punch the cash registers and take down customers' orders," he said.

Mdm Ng Sock Kian, Kaisong's mother, said it would be very useful for him to pick up life skills as he goes on in life.

She said he would learn self-regulation, discipline in his work, including things like following instructions and not insisting on your his way.

The cafe, costing about \$150,000, will cater mainly to parents and students.

So far, the school has trained about eight students for a start, to work at this cafe.

The students, aged between 12 and 15, are taught skills like how to handle money and how to serve customers.

This is to equip them with the necessary skills for future employment.

Ms Denise Phua, Acting Principal of Pathlight School, said: "So when they eventually get to hold jobs, they are given jobs not because they have special needs or people have compassion on them. But really because they are competent and have good employment skills, good attitude and good work habits."

Pathlight School's Adviser and Temasek Holdings CEO Ho Ching officially opened the cafe. - CNA/de

Copyright © 2006 MCN International Pte Ltd

[<< back to channelnewsasia.com](http://www.channelnewsasia.com)