

By : Surekha A Yadav
Date : 01 June 2010 1749 hrs (SST)
URL : <http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/singaporelocalnews/view/1060358/1/.html>

Autism Resource Centre seeks to help autistic adults find and keep jobs

SINGAPORE: Close to 30,000 Singaporeans have varying degrees of autism, so the Autism Resource Centre is now looking at ways to ensure these numbers can be supported on the job market.

A group of children with autism performed on stage for the first time at the 10th Annual Learning Congress on Autism, capturing the progress made in educating these children.

10-year-old Wong Jun Xiang is one such student.

At Pathlight, his classes are constructed to meet his needs.

He said: "I have made many new friends throughout the years, and all my friends admire me."

His mother has also seen him become more independent.

Annie Wong said: "It is good that they learn to do things independently, because we wait for them to get to the point when they are independent."

But she still has her concerns about his future.

This is why the Autism Resource Centre is looking at ways to develop workable models that can be used to support the employment of adults with autism.

Denise Phua, president, Autism Resource Centre, said: "People with autism need a few features that will help them succeed, besides having the normal education just like everyone else. They will need training in inculcating good work habits. At their work area they need physical structures, they need work systems that are visual, and they need visual cues as well.

"So when these are put in place in varying forms, depending on the severity of the person with autism, these are very useful and help them to hold jobs and understand what their roles and responsibilities are."

The centre has also worked with vendors to set up real work sites on campus, so that students can be trained on the job. - CNA/ms



Denise Phua speaking at the Learning Congress on Autism