



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Republic Polytechnic and Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore School Launches Inclusive Outdoor Learning Programme

Singapore, 20 October 2023 – Republic Polytechnic (RP) and the Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore School (CPASS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding today to build a more inclusive society. As part of the partnership, both organisations launched a customised outdoor learning programme for students with special needs. The three-year programme marks a significant milestone as it is the first-of-its-kind between an Institute of Higher Learning and CPASS.

The programme allows CPASS students to experience outdoor activities in Singapore and an overseas service-learning trip during the final year of the programme. It is also specially tailored to the unique learning objectives of CPASS students, aimed at equipping them with essential life and soft skills, including self-confidence, communication, teamwork, and problem-solving.

It is estimated that more than 110,000 or close to three per cent of Singaporeans have some form of disability.¹ This includes cerebral palsy, a neurological disorder affecting movement and posture, with global prevalence estimates ranging from 1 to nearly 4 out of every 1,000 people.² This pioneering collaboration between RP and CPASS is a testament to the growing importance of diversity and inclusion in Singapore.

A Journey of Fun and Inclusive Outdoor Learning

A safe and inclusive learning environment for the CPASS students was the top priority when RP staff from the School of Sports, Health and Leisure were crafting the structured outdoor learning programme. Working closely with CPASS staff, RP tailored the outdoor learning programme to ensure the participant's safety through medical assessments and safe supervision. RP staff also modified all activities for the special needs students to suit their varying abilities, while ensuring challenges are kept close to those that are meant for the general community. This allows CPASS' students to experience authentic outdoor adventuring, thus ensuring a sense of achievement, belonging and confidence.

To ensure participants can rely on their own ability to accomplish various tasks in the programme, additional assistive devices were added, and tweaks were made to the delivery method. RP staff also tapped on their experience developing the Xperiential Learning Centre - Singapore's first large-scale inclusive outdoor adventure facility on the polytechnic's campus that was specifically designed to allow people of varying abilities, including persons with disabilities, to participate in outdoor and adventure learning programmes safely.

¹ [Disability:IN - Singapore](#)

² [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Data and Statistics for Cerebral Palsy](#)

Students from RP's Diploma in Outdoor & Adventure Learning (DOAL) will value add to the outdoor learning programme by facilitating the various activities. The experience not only fosters purposeful interactions between DOAL students and the participants, but also allows them to better understand the abilities of students with special needs in outdoor settings.

Nurturing Life Skills and Inclusivity

By collaborating to bring a shared vision of inclusivity to life, the partnership between RP and CPASS marks a paradigm shift in providing meaningful and holistic learning experiences for individuals of all abilities, answering the call in Singapore's Enabling Masterplan 2030.

"We are delighted to embark on this meaningful partnership with the Cerebral Palsy Alliance of Singapore in providing a special learning platform to empower individuals to become the best possible version of themselves. Through our expertise in outdoor and adventure learning, we want to champion students with special needs and equip them with the confidence to participate in a variety of physical activities, and to appreciate the outdoors in their everyday life. We hope to inspire other members of society in embracing the spirit of diversity, as part of Singapore's refreshed social compact," said Jeanne Liew, Principal & Chief Executive Officer of Republic Polytechnic.

Latha Kutty, Executive Director of Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore, said, "The synergy between Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore and Republic Polytechnic represents a powerful convergence of expertise and passion. Our joint mission is to provide students with holistic learning experiences that transcend conventional boundaries. By embracing diversity, nurturing inclusivity, and harnessing the potential of outdoor learning, this partnership marks a defining moment in Singapore's disability and educational landscape."

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About Republic Polytechnic

The first educational institution in Singapore to leverage the Problem-based Learning approach for all its diploma programmes, Republic Polytechnic (RP) has seven schools and two academic centres offering 37 full-time diplomas in Applied Science, Engineering, Management and Communication, Hospitality, Infocomm, Sports, Health and Leisure, and Technology for the Arts. RP is committed to nurturing professionals with strong problem-solving capabilities through an innovative and entrepreneurial learning environment, based on a holistic and industry relevant curriculum. RP's Academy for Continuing Education also offers a comprehensive suite of lifelong learning programmes to provide adult learners with skills upgrading opportunities. For more information, visit <http://www.rp.edu.sg>.

About Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore

Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore (CPAS) is a social service agency providing care and services for children and adults with cerebral palsy or multiple disabilities. Formerly known as the Spastic Children's Association of Singapore, CPAS was founded in 1957 and provides early intervention, special education, therapy rehabilitation and clinics, day activity centre programmes, vocational training, and sheltered employment for over 700 children and adults. Driven by our core values of hope, empowerment, aspiration, respect, and trust, we aim to empower persons with cerebral palsy or multiple disabilities to realise their full potential and lead fulfilled, dignified lives. CPAS is a registered charity with IPC status and is a member of the National Council of Social Service. For more information, please visit www.cpas.org.sg.