

MEDIA RELEASE

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NIEC Holds Conference on Professional Exchange and Thought Leadership in Early Childhood Education

The National Institute of Early Childhood Development (NIEC) will host its inaugural international conference with the theme "Inspiring Excellence in Early Childhood Practice," on 17 to 18 October 2024. Held at the Marina Bay Sands Expo and Convention Centre, the first day of the conference will bring together over 1,000 early childhood (EC) professionals, including educators, leaders, researchers, and policy makers, providing an engaging platform for professional exchange and thought leadership in early childhood education.

Guest of Honour Mr Chan Chun Sing, Minister for Education, will deliver the keynote address, where he is expected to make key announcements that impact the early childhood sector. His speech will highlight the government's strategic investment in early childhood education and chart a path forward, reinforcing Singapore's commitment to high-quality early childhood care and education, with NIEC playing a crucial role in training the next generation of educators.

Reflecting on NIEC's five years of impact on uplifting the quality of early childhood educator training, Mrs Loke-Yeo Teck Yong, Director and CEO of NIEC, said, "This conference serves as an important platform for professional exchange and growth in the sector. As we look to the future, we remain committed to providing quality training and professional development for EC educators, ensuring they are well-prepared to shape the lives of young children in Singapore."

The conference will feature three main topic strands—Professional Development, Pedagogy and Curriculum, and Trends, Policy and Local Research—with presentations from distinguished speakers including:

1. Professor Patricia Jennings (University of Virginia, USA), on "Cultivating Well-Being of Early Childhood Educators and Children in the Early Childhood Education and Care System."
2. Professor Kenneth Poon (National Institute of Education, Singapore), addressing "Inclusion for Preschool Children with Developmental Needs: Where Are We? What Can We Do? And What Is Next for the Sector?"
3. Professor Lynn Ang (UCL Institute of Education, UK), discussing "Shaping the Future of Early Childhood Education to Enhance Educational Equality."

The second day of the conference will be conducted virtually with 32 sessions, allowing more than 1,000 participants from all over the world to participate.

Local and international presenters will be presenting in English, Malay, Mandarin or Tamil. In addition, NIEC's faculty will speak on a range of topics that underscore NIEC's leadership in early childhood educator training.

The conference will also include an art exhibition of student's works, a milestone display of NIEC's achievements, and a booth to promote local early childhood research.

Pre-conference activities on 16 October will include learning journeys to preschools and partner organisations such as the Singapore Zoo and Singapore Children’s Museum, and a masterclass by Professor Patricia Jennings.

About the National Institute of Early Childhood Development (NIEC)

NIEC is the national training institute set up in 2019 by the Ministry of Education to deliver quality training to Singapore’s early childhood (EC) educators at every career stage. NIEC provides a full range of certificates and diplomas for post-secondary students and mid-careerists embarking on their EC journey. In-service educators may also take Post-diplomas and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses with NIEC to deepen their EC skills. For more information, please visit www.niec.edu.sg.

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