

Macau Child Development Association

2009 Activities Report (January – September)



“Helping Kids Reach for the Stars”

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Activities Carried Out

January 2009 to September 2009

To render its services to the Macau community, the Macau Child Development Association had conducted several activities from January 2009 to August 2009.

1. Early Intervention Program

Our Early Intervention Program is one of the most important and crucial services that MCDA provides to children, families and the Macau community.

MCDA's Early Intervention Program is aimed at children from 2 to 4 years of age with learning difficulties and developmental disorders such as autism, or children with a high potential to have developmental delays. It is a comprehensive, coordinated and multidisciplinary intervention that involves combinations of programs, therapies and activities such as: psychomotor therapy, physical activities (gross and fine motor), cognitive/intellectual, occupational, adaptive, behavioral, psycho-emotional, guided social interaction stimulation and augmentative communication systems, to encourage language and speech. Besides these activities families and caregivers are also given guidance and training.

In view of MCDA's lack of facilities some sessions were conducted at DSEJ Rooms and MCDA Taipa Center. From the beginning September, this program will continue and will now be held at the School of the Nations MCDA room and at the MCDA Taipa Center.



MCDA Early Intervention Program focuses on very specific skills such as modifying behaviors or improving different skills that are necessary for the children to be highly-functional and successful in their environment. This intervention prepares them for an inclusive education and integration into society

2. Integrated Learning through Play Activities

These group activities have been developed for children from 2 to 12 years of age. Our objective is to integrate children with autism or/and learning difficulties, offering them educational training therapy in an environment group of socialization, as well as promoting a love of learning.

From January 2009-September 2009, 85 children have benefited from these activities.

The activities are developed in 2 hours sessions and they include different activities such as: (see session structure example – Attachment 1)

Writing activities

Mathematical concept development knowledge

Language acquisition: grammar and vocabulary

All these concepts are reinforced through all the senses: kinesthetic, auditory, tactile and visual. Designed to appeal to the children's intelligence and adapted to the way they learn.

- **Drawing, Tracing and Painting** – are activities that strengthen motor skills. They can also be used as tools for teaching shapes, contrasts, boundaries, spatial awareness, and other math concepts/ideas. It also stimulates children's creativity and imagination.



~~MCDA activities allow children to develop self-expression which lead them to discover their own talents and interests.~~

- **Music** – through music children learn about **rhythm, sound and pitch** and **academic facts** (like the alphabet song or multiplication table). Music makes learning easy and fun; it also develops memory and recall skills. Music leads the children to communication and expression. It helps children enhance creativity, imagination, and interpersonal skills.



MCDA believes that children learn more when they are having fun, and by nature, children enjoy and love music.

- **Dance** – By dancing, children can learn **sequencing rhythm** and **following directions**, it also develops their personality as dancing is a way of socializing. While developing body awareness, coordination and motor control, children can also learn **counting** and **directionality** which are basic skills to enhance **reading** and **writing** concepts – such as understanding the difference between similar looking letters (like p/b/d/q) and discriminating left from right.
- **Performing plays** – is an opportunity for children to understand their surroundings, their community and society “putting themselves into someone else’s shoes” through acting according to the given themes they learn in a profound and personal way.



MCDA provides opportunities for children to do role play and creative play. Creative play is like a spring that bubbles up from deep within a child, and role play teaches children to have empathy and passion for others, and stimulates their imagination as they desire to follow a specific role in society

- **Arts & Crafts** – reinforce children’s learning –encourage **self-expression**. Children can develop **vital problem solving skills** without having to rely on areas of expression that maybe more challenging. Arts and Crafts also develop cognitive and fine motor skills.



MCDA Arts and Crafts activities lead children to self-discovery and develop positive attitudes (such as patience, perseverance, giving and sharing).

- **Playing water and sand** – stimulates imaginative play and tactile sense, develops socialization skills (sharing, negotiating and turn taking) and eye-hand coordination.



- **Science projects** – by performing experiments and chemical experiences and creating gadgets children can observe and learn about science in our world and reinforce their school lessons in a fun way. MCDA use up-to-date visual tools like computers for the clients to create their presentations through searching the internet which teaches the value of science and technology being applied in practical situations.



MCDA Science Projects open new ideas and concepts for children to learn and apply in their daily activities.

- **Communication Development**

- Expressive Language Development – children with learning difficulties find it hard to communicate and express their feelings and needs. The main objective is to encourage expressive language in children with communication and developmental disorders such as Autism. Children are exposed to different communication stimulation techniques to encourage speech and develop language skills.
 - Oromotor exercises – blowing bubbles and blowing papers help to develop oro-motor skills.
 - Special Visual Activities – watching an educational guided movie (Maisy's ABC, Tweenies etc.) motivates the introduction to cognitive/intellectual learning. This activity is accompanied with tactile coordinated work properly developed for the clients.

3. Educational and Therapy Services

During 2009 MCDA provided these services to 50 children with learning difficulties/disabilities, autism and other development disorders. Due to the families economic difficulties, for some children this support is 50% subsidized by MCDA or provided for free.

On internship basis MCDA integrates in these services, psychology students, who have direct training from our qualified therapist assisting the children to follow the activities during the educational and therapy sessions.

- Educational Services – these services support children with learning difficulties/disabilities who are currently enrolled in mainstream schools to cope with the academic requirements. The service is adapted to children's needs in the subject areas of reading, writing, and math.
- Therapy services – children are supported with educational therapy and/or psychomotor therapy services in 1:1 and small group sessions (3 children per group)
- Educational Therapy – to provide diagnostic testing in the areas of focus/attention, memory, reading, spelling, writing, and mathematics that may identify specific learning deficits and to provide intensive, educational intervention for children with learning disabilities and learning challenges such as dyslexia, ADD/ADHD, language processing problems, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, auditory processing disorders, visual/spatial difficulties, poor organizational skills, and performance anxiety. These services are run by Mrs. Jennifer Camulli, Educational Therapist (BA., BEd., Med) to support English speaking children.

- Psychomotor Therapy – to provide assessment in children’s psychomotor development (gross motor, fine motor, spatial-temporal awareness, body awareness, social and self help skills) in order to identify specific psychomotor development disorders or underdeveloped skills that may be related to other specific learning disabilities. To then carry out intensive interventions using movement and multi-sensory stimulation to help children to improve on their underdeveloped psychomotor skills and to stimulate the learning process.



Psychomotor Therapy
Small Group

4. Guidance and Support for Parents

Parents’ involvement in the process of treatments and therapies is vital. MCDA aims to introduce the scientific concepts and positive attitude about autism and other learning difficulties to parents, family and society, to enhance their understanding of the available educational and social resources, as well as the theory and practical issues about educating autistic children or children with learning difficulties, or even the techniques to implement these theories in their interaction with their own child.

- a) **Awareness / Social Services to the Community** – every week parents approach the center seeking information about LD and developmental disorders.
- b) **Parent Support** – this support has been given to 15 families in order to advise parents as well as to clarify their doubts about their children.
- c) **Services Referrals** – MCDA refers children to other institutions for evaluation or therapeutic services that the association cannot provide.
- d) **Services Subsidy** – MCDA subsidizes therapeutic and special educational support services for children with Autism and Learning Disorders.



MCDA welcomes parents, relatives, and caregivers of both typical children and children with learning disabilities

5. Awareness and information for the community about Learning Difficulties and Autism

World Autism Awareness Day Celebration Event - 29th to 31st March

On 18th December 2007, the United Nations General Assembly declared the celebration of the World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD) on April 2nd each year. This declaration was made to join many countries around the world that are taking into account the large numbers of children who have a diagnosis under the autism spectrum. Awareness is the key to developing programs of support, research, and communication.

Macau Child Development Association (MCDA), established in 2004 as a non-profit, private organization provides services for families with children with special needs such as children with autism and children with learning and speech disorders.

With a series of events held between the 29th March and 31st March, MCDA and Macau celebrated for the first time the WAAD.

Dates and venues

- **March 29th at Iao Hon Park**

WAAD celebration event started on the 29th March with a Carnival at Jardim Iao Hon. Despite the inclement weather the carnival at Iao Hon Park was very well attended. Hundreds were in attendance both for the opening ceremony speech and the activities. The event was covered by local Chinese television and local journalists



- **March 30th at St. Joseph the Worker Church**

On the 30th of March an Entertainment Activity was held at St. Joseph the Worker Church to provide families with autistic children supportive group discussion. The aim of this activity was also to offer the public a chance to know more about MCDA, Autism and other learning difficulties.



- **March 31st at Centro Hospitalar Conde S. Januário**

The last day of this celebration event consisted in a conference held at Centro Hospitalar Conde S. Januário Auditorium, bringing together specialists and researchers from Macau and Hong Kong, who discussed a range of topics related to medical approach of Autism. According to MCDA's representative, the purpose of the conference was to share current best practices for helping children with Autism and to raise public awareness and understanding of social and clinical issues related to Autism, as special education of children with Autism and other learning difficulties is still underdeveloped in Macau.

The conference opening ceremony was presided over by Ms. Jennifer Camulli, educational therapist and MCDA's representative, and six distinguished speakers followed:

- **Professor Virginia Wong**, clinical professor at the Department of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine of the University of Hong Kong, gave an overview of Autism (possible causes, related syndromes screening and diagnosis, complementary and alternative medicine and diagnostic evaluation);

- **Professor Rik C. D'Amato**, Professor and Head of the Department of Psychology at the University of Macau who was recently awarded a *Medal of*



Achievement for serving a distinguished team as Editor-in-Chief of School Psychology Quarterly, discussed how a neurophysiological approach can help individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders;

- **Miss Cecilia Au**, a full member of The Hong Kong Association of Speech Therapists and Honorary Clinical Supervisor of Division of Speech and Hearing Sciences of the University of Hong Kong and a senior speech therapist, spoke of the role of speech therapy in facilitating communication in children with autistic features;

- **Professor Doris Mok**, Associate Professor of the Department of Psychology at The University of Macau and a licensed psychologist and credentialed school psychologist in California, spoke of early intervention in infancy and in pre-school for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders;

- **Professor Lilian Ko**, director, founder and consultant at the Hong Kong Child

Development Center, discussed in particular the relationship between the presence of heavy metals in our environment and the brain development in young children, and gave an overview of the incidence of Autism in Hong Kong and China.

The audience consisted of Parents, teachers, clinicians, students and also the general public.

235 people participated and gave an active and positive feedback from the conference. Special interest was shown in this topic by parents and by families with autistic children; this was evidenced by the active Q&A sessions after each presentation which included questions such as:

- “My son is autistic and he is being bullied in school. He is having difficulties in dealing with this situation, is there anything that I, as a parent, can do? Or is that any measures that should be taken by the school he is attending?”
- “Have you heard about the Son-Rise Program? Do you recommend it?”;
- “What is the difference between Autism and Asperger’s Syndrome?”;
- “Which organization in Macau is providing Floortime program?”;
- “I heard that there is a new way to do heavy metal detoxification. Is it some kind of injection? Do you know the treatment fee?”
- “How can I teach my son to say complex words smoothly?”
- “Is there a way I can motivate my son to speak and communicate with me?”

Concerned parents and the public eager to learn also approached the speakers after the seminars in order to improve their understanding of children with Autism spectrum disorders. In addition, many people showed interest on the services provided by MCDA by approaching MCDA’s information counter.



Outcome

- Overwhelming support and interest in this topic from different corporations, clinicians, parents and the general community resulted in sponsorships, generous donations and the success of this celebration event;
- Active and high participation in Q&A sessions showed that Macau's community have a great interest in subjects concerning the well being of children;
- The conference proved to be a good opportunity for students and Macau's young generation to learn more about Autism and to enrich their knowledge about the occurrence of Autism in Asia;

Acknowledgements

MCDA was only able to organize this special event celebrating WAAD, with the generosity of the 17 volunteers from the Salvation Army, Macau Scouts, sponsors Hospital Conde São Januário, DSEJ, Pinto Book Shop, Kids Gallery, HolidayInn, Waldo, Grand Waldo , Golf Association and CESL Asia, MCDA limited staff, speakers and participants.

6. Summer Speech Therapy Service Program - July 6 – 17

Macau Child Development Association and the Hong Kong Association of Speech Therapists jointly organized a two-week Summer Speech Therapy Service Program for the local children from July 6 to 17, 2009. With the support from the University of Hong Kong, Speech and Hearing Sciences Department, MCDA was able to run the program for 14 children. 12 children finished the 2 week program while 2 children only participated in the initial assessment. Under the supervision of Mrs. Lorinda Kwan, Ms. Fanny Lam and Ms. Janet Ng, three students from the university gained practical experience from this program. And our parents received an opportunity to learn more about speech therapy, something they had not previously been able to do in Macau.

Individual Screening

The program started with an initial screening performed by three internship students under the supervision of senior speech therapists. Children were divided into small groups or individuals, based on their functioning and ability, and evaluated on the first day.



Daily Therapy Session

Every day the therapy session was tailor-planned for the children in order to cope with their difficulties. As there is a high demand for speech therapists all over the world, parents greatly valued this opportunity. There are many more parents on our waiting list hoping for a chance to have their children screened by the clinicians so they will learn more about their children's needs.



Outcome

The two-week speech therapy program concluded successfully. Evaluation reports on the program have been prepared for the parents' future reference. Through this program, parents got to know more about Speech Therapy and received recommendations from professional therapists for their children's development.



Acknowledgements

As this program was performed by the clinician students and the therapists on a voluntary basis, we received support from many organizations and parties. Besides contributions given by the parents, the Mandarin Oriental Macau (Grand Lapa Hotel) and the Holiday Inn Macau provided us with rooms for the students' accommodation for two weeks. Moreover, we acknowledged the Bond Medical for offering us rooms for the therapy sessions and the Cotai-Jet for providing the ferry tickets for the clinician students and supervisors.

7. Workshops for School Teachers

- Workshop Training for D. José da Costa Nunes kindergarten teachers

In June and July MCDA provided a training workshop specifically developed by the psychomotor therapist Margarida Marreiros for the Portuguese kindergarten D. José da Costa Nunes.

The 20 hours of training targeted the signs of difficulties in psychomotor skills' acquisition and development in children from 3 to 6 years old, as well as providing different strategies for teachers to better stimulate learning and skills' development.

Carried out in ten sessions, with each session focusing on: the typical skill's aquired by children between 3 and 6 years old in different areas of their psychomotor; development: gross motor, fine motor, body awareness, spatial and temporal awareness; the warning signs that can be used to identify possible difficulty or



disorder in a child; and strategies and tools that can be used to help the child to improve the underdeveloped skills.



In every session, all the kindergarten teachers who attended the training also had the opportunity to discuss specific difficulties of some of the children they have in their classrooms.

Professional Development Workshop for School of the Nations Teachers

In August 2009, MCDA provided a 2-day professional development workshop (Brain Compatible Learning) for 15 teachers at School of the Nations. Ms. Jennifer Camulli, an educational therapist and consultant for MCDA, facilitated the workshop on the topics of multiple intelligences and learning styles. Both theory and research-based evidence were discussed and then applied through hands-on learning activities. Practical examples of simple modifications to teaching styles helped teachers realize how important it is to adapt to



the various learning profiles in a classroom. It was a highly successful collaboration that not only inspired the teachers but also resulted in their requests for future workshops.



8. MCDA Early Intervention Program and Educational and Therapy Services

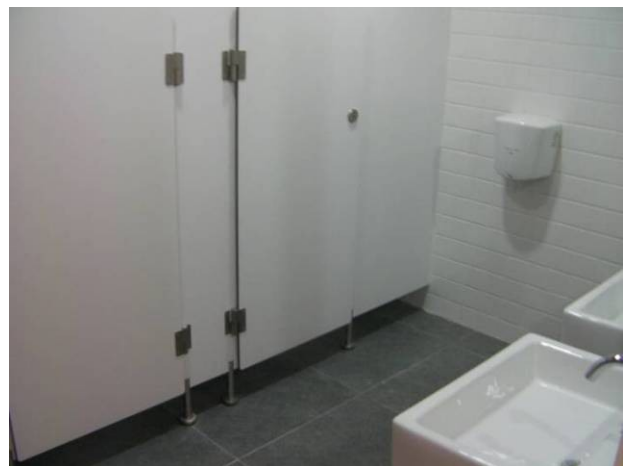
SCHOOL OF THE NATIONS CLASSROOM



The Classroom



The Open Area Adjacent to the Classroom



The Exclusive Toilet and Wash Area inside the Classroom

9. Summer Activities

During summer, MCDA designs activities that would make both typical children and children with learning disabilities vacation time more fruitful and enjoyable. The activities include drawing and painting, arts and crafts, music, dancing, performing plays, exploring science, book interpretation, writing activities, physical activities, games, board games, Cantonese for kids, preparing snacks, and cooking. This June to September, 85 children attended the daily activities. See attached list of children.



Integrated Learning Through Play Activities 2009

(From January to July)

Table 1: Morning Class Age 2-4

	Name		Name		Name
1	Finn. B	16	Argus. H	31	Ben. H
2	Dylan. S	17	Michelle	32	Daisy. H
3	Carlos. M	18	Johnny	33	Hennessy. W
4	Abygail. C	19	Emily. E	34	Alecia. B
5	Him Him	20	Ryan	35	Kit. H
6	Lorraine. M	21	Jasmine. L	36	Noan. D
7	Walter. L	22	Long. L	37	Jojo. O
8	Daryl. C	23	Cassandra. B	38	Hong. C
9	Perri. L	24	Lucas. T	39	Ava. S
10	Hong Hong	25	Luis. T	40	Amy. C
11	In In	26	Hei. S.T	41	Chloe. B
12	Rio. I	27	Victoria	42	Ushwya. B
13	Marta	28	Tang. M	43	Bogdan. M
14	Tang Tang	29	Hoi. K	44	Josh. P
15	Nathalie. C. B	30	Alecia. B	45	Mackenzie. M. G

Table 2: Afternoon Class Age 4-6

	Name		Name
1	Keyne. I	16	Anthea. C
2	Crispin. I	17	Alexander. B. A
3	Joseph. L	18	Elain. L
4	Josephine. L	19	Mar. P
5	Charlyn. S	20	São José. P
6	Alpha. K	21	Hang Hang. C
7	Haywood. T	22	Chon Chon. C
8	Kimberly. C	23	Rodrigo. G
9	Spencer. J. B	24	Diniz. W
10	Fong. C	25	Keng Un. W
11	Zoe. F	26	Vicente. M
12	Kei. C	27	Guilhermina. P
13	Noel. L	28	Hoi Kei. C
14	Hang. H	29	Nathan. W
15	John. L	30	Gi Weng. F

Table 3: Afternoon Class Age 6-10

	Name
1	Angela. M
2	Boris. C
3	Eric. L
4	Isac. S
5	Otilia. C

Table 4: Afternoon Class Age 10-12

	Name
1	Sergio
2	Brain. M
3	Max
4	Andrew. C
5	Chon. C

In total there are 85 children who have benefited from MCDA activities during this period

List of Activities and the number of children

Date	Activity	Information	Number of Participants
January to May 2009	Integration Learning Through Play Activities	Toddlers (from 2– 4 years old)	19
		Weekend (from 4 – 8 years old)	12
June to September 2009	Integration Learning Through Play Summer Activities	Toddlers (from 2 – 4 years old)	26
		Afternoon Class (from 4 – 6 years old)	18
		Afternoon Class (from 6 – 10 years old)	5
		Afternoon Class (from 10 – 12 years old)	5
Total of children			85

Staff List

Eliana Calderon	Ann Lam Pui I	Dickson Pun Chi Kuong	Celia Choi
Margarida Marreiros	Celia Wong Ka Hong	Esther Chan Sok Cheng	Vanessa Chan Weng Hun
Bonnie Tin Wan Cheng	Inkita Lam	Vivian Sio Weng Ian	Claire
Mary Ann Biliwang	Joana	Ivy Lei In San	San
Amy Yuen Wing Sze	Esther Leong	Cindy Cheong Fong Ieng	Joanna Marie E.L.
Yvonne Leong Sok On	Caroline	Wing	John
Lawrence Chim	Vivian Vong	Asa Asami Taira	Vivian Ho
Zita Wong Hoi Tong	Amanda	Kain Tang Kuong Lam	Leo Chan Ka Hei
William Wong Kai Hong	Winnie Chan Weng I	Chameli Leong	Nicole Vong Wai Kun
Ana Kim	Hoey Kuan Hou I	Jessica Leong Sok Na	Kita Cheong Sut Kun
Carmen Wong Ka I	Nelma Dias Ma	Sherry Lao Nga Kei	Eunice Ho Cheng I

Totally, there were 44 staff members who have worked in MCDA in this period

10. Community Activities

MCDA has established synergies with other community institutions (ILCM – Moms & Tots) which use the pilot center to carry out activities oriented for the children and therefore increases early stimulation and child development awareness.



Moms & Tots

11. Other synergies

MCDA embraces activities that can encourage children's development. Hence, our association has been cooperating with a kindermusik teacher to carryout music classes for toddlers.



Kindermusik

Attachments

Attachment 1

Integrated Learning Through Play Activities
Even young toddlers can begin to learn about the world around them.
August's Weekly Calendar



Week 1: Dressing Up (Who am I?)



Activities	Day 1 (Aug. 4)	Day 2 (Aug. 6)	Day 3 (Aug. 8)
10:30 – 10:40 Free Play (Blue Area)	Cars and Road Maps	Musical Instruments	Balls and Boxes
10:41 – 10:50 Song and Rhyme (Blue Area) 10:51 – 11:00 Circle Time (Blue Area)	Good Morning Song, ABC, If You're Happy etc. Dressing Up	Good Morning Song, ABC, If You're Happy etc. Dressing Up	Good Morning Song, ABC, If You're Happy etc. Dressing Up
11:01-11:16 Free Play	Blocks	Oral Motor Exercise: Blowing Papers	Fine Motor Exercise: Lacing
11:17-11:30	Wash and Snack Time		
11:31-11:45 Special Activity	Maisy's ABC – Familiarize M Introduction to Cognitive Learning	Maisy's ABC- Recognize M Introduction to Cognitive Learning	Maisy's ABC- Review K, L and M Introduction to Cognitive Learning
11:45 – 11: 50 Free Play (Blue Area)	Assorted Manipulative Toys	Books and Soft Toys	Tunnels
11:46 – 12:15 Art Project			
12:16 –12:30 Learning Time	MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT: Number Spotting	SCISSOR SKILLS PRACTICE	HANDWRITING READINESS: Tracing the dotted lines

Integrated Learning Through Play Activities Guide and Description

Week 1: Dressing Up (Who am I?)

General information the children should know:

Safety is important. Accidents happen everywhere.

Day 1 (Tuesday – Aug. 4)

FREE PLAY:	Cars and Road Maps
CIRCLE TIME	Good Morning Song, ABC, If You're Happy etc. Dressing Up
TRANSITION	Blocks
SPECIAL ACTIVITY	Maisy's ABC – Familiarize M Introduction to Cognitive Learning
FREE PLAY	Assorted Manipulative Toys
ART PROJECT	
LEARNING TIME	MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT: Number Spotting

Day 2 (Thursday – Aug. 6)

FREE PLAY:	Musical Instruments
CIRCLE TIME	Good Morning Song, ABC, If You're Happy etc. Dressing Up
TRANSITION	Oral Motor Exercise: Blowing Papers
SPECIAL ACTIVITY	Maisy's ABC- Recognize M Introduction to Cognitive Learning
FREE PLAY	Books and Soft Toys
ART PROJECT	
LEARNING TIME	SCISSOR SKILLS PRACTICE

Day 3 (Saturday – Aug. 8)

FREE PLAY:	Balls and Boxes
CIRCLE TIME	Good Morning Song, ABC, If You're Happy etc. Review: I'm a little fishy New Song: The Ocean Song
TRANSITION	Fine Motor Exercise: Lacing
SPECIAL ACTIVITY	Maisy's ABC- Review K, L and M Introduction to Cognitive Learning
FREE PLAY	Tunnels
ART PROJECT	
LEARNING TIME	HANDWRITING READINESS: Tracing the dotted lines. (3 lines)