



WALK OF A LIFETIME 2024

Come Build a More Inclusive Future for Persons with Autism

More than 50,000 persons in Singapore have autism. And community support is crucial for some among them who will not be able to live independently and/or integrate into society.

Organised by St. Andrew's Autism Centre (SAAC), this year's Walk of a Lifetime (WOAL 2024) aims to drum up greater public engagement and inclusivity for persons with autism and their families. It will be held on 21 September (Sat), 9am to 12nn, at St. Andrew's Junior College and St. Andrew's Secondary School.

WOAL 2024 offers a bigger line-up of interactive and experiential activities that underline its three themes of **Understand**, **Accept**, and **Embrace**. Join us at our community celebration where friends, families, neighbours, co-workers and even corporates come together to honour persons with autism and extol their different, diverse abilities.



Leading the festivities is a five-station **learning journey**, where fun activities such as scavenger hunts, charades and sensory sensitivity corners give participants glimpses into the world of autism and its challenges.

Find out, among other things, why some individuals with

autism experience difficulties with two-way conversation and how others in the community can more **effectively interact** with them.



To up the fun further is **Make-Your-Own-Windmill**. Upon registration, participants receive a DIY kit, which they can assemble and decorate, then carry throughout the walk. As they cross the finishing line, participants proceed to "plant" their windmills in a "garden". **A symbol of hope and resilience**, the windmill aptly encapsulates SAAC's mission to enrich quality of life for our beneficiaries.

Unlike last year's walk, which stretched 5km, WOAL 2024 has it shortened to **1.9km**. That, as well as having the route **mostly on footpaths**, are part of our efforts to keep the environment welcoming for persons with autism and caregivers. Meanwhile, we will bring back your favourite moments from last year, notably the **silent ovation** before flag-off.

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Save The Date

When 21 September 2024 (Sat), 9am - 12nn
Where St. Andrew's Junior College (start point)
 St. Andrew's Secondary School (end point))
Guest of Honour Mr Edwin Tong, Minister for
 Culture, Community and Youth, & Second
 Minister for Law



REGISTER HERE

COMMUNITY



Our emcees for the day: SAAS students Jason and Riman, and volunteer Suguet.



DAC client Aloysius was part of our guest registration team.



"1, 2, say cheese!" our volunteer Peter coaxed from behind the camera.



SAAS Transition Planning Coordinator Yin Hong showing a young guest how students use the communication board.



The team from Red Dot Penguins took time out to have tea with us!

SAAC CEO Bernard Chew presented our donors with tokens of appreciation.



OUR DONORS

You Came, You Saw, And You Gave

Our Donor Appreciation Tea was held on 10 May 2024 at our 1 Elliot Road campus. Many agreed it felt like a gathering of good friends both new and old, as well as young and young-at-heart. Amid the mingling and sharing, there was plenty of laughter and some tears (of joy) to go around too.

These are friends united by a mission to enable our beneficiaries to lead dignified and meaningful lives. Such generosity underlines the love and trust we receive from the community - and continues to push us forward in our mission to serve persons with autism and their families.

As our beneficiaries gain confidence and develop skills, they learn to gradually find their place in the world. For your compassion and commitment, we are grateful.



"There may be other upcoming opportunities for SAAC to play a bigger part in bringing greater dignity and quality of life to persons with autism. But the core of our mission lies in the 3 services we currently run. Through our school, our DACs and our Home, SAAC continues to walk with persons with moderate to severe autism throughout their lifetime. Despite the significant challenges of living with autism, we believe that if we have love and compassion for them, and we learn how best to care for them, we will make a significant difference in their lives. Autism lasts a lifetime. But we believe, no one should take that journey alone."

— **Bernard Chew, CEO, SAAC**



"It's my hope that more of society's efforts will be dedicated to caring for children with autism, filling the world with love and hope so that each child is no longer alone..." — **Lina Fu, Bo Rui Foundation**



"Having a safe space for Lucas to come to on a daily basis has been reassuring to me as a parent. Together with the coaches, we always look at the goals we want to set out for him, and we see how to integrate activities in his daily schedule so as to meet those goals." — **Sharon Lee, executive coach, and mother of DAC client Lucas Tan**



"I encourage everyone to come to learn and understand what SAAC does on a daily basis, and then you'll see the gaps that you can fill. This will be a contribution you can make for this community and the people who serve this community." — **Ili Ibrahim, retail manager (Southeast Asia), King Living Pte Ltd**

If you would like to contribute to this transformative journey, consider a one-time donation or recurring contributions.



Donate

#WOAL2024

By participating in WOAL 2024, you become part of a community to support persons with autism throughout their journey.

Participants go beyond learning what autism is - it is a neurological and developmental disorder that affects how people communicate, interact with others, and perceive the world around them - to help advocate for greater public awareness and acceptance.



Meanwhile, SAAH (pictured right) is Singapore's first purpose-built 24/7 residential facility for persons with autism. It focuses on daily living skills and emotional behavioural management, with activities and programmes that allow for greater social interaction and communal living.

Because Your Acceptance Matters

There are other ways to show support for our beneficiaries - we serve 470 across our Special Education School, DACs, and SAAH.

Besides raising funds and/or donating, you may consider becoming a volunteer with us, or simply spreading the word among friends and family. If you would like to join us on this journey to make a difference to persons with autism, register for WOAL 2024 now.

More information at www.walkofalifetime.sg; for other enquiries, email: walkofalifetime@saac.org.sg.

By joining the walk, you also help to raise funds that enable SAAC to continue serving our beneficiaries through quality education, training and care. Such programmes and activities will support them towards dignified and meaningful lives - specifically at our Day Activity Centres (DACs) and St. Andrew's Adult Home (SAAH).

Our two DACs in Siglap and Sengkang (pictured left) respectively equip clients with essential life skills and vocational training to foster self-sufficiency and community engagement. Programmes are curated to suit their different needs and abilities, and are designed to integrate interests with practical skills.



 @sg.saac  @saacsg  @standrewsautismcentre

The Corp Comms Team | corpcomms@saac.org.sg | St. Andrew's Autism Centre, 1 Elliot Road, S458686



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