



GRASSROOTS

A publication of The Grassroots' Club
MCI(P)020/06/2015

with passion

Private Tuition During School Holidays: How Much is Too Much?



**Through the
Eye of a Camera**

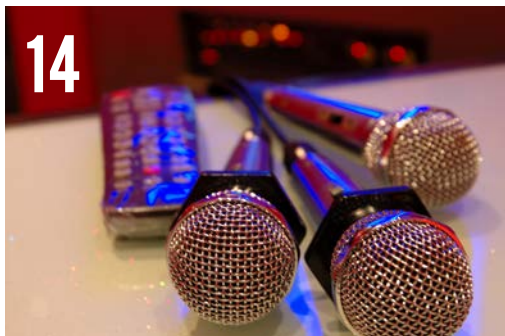
**Fatherhood: A Lifelong
Learning Journey**

HAVE YOUR SAY!

Did budget 2016 meet your expectations? How or how not?



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Issue 102 (Jun-Jul 2016)

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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

HR, LEGAL & DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE



Ms Lim Yen Lan, PBM
Chairman
HR, Legal & Disciplinary Committee

Dear Readers,

> Most of you would have noticed the improvements in the appearance of the Club after the completion of the phase 1 and phase 2 upgrading. Further improvements are on the way so do keep a lookout for these.

One of the main responsibilities of the HR, Legal & Disciplinary Committee is the handling of disputes among members and complaints against other members which warrant the attention of the Club. I am happy to inform you that so far my Committee has yet to be called upon to take action on such cases, proving that all our members are warm and friendly towards each other.

My Committee is also helping to keep the Club updated on current HR policies. We are reviewing the staff welfare and benefits and bringing them in line with that of the People's Association.

Our Club's Annual General Meeting (AGM) is round the corner. As this is an election year, we hope to see more new faces taking part in the elections. If you wish to make a difference to the running of the Club, please do not hesitate to take part in the elections to be part of the Management Committee.

The Grassroots' Club is built for the benefit of grassroots leaders. For grassroots leaders who have not joined the Club, we are going to roll out a new membership promotion package very soon. Not forgetting our current members, we will also be implementing an attractive renewal package. I look forward to seeing more of you at the Club. After all, The Grassroots' Club is your club. >



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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Dear TGC Members,

> Time really does fly, and it does not wait for anyone. We are now into the second half of the year, and wishing you more exciting months ahead.

Time also brought much transformation to The Grassroots' Club, what with its revitalised façade and range of improved facilities. Have you visited us yet? If not, please do.

In this issue, we bring you practical topics – materials that may well jolt your thinking and your desire to learn and enrich your lives. Again, this is where you can play an important role in our selection of themes. Feel free to write to us to tell us what you would like to see featured in future editions of the magazine.

Also tell us what you like or do not like about the magazine; that's the best way for us to keep improving on it so that it becomes a must-read for you, a valued member of our beloved club. Be hearing from you soon!

Edward See Chak Fei, PBM
Editor

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SPOTLIGHT

THROUGH THE EYE OF A CAMERA

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY EDWARD SEE, PBM



> Photography is one of the most important innovations in modern living. Images help us to share a story, journal our experiences and relive memories.

Photo-taking is a huge subject and it is not possible to do it any justice within a short piece such as this. So I will limit my discussion to what I consider two rather key aspects – Aperture and Composition, after which there is nothing like Trying it out yourself. In other words, ACT on your desire to capture life's beautiful moments!

Aperture setting

First thing first, what you see with your eyes is not necessarily what can be captured with a camera. This is because we view in 3-dimensional space, while the camera "sees" in 2-dimensional. What we can see of the background in relation to the foreground subject may only

be captured with the camera, many a times, as the subject against a blurred background.

This is where the aperture setting comes into play. The aperture setting in most DSLR's allows you to control the amount of light coming into the camera, the smaller the aperture setting the less light coming through, and vice versa. But this also affects how the background will turn out, that is, the larger the aperture, the focus will be the subject matter, whereas the background will likely be blurred. Meanwhile, a smaller aperture allows a more balanced distribution across the whole frame photograph. If you want your subject to be the main focus without the distraction of the background, then use a larger aperture setting, but if you want an even focus then use a smaller aperture setting.



Left, with a larger aperture setting. Right, with a smaller aperture setting

SPOTLIGHT

A larger lens opening (Aperture setting between f1.8 ~ f3.5) also allows one to use a higher speed to reduce the blurring effect of the subject, but at the same time, reduce the depth-of-field effect again focusing on the subject matter.

Picture composition

Photo composition is how we frame the subject within the photo frame. Seasoned photographers may refer to these as photography “rules”. For me, they are photography principles. Here are some of the principles that you can consider when you next take out your camera.

Principle 1: Focus on the subject

Do not allow too much clutter in the background or your subject can get lost. Stay focused, and zoom in to the subject.



Principle 2: Place the subject off-centre

This is also known as the “Rule of Thirds”. Some say that the centre is not the most important part of the photo, which I don’t necessarily agree. But placing the subject off-centre can offer an interesting composition.

Principle 3: Compose with lines, diagonals and frames

Use lines and diagonals to lead our eyes to the subject, regardless of what the subject is.



To sum up, it’s no point just reading about good photography without trying it out. Go out there with your camera and enjoy the fun of photography; remember, ACT on it and start shooting! ▶

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IN FOCUS

Private Tuition During School Holidays: How Much is Too Much?

School's out, but for some students, the holidays do not offer much relieve from their studies.



> According to a survey published by The Straits Times in July 2015, seven in 10 parents send their children for tuition. While the published results do not carry any mention of tuition during the holidays, there are bound to be students whose semester breaks are not an excuse for them to shun the textbooks.

Mr Rum Tan of SmileTutor Tuition Agency continues to bear witness to this trend. "Holidays are where parents try to pack their child's schedules with lots of tuition, to push their grades up," he said. "This happens both during the June holidays after the mid-year exams, to gain an edge or to catch up for final exams, and the December holidays, to cover the year's syllabus and prepare for the next year."

There is no clear answer whether tuition or more tuition during holidays is good for the kid. On one hand, the spare time affords weaker students the chance to catch up with their peers, especially in today's competitive environment and unforgiving pace of learning.

On the other, some students might already be on or comfortably above the performance curve, yet parents strive to push them further either to push them to outdo themselves or to ensure their grades are maintained. This

can be added pressure to the child and deprives him of the break he deserves.

Work-play balance

Ten-year-old Isaac Wee has English and Math tuition and like many kids his age, he isn't a fan of reaching for the books during the holidays. "I will not be able to do the things I want to do, like visiting Universal Studios Singapore," he said.

Recognising the need to strike a balance between work and play, his mother, Mrs Valerie Wee, chose to only give Isaac one session of tuition during the upcoming June holidays.

"We decided to have only one lesson, precisely because he needs a good break. Isaac has a three-day school camp, two four-day church camps with the family, swimming and piano lessons, which would already occupy his time," she said.

She also arranged for that one tuition session to be held during the last week of the June holidays, as a refresher to prepare Isaac for the next semester.





Mr Tay Soo Kiang, who has two daughters aged nine and 14, has enrolled his children at tuition centres for all four major subjects – English, Chinese, Math and Science. With the exception of English, tuition for the other subjects continues to be held once a week throughout the holidays.

While it seems as though his children have their work cut out for them, Mr Tay stresses that these enrichment classes do not interfere with family time. “If there is a need for them to miss lessons due to vacation, I will make the necessary arrangements,” he added.

Clearly both Mrs Wee and Mr Tay believe that tuition is essential for the child’s development, as long as careful consideration is given to determine how much of it is adequate for each individual child.

So how much is adequate? Mr Tan noted that there are overzealous parents who tend to dictate what their child does during the holidays, and end up placing too much focus on what they want and what they think is best for their child.

“This may not be a bad thing all the time, but it often means that in many cases, the child can be unfocused or unwilling to study, yet is inundated with tuition,” he said. “In such cases, the child may develop depression or resentment towards their parents, and the tuition itself may be very ineffective.”

Necessary evil

Some educators themselves recognise the need for tuition as a form of supplementing what is taught in school, but they too are aware of the need for holidays as a period to de-stress.

“I don't have anything against children having tuition during the holidays, but I just hope that it's not too often. The holiday is a time for the child to give their mind a rest and be kids for a bit,” said a secondary school teacher, who chose to remain anonymous. “That doesn't mean they can play all the way, so having tuition once a week for an hour or two will help keep the child's mind fresh while not overstraining it.”

Perhaps as a way of steering students away from studies during the break, schools have lined up camps, excursions and overseas trips during the holidays. With the bulk of the school year centred on academics, this is an appropriate time for children to build up their non-academic interests.

“I would certainly let my kids go for suitable alternative activities that allow them to have a more holistic experience in life,” said Mr Tay.

While there is no consensus over how often students should be subjected to tuition during the break, the general idea is that less is more and that every child is different.

“I've heard of students who have tuition four times a week during the holidays. This is counter-intuitive as it puts the child under much more academic strain,” said the unnamed teacher.

Ultimately, better communication between parents and their children is key to determining the right amount of tuition hours for each child, according to his pace and need. In the grand scheme of things, giving the child some freedom during the holidays can surprisingly be a form of providing the best for them. ➤

TGC SUNDAY

FATHERHOOD: A LIFELONG LEARNING JOURNEY

BY JOEY KOH, PBM

➤ As a first-time father, I vowed to be the best father to my son Javier when he was born in 2002.

That year on 3 August, I was waiting anxiously and patiently for his arrival at the delivery ward of Mount Alvernia Hospital. The excitement and joy I felt then when I finally held him in my arms and kissed him was beyond any words.

Since that day, my wife and I realised everything about our lives started to revolve around Javier, wherever we were and whatever we did. We are well on our parenting journey and there is no turning back!

Aspiring to be a "perfect" father and as part of my passion for lifelong learning, I enrolled myself for a part-time post-graduate diploma in "Early Childhood Education" with Edith Cowan University. It turned out to be the best decision I made, for parenting is indeed a lifelong process – once a parent always one, regardless the age of your child.

At the course, I picked up many tips on parenting and nurturing children from my lecturers and classmates, many of whom are both mothers and childcare professionals with reputable preschool chains such as Julia Gabriel, Eaton House, PAP Community Foundation and NTUC.

When Javier entered infancy, I embarked on another learning journey with him, this time using the expensive but proven method of Glen Doman program of flash cards. I was simply amazed and impressed by the outcome of programs like "How to teach your baby Math using Doman's Red Dot cards" and "How to teach your baby to read."

To me, the most effective tip was to have Javier sit on my lap just before his bedtime for a story I will read to him every night without fail. That cultivated in him a passion for learning and reading. Till today, Javier will still read before going to bed.

Like many boys his age, he is also quite a techie who enjoys electronic games – "Gameboy" in the early days before progressing to PS and then video sports like soccer and boxing, as well as Super Mario, street fighter on the Wii machine and Xbox. We also visit the arcades for all-time favourites like Daytona car racing and table soccer.

But it's not all geeky stuff for Javier and I. Father and son are as much for the great outdoors. For example, we love to roller blade and cycle at Ang Mo Kio-Bishan Park, catch



"Aspiring to be a 'perfect' father and as part of my passion for lifelong learning, I enrolled myself for a part-time post-graduate diploma in 'Early Childhood Education' ...It turned out to be the best decision...for parenting is indeed a lifelong process."

"long-kang" fishes at Bishan Park, kick a soccer ball or play badminton, or simply head for the swing and the see-saw at the nearby playground.

The swimming pool and the Jacuzzi are also our frequent weekend haunts – Javier loves to pretend to be "Animal Kaiser", his favourite character in the video game, and then we would wrestle and battle until I am exhausted or defeated, usually.

My wish is to venture overseas for more of such father-son dates before he prefers to have his own holidays with his friends. ➤

VOICES

” DID BUDGET 2016 MEET YOUR EXPECTATIONS? HOW OR HOW NOT? ”

Yes, budget 2016 met my expectations. What this budget has addressed is far reaching, not only does it aim to address near-term cyclical weakness but also medium-term challenges and opportunities.

I did expect a tapering of PIC, but i didn't expect that they would come up with the Jurong Innovation District (JID) which shows the commitment and farsightedness of the government in pursuing innovation!

~ Mr CK Eu

Budget 2016 is a very good budget as it covers all sectors and evenly spreads goodies among wide-ranging age groups, agencies, industries and investors.

With an uncertain economy ahead, Singaporeans would tend to worry about their future, such as starting families. The budget will be able to help, what with the introduction of bonuses for families and children, for eg., Baby Bonus and Edusave. Needs of the elderly, the married couples and those with special needs will also be taken care of.

The budget is an assurance to Singaporeans that we are ready for the changes ahead and will pull through in spite of the tough economy.

~ Mr Joshi

I think Budget 2016 is generally well-thought out and covers different sectors.

However, it is more reactionary than proactive when dealing with economic slowdown in Southeast Asia, especially in China. While the budget's financial impact remains to be seen, the nation should steer its economy towards being more independent by encouraging local entrepreneurship.

As for society/family, the budget does address Singaporeans' needs with initiatives such as the Silver Support Scheme, flat rental and Child Development Account. Moving forward, the budget can address issues such as wage schemes for employees and new roles for PMET.

So far, the budget managed to address the needs of lower income families with initiatives such as housing grants and support schemes. I feel that the budget should also address the needs of the middle class/ those living in private housing by extending healthcare assistance/initiatives.

In addition, more can be done to prepare our youth for an increasingly competitive world, such as encouraging them to take measured risks as entrepreneurs, and retaining the pool of young people who have ventured abroad to hone their skills.

In all, I feel that future budgets should take the larger scheme of things into consideration, to encourage Singaporeans to be active contributors to the community.

~ Mr Tony Yeap



RECAP

3 DAYS 2 NIGHTS CAMERON HIGHLANDS

30 APRIL 2016 TO 2 MAY 2016

➤ On 30 April to 2 May 2016, a total of 30 members and guests escaped the heat of Singapore and spent a wonderful 3D2N at the cooling Cameron Highlands. The group visited various local attractions such as Boh Tea plantation, Strawberry Centre, Cactus Point and Lavender Garden, Mushroom farm and so on. It was also a good opportunity for members to bond with fellow grassroots leaders and their family.

Shopping lovers also enjoyed their visits to the local markets as well as the stopover at Mid Valley Megamall at KL on the way back to Singapore. After dinner on the last day, the participants were pleasantly surprised when cakes were brought out to have an early Mother's Day celebration. It was an enjoyable outing for the group and they are looking forward to more holiday getaway tours organised by the Club. ➤





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CALENDAR OF EVENTS



HOKKIEN KARAOKE SINGING CLASS

Date: 5 July 2016 to 23 August 2016
 (Every Tuesday) – 8 sessions
Time: 7.00pm to 9.00pm
Venue: TGC
Fees: \$120 (Members), \$135 (Guests)

Conducted by former Taiwanese media artiste Chen Lin, this singing class will provide a conducive environment to develop your singing techniques such as breathing, intonation and pitching. You can also start building your confidence by singing to your classmates!

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50TH INTAKE YOGA CLASS

Date: 21 July 2016 to 20 October 2016
 (Every Thursday) – 12 sessions
Time: 6.45pm to 8.30pm
Fee: \$16.00 (Member)
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MEMBER ACTIVITIES

FINANCIAL SEMINARS



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Time: 10.30am to 12.30pm

Venue: TGC

Fees: Free for all members, GRLs and guests!
Guests are required to be signed-in by TGC members

Light refreshments to be served after event

Retire Happy: 5 Essentials to Happiness – 16 Jul 2016

If you think you may need to have more than just CPF payouts and savings to enjoy your retirement, you are right! The future looks expensive! It is good to prepare now!

4 Steps to Inheritance Planning – 27 Aug 2016

Only with proper Inheritance Planning can you ensure that the dreams you have for your loved ones will carry on, such as your kids going on to university or your business carrying on with your blessings.

3 Strategies to battle Healthcare Costs – 17 Sep 2016

Rising healthcare costs are a concern for everyone. Will the new Medishield Life cover the full cost when one is hospitalised? Are private Shield Plans still required? The seminar will help you answer these common questions.

ONE-DAY DURIAN AND SHOPPING TRIP TO MALAYSIA

A trip dedicated to fans of the King of Fruits. Feast on high quality Mountain Cat King Durians (猫山王), other branded durians such as D24, X0, D13 Durians and other seasonal fruits for a low price!



Besides feasting on durians, participants can look forward to some local shopping at Ayer Hitam and AEON, the biggest shopping mall in Johore.

Date: 30 Jul 2016 (Saturday)

Venue: Assemble at TGC at 6.45am

Fee: TGC Member \$62, Guest \$75

Closing Date: 15 Jul 2016 or once seats are filled

Tour fee includes:

- Guided Tour
- 2-way return air-conditioned coach
- Durian feast and lunch, dinner at local restaurants
- Group Insurance
- Tipping



Itinerary (subject to changes)

Depart from TGC and proceed to 2nd link for Tangkat. Brief stop for breakfast at local coffee shop at own expense. Durian lunch to be followed once reached durian plantation at Tangkat. Shopping stops at Ayer Hitam and AEON. Dinner at local restaurant before proceeding back to Singapore.

Welcome!

TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!

**As of 17 June 2016*

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Ang Eng Chew
Ang Jing Jing Adeline
Anne Marie Gutierrez
Ashok Kumar
Chang Yoke Theng Edna
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Sypongco Vicente Alolor
Tan Key Peng
Tanaz Suresh
Tang Jin Huat Gary
Teo Koon Hwee
Thahiribunu
Tow Chew Choy
Vincent Yap Soo Beng
Vishal Pratap Dang
Yeo Chee Beng
Yeo Siok Thiam Gimmy

Join us at our next

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

All voting members (Founder and Ordinary) are encouraged to attend. The Annual Report and Notice of Meeting will be mailed to members in early July 2016.

Date: Friday, 22 July 2016

Time: 7.30pm (Registration starts at 6.30pm)

Venue: TGC Auditorium

Buffet dinner will be served for voting members (Founder and Ordinary) after the Meeting.

FREE!
TGC VOUCHERS
WORTH \$50
for every member
who attends the AGM



Muslim Delights



Voted Singapore's Top 5 "Nasi Padang Restaurants" by a local radio station, the halal restaurant is made famous by its fabulous offerings of *nasi padang* Indonesian style such as *ayam masak merah*, *sotong hitam*, *sambal goreng* and much more.

Also known for its catering services, MUSLIM Delights was the choice of Singapore Idol Taufik Batisah whose wedding party in February 2015 hosted 3,000 guests, as well as Radio DJ Syah Ibrahim who hosted 6,000 guests at his November 2014 wedding.

MUSLIM Delights at TGC will provide theme parties such as Penang Fair, BBQ Fiesta, Arabian Night and much more. For booking or event enquiry please call

96330261

