Inclusive Attitudes Survey Part 2
Views of the Parents of Children with Special Needs
Prepared for Lien Foundation

July 4, 2016
About the Survey

The Lien Foundation commissioned the Inclusive Attitudes Survey to examine how truly inclusive Singapore is, and to explore the views of parents of children with special needs on the issue of inclusiveness in Singapore. Blackbox Research polled over 800 such parents of children with special needs from 20 SPED schools and EIPIC center from January to May 2016 for the survey, focusing its questions on the perception of inclusiveness in Singapore and education, views on society’s reaction towards their children and challenges of bringing up children with special needs.

Key Findings

Perception of Inclusiveness in Singapore

- The survey revealed that less than a third (28%) of parents of children with special needs surveyed regard Singapore as an inclusive society. Majority (77%) of parents of children with special needs supported inclusive education.

- Parents of children with special needs are unsure if people are comfortable interacting with their child - 57% agree that adults are comfortable interacting with their child, and 40% agree that children are comfortable interacting with their child. Almost half of the children with special needs do not have typically developing friends.

- For almost half of parents of children with special needs, having their children enroll in mainstream primary schools is an indicator of success. This desire could explain the strong motivation for parents to place their children with special needs into preschools.

Views on society’s reaction

- Nearly 31% of the respondents fear being judged as “not a good parent”. It is the underlying reason for children with special needs to spend too little time outside. One in three parents have heard insensitive remarks being directed at their child by adults.

- Less than a third (27%) of parents felt that children with special needs are at risk of bullying by other children.

Challenges faced in society

- Two in five families have a parent quit work to look after their child. Next to parents (61%), domestic helpers (16%) were cited as primary caregivers of children with special needs, followed by grandparents (13%). Level of satisfaction in terms of relationship with their children or life in general is lower as compared to the case of the general population.
Nearly 40% of parents of children with special needs think their child spend too little time outside in the community and seldom visits leisure places such as the library and cinema. Nearly half of the respondents (47%) cited difficulty in controlling their child as the reason for not being able to spend more time in public and community spaces.

About half of respondents felt their key service needs are being met - transportation (58%), medical and dental (55%) and childcare (54%).

Majority of parents of children with special needs (72%) think new laws focussed on providing access to key amenities, suitable opportunities and child protection policies for children with special needs are necessary to better promote the rights of children with special needs. However, less than half of these parents are aware of the rights related to their child’s special needs.

**Challenges faced in education**

About 5 in 10 parents encountered difficulties while enrolling their children in preschools. More than half of the parents observed that schools were unwilling to take their child because of their special needs.

About half (55%) of parents of children with special needs in mainstream preschools are satisfied with their child’s education. They are always concerned about the capability of the teachers as one-fourth disagree that the teacher provides their child with the needed attention, and about one-third beleive that the teachers are not sufficiently trained to support their child’s special needs.

Only about 3 in 10 parents whose children are in preschools think that the curriculum offered by preschools are suitable for children with special needs. Less than a third of parents think that preschools are equipped with the right facilities to meet the needs of children with special needs.

**Conclusion**

Survey responses also revealed that the parents’ key areas of need and wish are for greater support from the government, society and education system, the need to move Singapore from tolerance to greater acceptance, and active inclusion of children with special needs and their families.
About the survey

Lien Foundation commissioned Blackbox Research to conduct a survey to examine how truly inclusive Singapore society is, by listening to the voices of 2 groups of audiences:

1. The general public (including parents of typically developing children), and
2. Parents of children with special needs

The fieldwork was conducted from January to May 2016 to look into:

- The general public (Part 1)
  - Inclusiveness in Singapore
  - Interaction with children with special needs
  - Inclusiveness in education

- Parents of children with special needs (Part 2)
  - Perception of inclusiveness in Singapore & education
  - Views on society’s reaction towards their children
  - Experiences & challenges of bringing up children with special needs

For this presentation, we will be focusing on the views of parents of children with special needs (part 2)
Multiple consultations with the steering committee comprising:

- **Associate Prof Kenneth Poon**, Assistant Dean (Research Translation), Office of Education Research and Early Childhood & Special Needs Education Department at NIE
- **Mr. Tim Oei**, CEO of AWWA
- **Mr. Tang Hui Nee**, Educational Psychologist, Assistant Director and Head of Community Service at KK Hospital
- **Ms. Peggy Zee**, Founder of The Experiential Learning Centre & former owner of Zee School (a pre-school that works with children with special needs)
- **Mr. Daniel Koh**, Psychologist, Insights Mind Centre

5 in-depth interviews with parents of children with special needs from different family background and disability

Note: It is currently not possible to obtain a representative sample of parents with children with special needs in Singapore as there is insufficient publicly-available data.
Recap of Part 1: Voice of general public

Singapore may not be as inclusive as we think it is

- Only a third agree that Singapore is an inclusive society when it comes to children with special needs
- Of the public are willing to share public spaces but not interact with the special needs community
- Almost half of the population think that new laws are necessary to better promote the rights of children with special needs

Lack of interaction leads to uncertainty in the behavior of the general public

- For over a third of Singaporeans, children with special needs are not part of their social circle
- Even amongst those whose social circle includes children with special needs, 1 in 4 rarely come across them (once a year or less) casually
- Very few say they are never uncertain how to interact with children with special needs
- Only 1 in 4 parents of typically developing children said that their child has friends with special needs.
- 2 in 3 worry that children with special needs are at risk of being bullied
- However, most people say that knowing that a child has special needs would make them more tolerant

There is broad-based support for inclusive education

- 7 out of 10 Singaporeans are supportive of the idea of inclusive education
- However, amongst parents, only half are comfortable with the idea of having their children sitting next to a child with special needs in the classroom
List of participating EIPIC center & SPED schools

- Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore (CPAS)
- MINDS Fernvale Gardens School (MINDS FGS)
- MINDS Woodlands Gardens School (MINDS WGS)
- Pathlight School
- Rainbow Centre at Margaret Drive
- Rainbow Centre at Yishun Street
- APSN Chaoyang School
- Association for Persons with Special Needs (APSN) Katong School (APSN Katong)
- Early Intervention Centre AWWA (AWWA EIC)
- AWWA School at Lorong Napiri (AWWA School)
- THK EIPIC Centre @ Woodlands
- THK EIPIC Centre @ CCK
- THK EIPIC Centre @ Ang Mo Kio
- THK EIPIC Centre @ Tampines
- Fei Yue Early Intervention Centre for Children
- Lighthouse School
- Eden School
- Society for the Physically Disabled (SPD Ability Centre)
- Society for the Physically Disabled (SPD Jurong)
- Canossian School
A Chinese mother, aged 35-44 years, professionally qualified and lives in HDB 4-5 Room flat

**Gender**
- Male, 30%
- Female, 70%

**Age**
- 34 y/o & below, 30%
- 35-44 y/o, 57%
- 45 y/o & above, 13%

**Race**
- Chinese, 66%
- Malay, 23%
- Others, 11%

**Education**
- Post Graduate, 10%
- Bachelor degree, 26%
- Poly/Professional cert, 28%
- A level/Vocational, 10%
- Secondary & below, 24%

**Housing type**
- HDB 1-3 rooms, 21%
- HDB 4 rooms, 42%
- HDB 5 rooms/Exe flat, 28%
- Private Apart/Landed, 10%

**Parents of children with special needs**
Base: 835

D1. How old are you? ; D2. What is your ethnicity? ; D3. What is your gender? ;
D5. How much is your household income? D6. Please tell me the highest level of education you’ve reached?
D7. Please indicate your type of residence; D8. What is your religion?
A 4-9 years old boy, diagnosed with speech & language impairment or autism, studying in EIPIC center

**Gender**
- Male, 72%
- Female, 28%

**Age**
- Under 2 y/o: 2%
- 2-3 y/o: 12%
- 4-9 y/o: 82%

**Condition**
- Speech & language impairment: 48%
- Autistic Spectrum Disorder: 42%
- Global Development Delay: 28%
- Learning disorder: 4%
- ADHD: 4%
- Cerebral Palsy: 2%
- Vision & Hearing impairment: 2%
- Others: 6%

**Education**
- EIPIC: 87%
- pre-school: 52%
- Private therapy: 18%
- Home School: 3%
- Special education school: 3%

Note: It is currently not possible to obtain a representative sample of parents with children with special needs in Singapore as there is insufficient publicly-available data.

A4. What is the age of your child?; A5. What is the gender of this child?
A6. What has the child been diagnosed with? A8. How would you describe the severity of your child’s condition? C1. My child attend/attended the following…
A longer path for Singapore to be an inclusive society
**Singapore is not yet an inclusive society**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 2 boxes</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>21%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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**Comments**

**Parents of children with special needs**

- “Special needs are treated like 'disease' kids in situations I have seen personally. The public needs to be more aware and tolerant about such kids.”

- “Public has limited understanding of ASD and they do not understand the challenges we face daily”

- “The facility and acceptance for disability person is good in general. But the acceptance/knowledge for the child with special needs have to improve.”

- “Majority of Singaporeans have this fear in them. They fear that this 'special needs community' could affect them or their family members and friends negatively. Also they have this mind-set that special needs community is useless as they cannot contribute anything or much to the society. This can only be changed if only each individuals can change their attitude, behaviour, mindset, perspective towards the special needs community.”
“Do you think new laws are necessary to better promote the rights of special needs children?”

Top 2 boxes

- Strongly agree: 9%
- Agree: 40%
- Neutral: 38%
- Disagree: 10%
- Strongly disagree: 3%

General Public
Base: 1086

Parents of children with special needs
Base: 832

New laws are needed to promote the rights of children with special needs
Laws need to be multidimensional

How laws can promote rights of special needs community?

**Opportunities for Child**

“...in term of **employment**, special needs community must be employed with reasonable terms and benefited....”

“there should be a law to ensure they can **survive** in this very thriving society both **financially and morally**.”

**Child’s Protection**

“**exploited by evil doers** and criminals for coaxing or tricking them to do load things. Eg, stealing or even barter trade sex.”

“in some ways by the law to be **exonerated** in some areas. E.g., if they accidentally done grafiti or broke something in restaurant.”

**Access to Key Amenities**

“..In Australia and in the US, they **priority in everything**, unlike Singapore.”

“The right of deaf people to have **access to information** like sign language interpretation, closed captioning etc..”

B12/B25. Do you think new laws are necessary to better promote the rights of special needs children?
B12b: Why?
Key services still have gaps that should be addressed

% agree/strongly agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>55%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child-Care</td>
<td>54%</td>
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</table>

**Transportation**

“.. Sometimes it's difficult to get around using public transport (especially the bus). We use a stroller but have to fold it on the bus”

“.. a few commuters still will never give way to wheelchair users. Wheelchair users will need to wait for their turn.”

**Medical**

“.. The medical fees are not subsidized enough to include medically complex children or children/adults with rare disorders”

“.. better if there is a information sharing system between the school and the hospital, so that I don’t have to tell the doctors about my son’s behaviour again while we have already filled in a lot forms from the school”

“.. some doctors are not willing to provide treatment to children with special needs despite consent from the parent.”

**Child-Care**

“.. My child was not given the equal opportunity to participate in the childcare’s year-end concert. We felt discriminated”

“.. neglected child’s study, behaviour & needs. It is very expensive for special needs child as they have to attend to many class & school”

“.. applied through MSW for ICCP, but so hard to get. So I need to struggle more and just teach her at home only”

B13. Please select your responses to the following statements:
Our transportation needs are met; Our dental and medical needs are met; Our transportation needs are met
Parents also seek support from the government

We receive enough financial support from the government

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents of children with special needs</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>17%</td>
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The 'help' given by the government to such kids can be greatly inspired. Example, my son special need school only have 1 speech therapist, it does not take a genius to figure out how much time the therapist can give to a child.”

“The past few years, our society are made more aware of and has become more tolerate of our special need kids. However, I feel that the government should provide more subsidy for the therapy classes (eg. Swimming, music, etc). As looking after and nurturing them to be inclusive into the society is very straining on a family’s financially.”

The perception is even stronger:
- Among middle income family ($7K - 9.9): 57%
- For children with ADHD (52%), and Global Development Delay (47%)
Parents of children with special needs face challenges on multiple fronts.
Relatively lower satisfaction with life and relationships in general

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>General Public</th>
<th>Parents of children with special needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with my child</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with my spouse</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuclear family unit</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended family</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My life overall</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Score = top 2 boxes

Base: 1086
Base: 825

A12/ B15. How satisfied are you with…
Parents (esp. mothers) tend to be the primary care-giver

Interestingly, domestic helpers play a bigger role than the grandparents in taking care of the children with special needs

Parents of children with special needs
Base: 823

- Parents: 61%
- Domestic helper: 16%
- Grandparents: 13%
- Others: 10%

18% father
43% mother

A10a. Who is the primary care-giver for your child?
“After the child’s diagnosis…”

Parents stopped working to take care of the child

- 43%

Either one of the parent changed to a part time job from a full time job

- 12%

14% father
29% mother

Highest among
- Children with Global Development Delay: 46%
- Low income (<$3K) family: 49%

Parents of children with special needs who are the primary care-givers
Base: 470

Score = top 2 boxes

A11. After your child’s diagnosis…
Nearly 40% of special needs children parents think their child spend too little time outside in the community.

Parents of children with special needs
Base: 829

Highest among children with ADHD (48%) and Global Development Delay (44%)

B3a. I feel the amount of time my child gets to spend outside of school in the community doing things he enjoys is…
The child also seldom visits leisure places such as library and cinema

B1. How often does your child visit or use the following places?

Parents of children with special needs
Base: 820
Librarians are considered least accepting of children with special needs

Parents of children with special needs
Base: 815
Score = top 2 boxes

Policemen: 89%
Bus driver: 80%
Security guard: 77%
Taxi driver: 74%
Service staff: 71%
Librarian: 59%

B11. How accepting of children with special needs are they?
Being judged as ‘not a good parent’ perhaps is the underlying reason

**Reasons for little time spent outside**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to control my child</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not easy to move around</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel judged by others</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can be expensive</td>
<td>28%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Parents of children with special needs who spent little time outside
Base: 331
Score = top 2 boxes

“They should learn how difficult life to have been in such situation and learn how those in this situation able to overcome their problems”

“Singaporeans can be pretty judgemental about kids with special needs. Instead of ignoring and feeling sympathetic with the parents of the special need kids, they gave awful remarks and kept staring until the situations are out of sight for them.”

“They may pass judgemental and insensitive remarks on the child which will affect the parents’ feelings.

“don’t judge too fast because they don’t know the story behind it.”

B3b. What makes it difficult for you and your child to spend more time in public and community spaces?
B7. For each statement, please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with it.

“I have heard insensitive remarks made by __ about my special needs child”

Parents of children with special needs
Base: 827

Top 2 boxes

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Adults</th>
<th>Other children</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
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Highest among children with ADHD (39%) and ASD (38%)

Highest among children with ASD (43%) and Learning disorder (37%)
However, being more upfront about their child’s condition probably could help

“I am more understanding and less judgmental when I know in advance…”

Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with each statement

B19. I am more understanding and less judgemental about the disruptive behaviour of a child with special needs, when I know in advance that it is due to his or her special needs, and not other factors.

B7. Being upfront about my child's special needs makes others more tolerant of his/her behaviour.
Limited interactions with mixed emotions from typically developing community
Almost half of children with special needs do not have typically developing friends.

Lack of conducive environment stated as the main barrier:

- Not enough conducive environment for them to interact: 36%
- My child doesn’t like to socialize: 31%
- Other children don’t like to befriend my child: 14%
- I prefer to keep my child apart for safety reasons: 11%
- No time: 10%
- Others: 9%

Parents of children with special needs children who don’t have typically developing friends:

- Base: 830
- Score = top 2 boxes

Parents of children with special needs:

- Base: 341
There are mixed emotions but more positive amongst parents.

Top 3 most common emotions you have seen when adults interact with children with special needs.

**General Public**
- Love: 56%
- Curiosity: 33%
- Joy: 19%
- Empathy: 67%
- Pity: 58%
- Affirmation: 18%
- Sympathy: 30%
- Insincerity: 9%
- Arrogance: 5%
Base: 1086

**Parents of children with special needs**
- Love: 53%
- Curiosity: 51%
- Joy: 44%
- Empathy: 43%
- Pity: 33%
- Sympathy: 22%
- Affirmation: 12%
- Fear: 8%
- Insincerity: 4%
- Arrogance: 4%
Base: 823

B6/ B18. What are the 3 most common emotions you have seen, when adults interact with your child/children with special needs?
Parent are less worried about their children being bullied than the general public

"Children with special needs are at risk of bullying by other children"

Top 2 boxes

- Strongly agree: 15%
- Agree: 50%
- Neutral: 25%
- Disagree: 4%
- Strongly disagree: 2%

65% Agree, 27% Strongly agree, 38% Disagree

It does not matter what the child’s condition is

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child Condition</th>
<th>Top 2 boxes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speech &amp; language delay</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autistic Spectrum Disorder</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Development Delay</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADHD</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Disorder</td>
<td>34%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>20%</td>
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However, parents of children with special needs who go to pre-school with typically developing children are slightly more worried (36%)

Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with each statement
B19. Children with special needs are at risk of bullying by other children (General Public)
B7. My child has experienced bullying from other children (Parents of special needs children)
Pre-school education for children with special needs has plenty of room for improvement
Both parties support the idea of inclusive education

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 2 boxes</th>
<th>71%</th>
<th>77%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely supportive</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Supportive</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
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Parents of typically developing children
Base: 457

Parents of children with special needs
Base: 827

“Totally agree with the need to build inclusion as part of school’s key subject if we want to see a more inclusive society. 2. Learning pace should be moderated for some children with disabilities, some fast learners and better performance should be given a chance for accelerated programmes. 3. It will work if policies and infrastructure resources, funding and nationalism spirit are aligned.”

“All children with special needs have a right to education alongside neuro-typical children they should not be shunned or shut out into another corner of society.”

“Recently there is a pre-school which included a certain percentage of special needs kids in the cohort and it was reported that parents of the non special needs kids were supportive. It demonstrates that we are somewhat an inclusive society. We just need more trained professionals to manage such mixed pre school cohort. Educate the young to be inclusive is a good way to build a more gracious society.”
However, parents are skeptical about the preparedness of pre-schools to facilitate the special needs of their children.

- The teachers in pre-schools provide children with the attention that he/she needs: 46%
- The teachers in pre-schools are sufficiently trained to support the children's needs: 34%
- The curriculum offered by pre-schools is suitable for children with special needs: 32%
- Pre-schools are equipped with the right facilities to meet the needs of children with special needs: 33%

Parents of children with special needs who went to pre-school
Base: 380
Score = top 2 boxes

C14. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements, based on your best understanding?

“Singaporean in general are not aware of special needs or how to handle them. For child care teachers, they should be trained how to identify and manage them. It could be a standard module kids with special needs and a few day experience seeing how the therapist manage these kids.”

“There are schools for early intervention but need more of it. Near neighbourhoods.”

“There are not many options for children with physical disabilities, especially related to writing/hand skills, to be able to fit in well in a mainstream school setting at a young age.”
C18. For each statement please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with it.

“As a parent, what defines success for me is when my child makes it into a mainstream primary school. Other factors are important too, but not as much.”

Nearly half of the parents aspire that their children with special needs make it into mainstream primary schools.

Parents of children with special needs  
Base: 831

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<th>Top 2 boxes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>12%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>29%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>16%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>7%</td>
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47%

“Studies shown that 1 out of 68 children are diagnosed as ASD. SG has only 1 pathlight school, 81 Eden school. We can do the math on how many students they can take. Limited vacancy, my girl is still on Eden’s waiting list. It is an irony that she is not given a primary education. Society is not made up of just elites. Bulk of govt subsidy cannot just go to normal children. how can a mainstream school just have 2 allied educator to support 1% of the special needs children..”
Many face challenges for entry into pre-school

“How easy it was for you to enroll a pre-school for your child?”

- Very easy: 21%
- Somewhat easy: 33%
- A little difficult: 21%
- Somewhat difficult: 13%
- Very difficult: 11%

Parents of children with special needs who went to pre-school
Base: 430

“What problems did you encounter?”

- School was unwilling to take my child because of needs: 54%
- Inexperienced/untrained teachers/staff: 51%
- No access to professionals to provide support for my child: 36%
- Too expensive: 11%
- Building/facility was not easily accessible: 11%
- Others: 4%

Parents of children with special needs who encountered difficulty enrolling their children in pre-school
Base: 193

C2. On a scale of ‘1’ to ‘5’, please rate how easy it was for you to enroll a pre-school for your child.
C7. What problems did you encounter?
Slightly more than half are satisfied with child’s education in pre-school

Please indicate the extent of your agreement with these statements:

- My child is welcomed by the school: 71%
- My child is able to participate in school activities meaningfully: 59%
- My child has difficulties making friends in pre-school: 42%
- My child has been bullied in pre-school: 16%

Parents of children with special needs who went to pre-school
Base: 430

Top 2 boxes

- Very Satisfied: 9%
- Satisfied: 46%
- Neutral: 34%
- Dissatisfied: 8%
- Very Dissatisfied: 3%

Top 2 boxes represent 55% of responses.

“How satisfied are you with your child’s education?”

Parents of children with special needs who went to pre-school
Base: 451

C11. Listed below are a few statements regarding your child’s experience in school. For each statement, please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with it.

C12. Overall, how satisfied are you with your child's education?
Way forward towards inclusion
(Thoughts from Blackbox Research)
Path to inclusion: A longer one

Zone of Inclusion

Singapora

(Ideal Zone)

Empathetic

(Understanding, Welcoming)

Sympathetic

(Compassion, Pity)

Limited

(isolation; insecure, fear)

Welcoming

(Sense of Belongingness)

Interaction Opportunities

Society

Singaporo

(Present)
1. **General Infrastructural Support**
   - Improved medical and child care facilities
   - Inclusive infrastructure to enable interactions
   - Laws to safeguard child’s interest

2. **Transitioning from Sympathy to Empathy**
   - Awareness/Educational programs through social media/documentaries
   - Enable interactions with the special needs community

3. **Readiness of schools for implementation of inclusive education**
   - Make pre-schools more accessible to the community
   - Facilities to make it ready for special needs children
   - Requisite training for teachers and staff

*Government support is critical but the onus of driving the change lies with each one of us!*
Key statistics
### Part 2: Voice of parents of children with special needs

#### A long path towards inclusion
- **28%** Only a third agree that Singapore is an inclusive society
- **72%** Agreed that laws as necessary to promote rights of special needs children
- **54-58%** Agree that their children’s basic needs are met
- **43%** Disagree that they receive enough financial support from the government

#### Parents face challenge on multiple fronts
- **61%** Parents are the primary care giver. 40% gave up their job to take care of the child
- **40%** Think that their children spend too little time outside
- **31%** Cite the fear of being ‘judged by others’ as reason for their child’s limited time spent outside
- **30%** Heard insensitive remarks by adults towards their child. 35% have heard it from other children
- **50%** Agree that being upfront about child’s conditions improves understanding from society

#### Limited interactions but mixed emotions received
- **45%** Believe that their children with special needs do not have typically developing friends
- **27%** Worry that their child with special needs are at risk of being bullied

#### Inclusive Education: Room for improvement
- **77%** Supportive of the idea of inclusive education
- **33%** On average, agree on pre-schools readiness on various fronts
- **47%** Consider having their child entering mainstream primary school as success
- **46%** Encounter difficulty when enrolling their child in pre-school