

Reaching out, Connecting & Engaging Parents

Thank you to all parents who took the time to join us for our inaugural group sessions for parents! There were 5 different timeslots, which parents could choose from and we had a total of 73 parents join us for the sessions.

The semi-structured format included a short introduction on the focus topic of discussion, followed by sharing by the parents. The first topic centered on nurturing the relationship with your teenager. I shared that we have to begin the process of taking time to nourish ourselves so that we have the capacity to attend to our children. The second point is to develop self-awareness about our parenting styles, which are likely to reflect how we were parented and how our children's behaviours may be more about us than them. The third point is that parenting is very much about teamwork, collaborating with our partner or spouse, in order to connect with our children (*A video about sharing responsibilities can be viewed [here.](#)*) Finally, a reminder to parents to spend time with their children because such precious time is so valuable and will not come by again when they grow up (*For a video about family time go [here.](#)*)

One of the benefits of such group sessions is universality, that is, knowing that you are not alone and we are all in this together. Parents are able to relate to one another and thus connect with similar experiences, sharing and learning as a group. We talked about the difficulties of dealing with non-communicative, moody and sulky teenagers. We also explored ways to reach out to them by finding opportunities to connect through shared activities and having conversations about a range of topics. I look forward to our next session in April with the focus topic of dealing with the use of internet and cyberbullying.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite more fathers to join us. Please sign up at [here](#). Thank you!

Michelle Koay, High School Counsellor, michelle.koay@sj-international.com.sg

