

For immediate release

Winner takes home top-prize two years in a row at the Speak Mandarin Campaign Parent-Child Talent Competition 2015

22 June 2015 – For the second consecutive year, the parent-child team led by Ms Hazel Chong won first-prize in the Upper Primary category at the Speak Mandarin Campaign Parent-Child Talent Competition 2015.

Ms Chong returned to the competition this year with both her children, after the memorable experience she had participating with her daughter Kai Han last year. “My son, Li Yu, joined us for his first time in this competition. He was very keen to take part after witnessing all the fun Kai Han and I had preparing for last year’s competition,” said Ms Chong.

The constant practice and rehearsals at home also strengthened Kai Han and Li Yu’s confidence in using Mandarin. “Both my children now use Mandarin more often to communicate with other family members, even after the competition,” said Ms Chong.

Other participants agreed that the competition had given them an opportunity to explore creative and fun ways to use and learn Mandarin as a family. By creating original scripts to relate their personal stories through the performances, parents demonstrated how Mandarin can be applied outside textbooks and homework.

Beyond language appreciation, the competition also fostered family ties. For many participants, preparing for the competition was a family effort, as family members contributed behind the scenes, providing creative input as script writers or even posing as judges or audience at rehearsals.

“The whole family was involved,” said Mrs Goh Yi Liang, who won first-prize in the Lower Primary category with her daughter, Goh Yu Mi, in this year’s competition. “Yu Mi’s elder sister would watch us rehearse and give suggestions on how to improve our presentation. My niece and nephew also helped us with the costumes.”

The Speak Mandarin Campaign Parent-Child Talent Competition 2015 is in its third edition, and organisers are heartened by the effort put in by parents in creating a memorable experience for their children.

“The standards of the performances have improved tremendously and many parents have also shared positive feedback,” said Mr Seow Choke Meng, Chairman of the Promote Mandarin Council. “We hope parents will continue to support their children in learning Mandarin and be role models for them even after the competition.”

The winners were presented certificates and trophies by the Minister of State for the Prime Minister’s Office and the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth, Mr Sam Tan, who graced the Grand Finals as Guest-of-Honour.

The list of winners for the Speak Mandarin Campaign Parent-Child Talent Competition 2015 can be found in Annex A. Please refer to Annex B for winners’ profiles.

###

About the Speak Mandarin Campaign Parent-Child Talent Competition 2015

The Speak Mandarin Campaign Parent-Child Talent Competition 2015 was a nationwide competition for parents to bond and have fun, while learning and speaking Mandarin with their primary school level children. Parents formed teams of up to three members with their children and put up five-minute performances in Mandarin. 14 teams from the Lower Primary category and eight teams from the Upper Primary category were chosen to enter the Grand Finals at the Preliminary Round held in April. They presented their performances at the Grand Finals on 6 June 2015 at the Lee Foundation Theatre in Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts.

The Competition was co-organised by St Nicholas Girls' School and supported by Thumbs Up and the Committee to Promote Chinese Language Learning.

About the Speak Mandarin Campaign 2015/2016

This year marks the 36th anniversary of the nationwide campaign. The tagline this year – “Mandarin. It Gets Better with Use. Immerse yourself today.” – reflects the campaign’s approach to create opportunities for Singaporeans to immerse themselves in a Mandarin-speaking environment where they can learn, use and practise Mandarin comfortably; and inculcate an appreciation for Chinese heritage and culture.

Visit www.mandarin.org.sg and www.facebook.com/SpeakMandarinCampaign for more information.

###

For media enquiries, please contact:

Yap Gian Cing
Media Liaison Manager
Mobile: +65 9115 8500
Email: giancing@affluencepr.com

Lee Min Jie
Campaign Manager
Speak Mandarin Campaign
National Heritage Board, Language Division
Mobile: +65 9877 0737
DID: +65 6332 4601
Email: LEE_Min_Jie@nhb.gov.sg

Annex A:
Winners of the Speak Mandarin Campaign Parent-Child Talent Competition 2015

Category A

Title	Name
Winner	Goh Yi Liang (Mother) & Goh Yu Mi (Daughter)
First Runner up	Ho Kim Hoe (Father) & Kelly Ho (Daughter)
Second Runner up	Lim Mei Har (Mother), Chew Zhen Yuan (Son) & Chew Zhen Kai (Son)

Category B

Title	Name
Winner	Hazel Chong (Mother), Tan Kai Han (Daughter) & Tan Li Yu (Son)
First Runner Up	Sally Pak (Mother) Joanna Goh (Daughter) & Josephine Goh (Daughter)
Second Runner Up	Bobby Yap (Father) & Faith Yap (Daughter)

Annex B:
Winners' profiles

Category A – Lower Primary

1. Winner: Goh Yi Liang (Mother) & Goh Yu Mi (Daughter)



Mrs Goh believes that the performing arts is a good way to improve her children's language competency. When her eight-year-old daughter Goh Yu Mi readily agreed to participate in the competition, she was pleasantly surprised.

"The prizes provided additional motivation. She was hoping to win the tickets to the theme parks and now, she's won them," said Mrs Goh.

The first-time participants presented a creative adaptation of the traditional folklore *The Man Who Sold a Ghost*. The story was chosen by Yu Mi. "It was important that she picked a story that she liked. It kept her interested," said Mrs Goh.

The experience has been more rewarding than winning the competition. Mrs Goh is heartened that Yu Mi's elder sister is also now expressing more interest in the performing arts and the Chinese language.

2. 1st Runner Up: Ho Kim Hoe (Father) & Kelly Ho (Daughter)



This is the second year that Mr Ho is taking part in the competition with his eight-year-old daughter, Kelly Ho. To demonstrate their language skills, the effectively bilingual father of two created an original crosstalk script based on the 12 zodiac signs.

His daughter, Kelly, appreciated the fun script, as Mr Ho injected much humour by incorporating lines from the popular local movie *Ah Boys to Men*. He also worked with his wife to make the script simple for Kelly to grasp and understand.

“We want our children to explore the various opportunities to use Mandarin, but we are also mindful not to pressurise them unnecessarily,” said Mr Ho, on his approach to supporting his children in honing their language skills. “The experience should be fun.”

3. 2nd Runner Up: Lim Mei Har (Mother), Chew Zhen Yuan (Son) & Chew Zhen Kai (Son)



Mdm Lim takes active interest in developing her twin sons' language skills by selecting programmes that allow them to enjoy Mandarin as a living language. Besides immersion activities such as Chinese Speech and Drama holiday classes, Mdm Lim also chooses holiday destinations where Mandarin is the primary language used in communication.

Participating in the competition was one of the many activities that Mdm Lim identified for her children in their learning journey. The trio presented a skit themed after the famous idiom story “狐假虎威”. Mdm Lim and her husband worked on the script, building in vocabulary that the children would have already learnt in story books.

As a student, Mdm Lim actively participated in storytelling competitions at school and national levels. She hoped that through this same activity, her sons would develop an appreciation for Mandarin the way she did in her younger days.

Category B – Upper Primary

1. Winner: Hazel Chong (Mother), Tan Li Yu (Son) & Tan Kai Han (Daughter)



Ms Hazel Chong returned to the competition for a second time this year with her daughter Tan Kai Han and son Tan Li Yu. The trio presented an original script highlighting the challenges faced by teachers and students in teaching and learning Mandarin.

“Children find it stressful learning Mandarin these days,” said the mother of three. “If we can make the learning process more fun for our children, they will grow to appreciate the language and be more receptive of it.”

Her belief is reflected in her approach used to foster her children’s language learning at home. Ms Chong also brings her children to programmes and activities that they enjoy, such as Mandarin theatre, where they get to use Mandarin in a lively and engaging manner.

While the family primarily speaks English at home, Ms Chong observes that her children are now getting more comfortable using Mandarin to communicate. “Participating in the competition seems to have made a difference. They are more confident using the language now,” she said.

2. 1st Runner Up: Sally Pak (Mother), Joanna Goh (Daughter) & Josephine Goh (Daughter)



Sally's daughters were disappointed when they did not win the competition last year. With the encouragement of Mr Goh, the girls rebounded quickly and were determined to join the competition again.

This year, the team presented an original skit that depicted the various approaches Sally uses in everyday life to interest her daughters in Mandarin. "I use songs, drama and stories to show them other aspects of the language that is beyond textbooks and the school curriculum," says Sally. She also hopes that her daughters would appreciate the Chinese values, teachings and language through these activities too.

Sally believes in learning with her children and setting an example for them. "Parents are role models for children. If we are receptive to learning the language, our children will feel the support and be encouraged to learn too."

3. 2nd Runner Up: Bobby Yap (Father) & Faith Yap (Daughter)



First-time participants Bobby Yap and Faith Yap were surprised and elated by their win at the competition this year. The team presented an adapted version of Aesop's fable *The Tortoise and the Hare*.

To add originality and creativity to their script, the father-daughter pair also incorporated some light-hearted moments into the skit.

"Faith would correct my mispronunciation of some Chinese words during rehearsals," said Mr Yap. "I told her it is not easy to change my habits as I am no longer young, but she will remind me that I should continue to learn and improve, no matter how old I am."

Apart from learning Mandarin with his daughter, Mr Yap also appreciated the opportunity to bond with his daughter. "Preparing for this competition has brought us closer," he said.