



## Fun-filled gaming app enhances learning effectiveness for SEN children

Dr Kean Poon Kei-yan, Assistant Professor at the Department of Special Education and Counselling, has been developing the first-ever Chinese character-focused gaming app for young children with special educational needs (SEN) since 2017. “i-Maze”, is designed to integrate creative technology and play-based learning into early childhood education, and improve the working memory and academic-related abilities of children with SEN.

Designed with an adventurous setting and storyline, children need to complete 25 sessions of two memory card games in the app – “N-back matching game” and “Card-pairing game”. Every odd level is the N-back training game and every even level is the Card-pairing training. Each session features both phonological and visual-spatial training tasks, with difficulty level adjusted according to children’s performance.

Shortly after the app was launched, over a hundred of primary school students aged from seven to 10 with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and/or reading disabilities (RD) signed up for training with “i-Maze”. Preliminary results revealed significant improvement in their working memory, as well as literacy skills after the training. Pre-service and in-service teachers have given positive feedback after deploying “i-Maze” in classes, where the app serves as an efficient and constructive tool to facilitate daily teaching of students with SEN.

## 15,000 masks distributed to families of frontline staff



Thanks to colleague’s generous support, over HK\$60,000 was raised within a week to buy around 300 boxes of surgical masks for the families of frontline staff.

The first batch of masks was distributed to cleaners, security guards, movers, gardeners and shuttle bus drivers on 17 April. The initiative served as a small token of appreciation and gratitude for our frontline staff, who help maintain the smooth operations of the University, especially during the pandemic.



## Student James Wong receives President’s Commendation

James Wong Hau-fung, a Year 2 student of the Master of Science in Educational Speech-Language Pathology and Learning Disabilities programme, has received the President’s Commendation award for his outstanding achievements in community service.



James established a parent support group “Senmily HK” with the funds awarded by the Yan Oi Tong Social Innovation Competition, to provide information, consultations, workshops and activities for families with special educational needs (SEN) children. With the help of the Hong Kong Council of Social Service, James is currently developing a set of board games to strengthen parent-child relationships. He also trains volunteers who will work for the group in the future.

“What I’ve learnt from my master’s course has enabled me to design activities which suit the needs of SEN students, and to develop a network in the social service sector,” said James, who will be a speech therapist after graduation this summer. “I was an SEN resource teacher in primary schools and enjoy helping the SEN students. I hope I can work in schools after graduation.”

