

# The PRessGS

*Connecting Rafflesian Parents*



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## Chairperson's Message

Dear PRGS members,

So much has changed in our lives with the current extended Circuit Breaker. Some of us have to juggle with Work from Home while supporting our younger children with Home-Based Learning (HBL). I hope everyone is embracing the extra family time together. Our RGS daughters have certainly risen to the challenge by not only adapting to HBL quickly and independently, but also coming up with many creative ideas on how to make the best of the situation.

As many PRGS and school activities have ceased with COVID-19 and may continue to be held off for some time to come, the PRGS Exco has decided to launch a newsletter "The PRessGS" (pronounced "The Press") to stay connected with RGS parents. In this inaugural issue, we are grateful to have contributions from not just parents but also school staff members. We hope that from this humble start, the newsletter will eventually grow and evolve into a platform by parents supporting parenting in RGS. Please let us know if you would like to contribute to "The PRessGS" in any way.

Here's wishing one and all a healthy and restful time for the rest of the mid-year school break!

Best regards,  
Geok Bin  
Chairperson, PRGS



# Principal's Message

Dear Parents

At the most recent (virtual) meeting with the PRGS Exco in March, several members suggested having a newsletter for PRGS to reach out to parents, as various scheduled activities such as the Triple P Parents Seminar and Breakfast Dialogues had to be cancelled due to the Circuit Breaker restrictions. This suggestion has the school's fullest support, and I am happy to contribute a message for this inaugural PRGS e-Newsletter.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all parents for the support you have given our school, throughout the Full Home-Based Learning (FHBL) period. The collective effort of our students, teachers, administrative staff and parents allowed us to have a relatively smooth implementation of FHBL. I am very proud of the way that the staff and students rose to the challenge of remote teaching and learning. In the first couple of weeks, our teachers were learning how to use new interactive tools, to be able to continue engaging our girls, make learning come alive and to push their thinking to higher levels. Teachers made adjustments along the way and found new ways to assess and check for understanding, while checking in on the well-being of their classes each day.

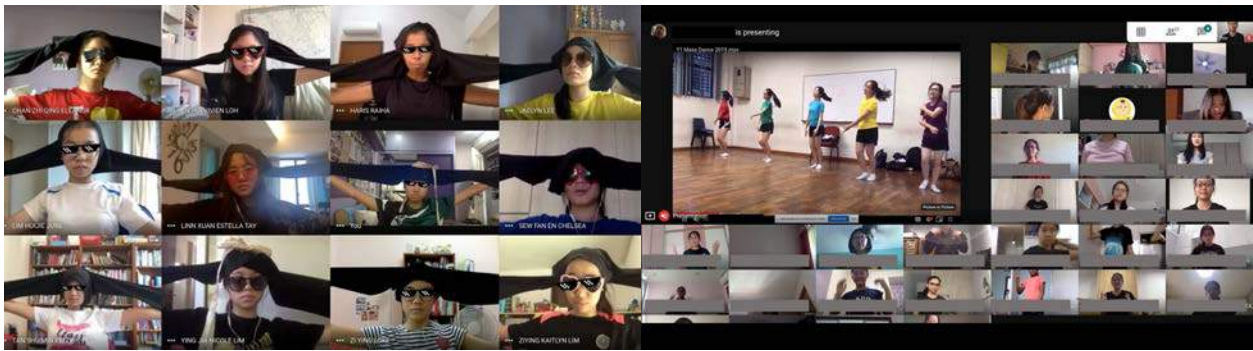
The Deputy Principals and I joined several classes for synchronous online lessons. We witnessed very creative lessons in progress, and it was wonderful to sense the friendship and warmth the girls have for one another and for their teacher through the banter that comes across when they come together online for the synchronous lessons. The Lead Boards, the Prefects, House Leaders, Peer Support Leaders and Student Congress leaders came up with a "Spark Cheer Beyond Our Classrooms" campaign so that during the 4 weeks of FHBL, our girls could reach out to one another and to grow socially closer even as they were physically apart. We observed so many girls leading at all levels, to encourage one another on and to show kindness. The girls were very creative too. Some classes came up with ideas such as having a coloured dress code for certain days of the week, doing workouts together in virtual space, creating a class bingo, and sharing key information like the daily timetable and homework list on a common spreadsheet. Through this and so many other activities that they initiated, the girls and staff have kept the RGS spirit strong!

The Filiae Centre team found new ways to provide support to our girls during the FHBL and circuit breaker period. In addition to arranging for online support conversations and career guidance talks, there were weekly tips and articles for parents too. I hope you found these articles helpful.

Thank you for the support you continue to give our school and our teachers. I wish for you and your family, good health and safety during this mid-year break and I look forward to seeing the girls back in school from 2 June. The COVID-19 pandemic has and will continue to pose challenges to us as a nation, but we will, as we always have in the past, rise to the challenge.

Ms Haslinda Zamani  
Principal  
Raffles Girls' School

# PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE



The girls kept their spirits up and had fun with their classmates and CCA friends with activities like mass dancing, taking creative wefies, and coordinating their shirt colour for a day of the week.



Our girls managed to whip up some delicious dishes at home during their Food and Design class, with the help of their parents overseeing the cooking at home.

Tips and articles on coping with the Circuit Breaker measures and Home-Based Learning by our Filiae Centre team that were shared with the school community.

**Dear students,**

We hope you had a restful weekend and are up bright and early to an awesome week of HBL!

Specially for you, the friendly folks at Filiae Centre have consolidated a **HBL Survivor Kit**. A series of cutting resources and tools to provide you with a wide range of fascinating activities to be engaged and active at home – by yourself or with friends and family during this period. In addition, we also share with you some helpful strategies on getting closer with yourself, family and friends.

Igniting The Fighting Spirit in Rafflesians during this Covid-19 Crisis  
Stay strong, stay well! **#RESILIENT**

## FIFTEEN THINGS YOU CAN DO AT HOME

FROM YOUR DESK FAMILY TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

- 1 DO ONLINE PERSONALITY AND STRENGTHS TEST (Includes recommendations by Ms Marjye)
- 2 WORK OUT & DANCE
- 3 JOURNALING
- 4 GIFT A CRAFT
- 5 GET CLOSER WITH YOURSELF, FAMILY AND FRIENDS
- 6 CARE FOR YOUR SKIN (Includes recommendations by Ms Florence Tay)
- 7 Tidy up your HOME
- 8 READ

- 9 ATTEND VIRTUAL EVENTS (Includes recommendations by Dr Cecilia and Ms Florence Tay)
- 10 PREPARE A MEAL OR SNACK (Includes recommendations by RGS Aesthetics Team)
- 11 EAT & SLEEP WELL
- 12 CHILL
- 13 WATCH MOVIES (Includes recommendation by Dr Cecilia)
- 14 UPGRADE YOUR TIME MANAGEMENT AND STUDY SKILLS (Includes recommendations by Ms Marjye)
- 15 LEARN A NEW SKILL (Includes recommendations by Ms Yan)

Click [HERE](#) to access to Filiae Centre...HBL Survivor Kit Stay Tuned for More Updates!

If all else fails, Call Filiae Centre Helpline 64706381 Or Make an appointment for an online session with us via iNet – link as shown below

**RAFFLES GIRLS' SCHOOL**

Parents' Version

## 7 Keys of E.M.B.R.A.C.E.

Additional information and resources for every KEY provided here.

**E** Empathise with others  
Learn to empathise with your teenager. Try putting on her 'shoes' for a day and walk in her world. You will realise it is one that is vastly different from the one which you were raised in. The world you were raised in has largely disappeared. And after you have walked for a day in her 'shoes', you may realise that there are things you would do differently now.

**M** Make new Memories  
Be creative and find ways to make new memories with your teenager that will overshadow the doom and gloom of Covid-19. Encourage her and help find things to do that will reduce boredom. Develop your sense of humour – laugh more and infect her with it. Every day is precious.

**B** Be a Blessing  
Parents are the foundation and walls of the 'invisible' home. The atmosphere and climate are determined by us. Support and appreciate your child when she initiates a blessing. This is how we can keep the blessings going. Blessings beget blessings.

**R** Respect one another  
Adolescence is a time of individuation and identity formation. Your teenager starts to break away from you in search for her independence and identity. It is a time when the opinions of her peers matter a lot more than yours. During this time, learning to respect their choices and decisions means a lot to them.

There are two golden rules that parents have found useful:  
Relationship over ruler-ship. We are often tempted to exert our authority as parents and we end up "losing" our child. There are times when we have to relent so as to keep the relationship. The bottom line is: "Is my relationship with my daughter more important than exerting my right as a parent over her?"

Major on the major. There will be many battles to fight. Choose wisely, and do not waste precious time on things that do not matter in the long run. Decide if it is a preference, a lifestyle, a habit, a value or a belief that you wish to teach – these will help you know better when to retreat.

**A** Accept and Adapt  
Even as you are adapting to the current measures and perhaps feeling frazzled and frustrated, do keep a look out for your teenager who may be experiencing the same.

Observe her unobtrusively. Allow her the space she needs. Make conversations during meal times. Show some care. Be understanding when she shows frustration of being at home 24/7 – after all she is still a child, and we all know about "cabin fever syndrome".

**C** Contribute to my family  
As parents, some of us like to remind our children that it is their duty to help out. And when they do, we get irritated if they missed the corners when they vacuumed the floor or missed a stain when they washed their plates. Maybe this does not happen in your home – wonderful! But if it is, try changing your strategy. A little smile, a little praise or some encouragement always works better than a mini-lecture.

**E** Embrace Change  
Encourage and model for your child a positive mindset and 'can do' attitude. This helps her to feel more safe and rooted amidst change and uncertainty.

Specially brought to you by your counsellors @ Filiae Centre

**RAFFLES GIRLS' SCHOOL**

## WHAT'S NEW AND NEWS

### PRGS 18TH Annual General Meeting - 14 March 2020

On 14 March 2020, the PRGS held its Annual General Meeting whereby its 17th Exco stepped down to hand over their duties to the newly elected 18th Exco.

Despite the challenging COVID-19 situation in Singapore, it was heartwarming to see the PRGS community rally to attend the AGM.

Ms Haslinda Zamani (Principal), Mrs Mary George Cheriyan (Deputy Principal - Centre for Pedagogical Research & Learning and Community Engagement) and Ms Lee Su Yin (Director, Communications & Partnerships) also graced the event.

The 17th Exco expressed its heartfelt thanks to Ms Haslinda, the school, its staff and all PRGS members for their continued loyal support. Thank you for your service 17th Exco! Welcome on board 18th Exco!



#### Presenting our PRGS 18th Exco during our 1st online Exco meeting



Sharon Lim Secretary	Vincent Lim Asst Treasurer	Gillian Koh Asst Secretary	Yannie Knapp Co-opted Member	SivapriyaThayaparan Honorary Auditor
Sylvia Khoo Co-opted Member	Yeo Jing Ping Vice Chairperson	Angela Yap Ordinary Member	Ching Sann Honorary Auditor	Ng Bee Bee Ordinary Member
Mazlita B Mohd Ali Co-opted Member	Pemme Wee Treasurer	Emily Cheng Co-opted Member	Marcus Chan Co-opted Member	Seah Geok Bin Chairperson
Saleha Ghouse Ordinary Member	Sheela Bhatia Ordinary Member	Anna Cheong Ordinary Member	Karen Kwee Ordinary Member	Petrina Tan Co-opted Member

## We are all performers on a stage - and in our lives

By Counsellor Ms Heng Yan Lin, Filiae Centre



*All the world's a stage,  
And all the men and women merely players;  
They have their exits and their entrances,  
And one man in his time plays many parts,  
His acts being seven ages.*

William Shakespeare, As You Like It



### Playing out the different roles and scripts in our lives

William Shakespeare said it well when he wrote that we are all merely players (or performers) on a stage. Just as performers have specific roles and scripts to follow, all of us have different roles and corresponding scripts that determine how we "act out" our roles in real life. Our family-of-origin has the biggest influence on how we define our roles and scripts (Byng-Hall, 1998). As parents in a sandwich generation, all of us juggle multiple roles and often function on an auto-pilot mode. The following story about **Raymond, Gina, Sophie and Ian\***, illustrates how these roles are played out within a family and its impact.

*"Raymond has a few roles as manager, colleague, husband, father and son. Of these roles, being a manager to him is obviously the lead role. As it is in line with his worldview that he, as the head of the family should be the **provider**, he puts most of his focus on this role. On the other hand, his wife, Gina, believes that her primary role is a **mother** even though she spends most of her time at work. As parents, both Raymond and Gina have sub-roles. Gina is the **disciplinarian, decision-maker** and **time manager** while Raymond is the **cheerleader** and **follower**. Their conflicting views about parenting and child discipline often create tension in the marriage and cause anxiety for their children, Sophie and Ian.*

*Raymond was born the youngest of three boys and raised by his mother who is a homemaker. She doted on him as the youngest of three boys, and Raymond was often exempted from additional responsibilities and from having to make decisions in the family. His father worked long hours and did not spend much time with them. As a result, he is not emotionally close to his father. Hence, his concept of a **father** is one of **provider**.*

*Gina on the other hand, is the eldest in her family. From a young age, she became a pseudo-parent who looked after her younger brother while Mom and Dad worked. She was a great help to Mom as she would ensure that her brother did his homework, ate his lunch, behaved himself and so on. Everyone in the family went to Gina often for decisions. When Gina had her own children, she naturally acted out her concept of the mother role because it was the only one that she knew, and it had worked for her brother.*

*In their marriage, Raymond is happy to let Gina make all the parenting decisions because he is accustomed to it. He is a responsible provider who spends little time communicating with his children. As months turned into years and Gina's work became more demanding, she started to feel the strain of being the **disciplinarian, decision-maker** and **time manager** all the time. Her children did not respond to her parenting in the same way that her brother did. There were many occasions when she was the 'bad' cop. The mix of guilt, frustration and tiredness led her to feel insecure and unhappy about herself as a mother.*

*Hence she turned to Raymond for help. She felt upset that he could go to his 'cave' to de-stress while she could not. She wanted him to take over some of the **disciplinarian** role. With Gina's demands, Raymond's 'me' time was reduced, which bothered him. He was also puzzled over her behaviour. He found it difficult to be the **disciplinarian** because he was unfamiliar with this role. He also felt that it was unnecessary to micromanage the children's time as they were old enough. He persuaded and cajoled instead of disciplined because that was how he was raised. As a **cheerleader**, he tried to console his children whenever Gina lost her cool, which only increased Gina's unhappiness and insecurity as she felt alienated from her children. With time, this scenario kept repeating itself as both Raymond and Gina continued to 'perform' according to the familiar roles and scripts they were raised and lived by.*

*Raymond argued that he turned out just fine the way he was raised and could not empathise with Gina's parenting style. Gina felt unloved and alone in this family and was envious of her friends' husbands who were very involved in their children's lives. All these drove a wedge in their marriage."*

Does any part of the story above strike a chord with you? Perhaps you can identify with or recognise yourself in certain aspects of the story. While the story may come across as contrived, stereotypical, or perhaps unfamiliar to some of you, it is written to illustrate the following principles.

Our behaviours, interaction patterns and underlying beliefs as parents are influenced by inner scripts inherited from our family-of-origin. There are, of course, parents who have resisted and chosen to establish corrective scripts with their own families due to bad experiences while growing up. This can be found in one mother who refused to use the cane and was very permissive with her children because she grew up with a physically abusive father. However, this parenting method backfired on her as she found herself losing 'control' of her teenage children who became ill-disciplined and rebellious due to excessive permissiveness.

There are parents who do not face these issues because they share similar scripts. For example, a couple who shares the belief that house rules and consequences for bad behaviour are necessary tools in disciplining their children. They were also raised in families that kept Sundays as a day of rest, meaning no enrichment and tuition, and they wanted to continue this tradition with their children.

### **A change of mindset - how we can reconcile the different roles and create shared scripts**

For Raymond and Gina, what they can do is to first agree that their methods are not always right or effective. What is more important is to agree on shared beliefs and practices, and jointly reinforce them at home. For Raymond, he can examine his mother's parenting style, his birth order as youngest and how his brothers took the lead, and his relationship with his father. For Gina, she can look at her role as a pseudo-parent and her relationship with her parents and brother for clues. Raymond and Gina can come together to exchange stories and insights, empathise with one another, and then work on changes based on shared beliefs and values. They can list and categorise their parenting practices into the 'must-haves', 'good-to-haves' and 'can do without'.

One young parent once told me how she wished there were an encyclopaedia on right and wrong parenting and the 'do's and 'don't's', so that she can show her husband all the wrong things that he was doing! In jest, I told her that I would be the first person to burn that encyclopaedia. I shared with her that every individual and family unit are unique, exceptional and precious, and that true power lies not in having an encyclopaedia but in knowing that both she and her husband have the power to re-create their own family roles and write their own scripts. However, this necessitates a change of mindset and not insist that her way is the right and fool-proof way.

In this day and age, our traditional worldviews of **provider**, **father** and **mother** have changed. It is no longer surprising to see mothers go out to work while fathers stay at home for a season with the children. What matters in the long run is that we provide our children with a home environment that models shared values, beliefs and practices that are important to us as parents.

As we spend enforced and extended times with our spouses and children during this period, certain unhappy scenarios may repeat themselves at home. Hopefully, you will find some of the suggestions shared here useful and be able to use them to make some changes. Take baby steps and if need be, seek external help.

*\*The Raymond, Gina, Sophie, Ian - RGS1 - story is an amalgamation of different true stories based on the writer's experiences of working with families in her previous workplaces and non-work contexts, and is not a personal story of anyone she knows while in her current position at RGS.*

1. Byng-Hall, J. (1998) *Rewriting family scripts : improvisation and systems change*. New York : The Guilford Press.

2. Shakespeare, @. (2000). *The comedies*. New York : Smithmark Publishers.

### Eye Care During the Coronavirus Pandemic

By Dr Leo Seo Wei



Recent studies have shown that COVID-19 may be transmitted through the eyes. The virus can cause red eyes (conjunctivitis) and possibly be transmitted by aerosol droplet contact with the eye. The virus can invade the conjunctiva, which might, in turn, serve as a source of its spread.

#### **So how do you take care of your eyes during this period?**

Eye screening and elective eye surgeries are not allowed during the circuit breaker period. The eye specialist clinics are still open for urgent and medically essential services. If there is any symptom like acute blurring of vision, eye pain and redness, you should still seek treatment without delay. Rest assured that the clinics will follow strict hygiene and disinfection guidelines. For patients with stable conditions, the appointments will be postponed and medication refills will be arranged.

If you do visit the clinic in person during the coronavirus pandemic, expect changes to the clinic procedures. The clinic/hospital is restricting the number of visitors and each patient is only allowed to have one visitor. If you do not need someone to be there with you, please do not bring anyone to your appointment. Both patient and accompanying person will need to do a health declaration and use SafeEntry to check in/ check out. SafeEntry is the mandatory national digital system for contact tracing. In addition, the ophthalmologist will use a special plastic breath shield on the slit lamp machine when examining your eyes. The shields will be also found on other equipment.

#### **How do you protect your eyes?**

- Avoid touching / rubbing your eyes, nose and mouth. Avoid touching any eye discharge.
- Wash hands frequently. Scrub the hands thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If that is not available, use hand sanitiser which contains at least 60% alcohol. Alcohol free hand sanitisers which contain quarternary ammonium compounds (usually benzalkonium chloride) are not effective against SARS-CoV-2 virus.
- If you wear contact lenses, it may be beneficial to switch to spectacles. Generally contact lens wearers touch their eyes more often than the average person. In addition, wearing glasses may add a layer of protection and shield the eyes from infected respiratory droplets. The sides, tops and bottoms of the glasses are still exposed and safety goggles are recommended for people coming into contact with COVID-19 patients. If you are still wearing contact lenses, do not forget to clean your hands carefully and thoroughly (please see above for method) followed by hand drying. This should occur before every contact lens insertion and removal.
- Is it safe to wear eyelash extensions (assuming beauty salons reopen after the circuit breaker period)? Although there is no definitive study, you should not risk it as the virus can potentially live on those surfaces for days. Do avoid eyelash extensions and be sure to clean your make up brushes and applicators regularly.



- Stay at home if possible. Practise social distancing when you are out. Regularly disinfect commonly touched surfaces and items in the house, such as doorknobs and counter tops.

**How do adults working from home and children on home-based learning avoid eye strain since they have to stare at computer or mobile screens everyday? Eye strain can result in eye discomfort and fluctuating.**

- Schedule planned breaks to prevent prolonged uninterrupted screen time using the “20-20-20” rule. For every 20 minutes that you are on the screen, look at something 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds.
- Minimise time spent on recreational screen-based activities like binge watching Korean drama or online gaming. Replace these with physical activities in the house or outdoor exercise in compliance with Circuit Breaker measures. Getting away from the computer to stretch the body is essential to avoid the body aches caused by prolonged computer use. For children (especially those with myopia), it is recommended to spend 1 to 2 hours outdoor daily. If circumstances do not allow, let the children spend time in sunlit areas like the balcony or open the curtains to let sunlight into the house.
- Proper monitor position: The monitor should be positioned at or slightly below eye level and at least 25 inches, or arm’s length, away to reduce the intensity of the light and the stress on the eyes.
- Adjust the brightness, contrast and text size. As screens which glow brighter than the surroundings force the eyes to work harder, match the screen brightness to that of the room and increase the contrast to reduce eye strain. Black print on a white background is the best combination to facilitate reading. Different times of day and the weather may affect these settings.
- Reduce glare: Avoid glare from windows and lights as much as possible and use anti-glare or matte screen protectors for monitors. Position the computer such that the windows are at your side, instead of being in front of, or behind, your screen. If you wear spectacles, use lenses with an anti-reflective coating. Direct the desk lamp away from the screen to avoid excessive reflection
- Get an updated spectacle prescription and use the right eyeglasses, especially for people who are presbyopic.
- Don’t forget to blink: Usually, we naturally blink between 8 to 21 times per minute. Blinking provides moisture to the eye by irrigation using tears and a lubricant the eyes secrete. The eyelid provides suction across the eye from the tear duct to the entire eyeball to keep it from drying out. Blinking also protects the eye from irritants. Studies indicate that blinking decreases by more than 50% when staring at computer screens or other digital devices. Reduced blinking results in dry eyes causing eye discomfort, redness and foreign body sensation. Make a conscious effort to blink as often as possible to keep the eyes moisturised.
- Other measures to avoid dry eyes include using artificial tears/ lubricating eye drops and adding omega-3 fatty acids to your diet. These are available as supplements and in foods such as flaxseed, salmon and sardines. Contact lens wear can be reduced to avoid dry eyes. Increase the humidity of your environment, avoid a fan blowing directly at your face and do not sit directly under the air vent so as to decrease tear evaporation.



## PARENTS' CORNER

As one of the circuit breaker measures to stop the COVID-19 spread, Singapore kicked off the biggest nation-wide learn-from-home exercise as schools implemented home-based learning. How are parents reacting to this experience in their kids' educational journey and how has it impacted family life? We invited 2 parents to share their experience during this period.



Ms Sharon Thio, a Practice Manager and home baker, with her husband and their 2 children, a son aged 16 and a daughter aged 14 (in RGS Year 2).



Mr Ridzal Saat, a Rugby Services Manager and his wife Liza, a tutor with their 2 daughters, aged 12 and aged 15 (in RGS Year 3).

### 1) How are your children coping with Home-Based Learning (HBL)?

HBL definitely brings out the differences in both my kids. My elder one misses his friends and the social aspect of school and church. He can't wait to go back to school. My younger one is impartial to it. She loves the fact that she can do her homework at her own pace. She has the freedom to do what she loves without the structure of a fixed time table.

The children can focus better as there are less disruptions when everyone is muted. You have everything you need around you... stationery, textbooks, worksheets etc. They can't say, "oh I forgot to bring it today!" My son is allowed to eat during "live" sessions and this is helpful at times, especially for boys. The kids get to wake up later, which is such a luxury for our school-going kids. However, school is not just about going through the curriculum. It is about interacting with your peers and with your teachers. That sadly is lost during this time. HBL also means too much screen time. My husband and I encourage them to take the neighbour's dog for a walk, or to go for a run or a spin on their bikes.

I feel my children are coping well and making progress in their schoolwork. The two girls are quite disciplined in terms of getting ready every morning and doing their work diligently. I am surprised that they have adjusted so well. One positive aspect of HBL is, the girls now spend lots of time together. They used to have CCAs on different days and hardly have time for each other. However, they do miss the face to face, physical interaction with friends and teachers. As the children are required to spend more time on their computers for lessons, we are mindful they do not spend excessive time in front of the screen outside lesson time, especially for my younger daughter.



### 2) Did your children face any challenges during HBL?

Children do learn very fast. They are more adaptable than what we think they are. So yes, it is a matter of getting used to the new normal. We are fortunate to have enough laptops to go around. I constantly remind them that this is something they should not take for granted. I think a major difficulty is to stay interested especially when lessons get boring or mundane. Spending 24/7 together can also mean more irritable siblings!

The children are quite independent and rarely have problems with their schoolwork. The lack of social interaction and not being in school with friends is something that took them a while to get used to. Overall, I think managing boredom and screen time management will remain the major challenges throughout this whole circuit breaker period.

### 3) How did you support them through this new experience?

I simply keep feeding them! I make sure that there is enough food in the house. I am definitely baking and cooking more often now. HBL is not an ideal situation for them, but we need to do what needs to be done to beat the COVID-19 pandemic. Health comes first.

As mentioned, we rarely need to help them with schoolwork but since the fasting month started, my wife and I wake up earlier to prepare and make sure the girls have proper morning meals.

### 4) How is your family making use of more family time together?

We not only have dinner together but lunch together these days too! This has definitely resulted in deeper and more meaningful conversations at the dining table. The children also make an effort to call their grandparents more often to check if they have gone out! We now do a lot more activities together. The kids have gone for runs or cycle with their father and they bake and cook with me. Our next goal is a family movie night!

With everyone at home all day, we now pray together five times a day. We have meals together during break fast, catch up on jokes and our day. We try to have movie days but have so far only watched "Jojo Rabbit", which was a good show. Liza and my younger daughter are bingeing on the Chinese series "The Untamed". We are also keeping fit! My older girl goes out jogging and I have been walking 10 km a day in our HDB apartment!

### 5) How does everyone feel about seeing each other so much each day?

It definitely takes time to adapt. Cabin fever doesn't help much too. Thankfully, we all get along and we have our private places to go to in our home.

I think it is great. The two girls are spending more time together while remaining able to respect each other's space. My wife and I are used to working from home, so we know how to protect each other's space when we work. In the day, we are all in our personal zones while the children are having lessons.

### 6) Did you discover anything new about your children?

They are much messier than I thought they were! On the positive side, I was pleasantly surprised that they leapt at the chance to help distribute cloth masks at the nearby community club. We went as a family and it was really a memorable time spent together blessing the community.

They are highly adaptable and are independent. Also, I discovered they have my weird sense of humour... haha!

### 7) Did your children learn a new skill during this WFH and HBL period?

Other than cooking simple meals, my daughter has picked up simple baking. My son has learnt how to change different light bulbs and LED lights around the house.

The younger girl is trying baking. We have not had a helper for 5 years now, so we are trying to get the girls to help out with the household chores... which can be pretty challenging.

### 8) Do you have any plans for the upcoming school holidays during these unusual times?

Not quite yet. Everything has happened so fast, so we are still thinking about what we can do if we still have to stay home most of the time. I am sure more experiments in the kitchen are on the cards. I think my daughter will focus on her interest in baking.

We have not discussed and planned yet. We would like to experiment with how they can meet their friends virtually or have some virtual parties.

### 9) Ridzal, what are your plans to celebrate Hari Raya differently during these unusual times?

We might do the Hari Raya Morning Prayers together at home, then head down to Bussorah Street to Sultan Mosque. Bussorah Street has a special place in my heart because my late parents grew up there. This year, celebrating Hari Raya will be challenging as it is by nature a communal celebration. I come from a big family and the two girls are my in-laws' only grandchildren. Without the physical gathering, we might dress up in last year's Hari Raya clothes, take some photos and do a Hari Raya Zoom video conference with my 10 siblings and in-laws.

### *In Closing.....*

I try to remind myself that the unusual situation we are in due to the pandemic has a positive side. It is a good time to allow our children to explore and to be curious about the things around them. It is a precious time for them to reflect, reboot, recalibrate and always to remember to count their blessings.

My work involves a lot of travel, so it has been great to be with everyone at home. I learned that while we are all creatures of habits and comforts, we can still adapt and adjust very quickly. Without a hectic travel schedule, this is an opportunity for me personally to connect with the family. I am making efforts not to be on my phones all the time, practice active listening, and give my girls undivided attention when they need it.

## FAMILY FUN @ HOME CONTEST

Come join our **FAMILY FUN @ HOME** Contest and stand to win entry tickets to Science Centre Singapore!



Share with us what staying at home means to you during the circuit breaker and be one of the lucky 10 to win a pair of entry tickets each to Science Centre Singapore!

### Here's how you can participate.



#### STEP 1

Take an interesting photo of how you and your family spend fun-filled time bonding at home.



#### STEP 2

Add a caption of up to 10 words to tell us what this means to you.



#### STEP 3

Indicate your daughter's name, daughter's class, your name and your contact number. Email your photo and details to [rgsfamilyfun@gmail.com](mailto:rgsfamilyfun@gmail.com)

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- 1) The judges' decision shall be final.
- 2) The organiser reserves the right to feature the winning entries in PRGS or RGS publicity and communication material.
- 3) Please send in your entries by **17 June 2020**.

## WHAT'S HOT?

**Get your very own Team Raffles T-shirts, PRGS Bucket Hat and RGS Car Decal!**  
**You can order them today at [shop.rgs.edu.sg](http://shop.rgs.edu.sg)**  
(Available for Self-Collection from RGS from 2 June 2020)



**Team Raffles T-shirts @ \$25 each**

A symbol of our Raffles Family esprit de corps. Wear them to support our girls at competitions, performances and other events. High-quality, unisex, round-neck, white and green T-shirts in Dri-FIT material with heat transfer green-black and gold letterings respectively.



**PRGS Bucket Hat @ \$20 each**

Wear your PRGS bucket hat while outdoors as a protection from heat, supporting our girls at outdoor events, or just walking and exercising. Lightweight, unisex, 100% cotton, black bucket hat with green trimming on the brim and embroidered PRGS logo.



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**RGS Car Decal @ \$10 each**

A depiction of Raffles Family pride each time we step into and drive our car to go about our daily lives. High-quality, transparent plastic car decal with school crest, and green and white letterings of the school name and motto.

The net proceeds from the sale of all merchandise until 31 December 2020 will go to the **RGS New Campus Development Fund.**

For more information on our merchandise, please visit [shop.rgs.edu.sg](http://shop.rgs.edu.sg)

Thank you for your support!