

Food Composting Experience of Students with Mild Intellectual Disability in a Special Education School in Singapore

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Abstract

This paper describes the design, development and implementation of a food composting project involving students with mild intellectual disability from different vocational programmes at a special education school in Singapore. The desired outcomes for the project, which included the inculcation of the values of respect and responsibility in students, were infused into the vocational training sessions through relevant activities to enhance student learning. Students learned to use a special machine to turn food waste into compost, which they then utilised as fertiliser in the daily maintenance of the gardens in the school. Students also engaged in several school-wide initiatives to raise awareness about the benefits of food composting amongst their peers. In addition to learning about food recycling, this project provided a platform for students to develop many significant transferable skills such as communication, problem-solving, decision making and teamwork as they were exposed to work processes that were interconnected in nature. The use of technology also provided an avenue for students to learn to adapt to new trends in the different work industries. This paper draws on the perspectives of the students, trainers and instructors involved in the project to underscore its benefits and identify the challenges experienced in the course of its implementation, concluding with an outline of future plans for the programme.

Key Words: vocational training, transferable skills