

# Key Word Sign @ MINDS

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AGOSCI 13<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference 2017, Melbourne (Australia)

# MINDS

- ▶ One of the largest & oldest organizations in Singapore supporting children & adults with intellectual disabilities
- ▶ Provide special-education, vocational, training, & residential care services
- ▶ Approximately 700 staff over 15 centres, serving > 3000 clients & caregivers



# The start of Key Word Sign @ MINDS

- ▶ Key Word Sign/KWS (Australia) was implemented across MINDS in 2014
- ▶ The benefits of KWS as a communication method were recognized
- ▶ To align communication methods across MINDS schools, adult centres, & homes

# MINDS KWS Champions



# Initiatives to encourage KWS



***In-house training on 50 Core KWS for all staff***



***Sign of the Week (& Fun Signs) Posters***

# WELCOME, KEY WORD SIGN COMMITTEE 2016

MINDS KEY WORD SIGN  
NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 1 / JUNE 2016

**minds**  
Movement for the Intellectually Disabled of Singapore

## KWS COMMITTEE

*Eva Loh (Chairperson)*  
Key Word Sign Certified Presenter

*Shannen Yue (Vice- Chairperson)*  
Key Word Sign Certified Presenter

## Schools

*Michelle Stella Weick*  
*Elizabeth Wee*  
*Stefanie Peng*  
*Lam Lay Ting*  
*Preeti Ghosh*  
*Jaime Ng*  
*Tee Beng Choo*  
*Ronen Singh*

## Adult Centers

*Vijaya Rani*  
*Teo Joo Lee*  
*Noor Hamzah*  
*Siti Nurbaiyah*  
*Meeradhakshini*  
*Joey Leong*  
*Nabila Huda*  
*Jackie Hoe*  
*Siti...*

## MINDS SIGNS ON FOR THE 3RD YEAR



Absent with apologies: Elizabeth kang, Jonalyn, Chelvi & Lam Lay Ting.



A.Chocolate  
B.Chips  
C.Candy

Wow, how times flies! This year 2016, MINDS is into her 3rd year of Key Word Sign (KWS) implementation across all schools and centres. Indeed, the Key Word Sign Committee (made up of the nominated champions from each MINDS school and centre) has several exciting initiatives planned for the year. Some examples include 'Revisiting Key Word Sign @ MINDS- Use it or Lose it'. Putting together a DVD featuring our own clients and staff using Key Word Sign... so, stay tuned for updates from your Key Word Sign Champions.

# Initiatives ...

- ▶ “Revisiting KWS @ MINDS - Use it or Lose it”
  - ▶ Games & activities to practice KWS
  - ▶ Led by KWS Champions
- ▶ “Using KWS in Songs” Challenge
  - ▶ Gather a group of work buddies/colleagues, sing & sign & send in video entries



# Current study



- ▶ **Aim:** to explore staff's current awareness & perception towards KWS
- ▶ **Research questions:**
  - ▶ What percentage of staff perceived KWS to be useful?
  - ▶ Does perceived usefulness of KWS vary according to job role, and length of service?
  - ▶ Is there a relationship between staff's perceived usefulness of KWS and these variables:
    - ▶ frequency of KWS use?
    - ▶ perceived comfort & competency in KWS use?
    - ▶ perceived amount of KWS support/training received at organization?



# Current study...

## ▶ **Method:**

### Participants:

- ▶ 370 staff (out of a potential of 503 staff) participated in the study, indicating a response rate of 73.6%.
- ▶ Speech Therapists were excluded from the study

### Material:

- ▶ A survey was developed to gather data on length of service, staff's job role, and staff's awareness and perception towards use of KWS
- ▶ Consisted of close-ended & open-ended questions

# Current study...

- ▶ Staff to self-rate on a 5-point Likert scale:
  - ▶ Frequency in KWS use when interacting with clients  
*(1 = Not applicable/Not at all at this stage to 5 = Always)*
  - ▶ Perceived comfort & competency in KWS use  
*(from 1 = Poor to 5 = Very Good)*
  - ▶ Perceived amount of KWS support/training received organization-wide  
*(1 = Poor to 5 = Very Good)*

# Current study...

- ▶ Staff to self-rate their perception towards KWS as being useful  
( 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 5 = *Strongly Agree*):
  - ▶ helping them to better connect with clients during interaction,
  - ▶ promoting clients' speech and communication
  - ▶ promoting clients' language development
  - ▶ facilitating clients' expression of needs
- ▶ Average of these 4 scores = Perceived usefulness of KWS

# Current study...

## Procedure:

- ▶ The survey was emailed to the Centre Head/School Principal, who would then disseminate to their respective staff.
- ▶ All surveys were returned as hard copies with no identifying information.

Analyses conducted: Descriptive statistics, ANOVA, Correlation

# Results

- ▶ ***Overall, 40.4 % of staff perceived KWS to be useful***
- ▶ Tables 1 and 2 show the percentage of staff who perceived KWS to be useful according to:
  - ▶ Job role
  - ▶ Length of service
  - ▶ Frequency of KWS use
  - ▶ Comfort and competency of KWS use

Table 1: Percentage of staff who perceived KWS to be useful according to job role, and length of service

<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>No. of staff who perceived KWS as useful</b>	<b>( % )</b>
<b><u>Job Role</u></b>			
Teacher	143	59	(41.3%)
Training Officer	105	43	(41.0%)
Allied Health	36	9	(25.0%)
Admin	16	6	(37.5%)
Nursing Staff	41	22	(53.7%)
Others	29	11	(37.9%)
<b><u>Length of Service</u></b>			
< 6 months	15	10	(66.7%)
6 months – 1 year	34	12	(35.3%)
1 year – 3 years	84	35	(41.7%)
3 years and >	113	50	(44.2%)
10 years and >	124	43	(34.7%)

Table 2: Percentage of staff who perceived KWS to be useful according to frequency of KWS use, and comfort & competency in KWS

Variable	N	No. of staff who perceived KWS as useful	( % )
<b><u>Frequency of KWS Use</u></b>			
Always	23	19	(82.6%)
Most of the time	63	43	(68.3%)
Some of the time	249	83	(33.3%)
Never	23	2	(8.7%)
Not applicable/Not at all	12	3	(25.0%)
<b><u>Comfort &amp; Competence in KWS</u></b>			
Very Good	2	2	(100%)
Good	53	37	(69.8%)
Neutral	160	67	(41.9%)
Limited	126	38	(30.2%)
Poor	29	6	(20.7%)

## ANOVA

perceived\_usefulness

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	243.245	5	48.649	4.236	.001
Within Groups	4180.852	364	11.486		
Total	4424.097	369			



## Multiple Comparisons



Dependent Variable: perceived\_usefulness

Tukey HSD

		95% Confidence Interval				
(I) job_role	(J) job_role	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Admin	Others	-3.66595*	1.05543	.008	-6.6897	-.6422
	Teacher	-3.47159*	.89341	.002	-6.0312	-.9120
	Trg Officer	-3.84821*	.90954	.000	-6.4540	-1.2424
	Allied Health	-2.84028	1.01829	.061	-5.7576	.0771
	NursingStaff	-4.17226*	.99900	.001	-7.0344	-1.3101

***Direct care staff (i.e. teachers, training officers, & nursing staff) perceived KWS to be more useful than administrative staff***

## ANOVA

perceived\_usefulness

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	166.918	4	41.730	3.578	.007
Within Groups	4257.179	365	11.664		
Total	4424.097	369			

## Multiple Comparisons



Dependent Variable: perceived\_usefulness

Tukey HSD

(I) job_duration	(J) job_duration	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound
< 6 months	6 months – 1 year	3.36471*	1.05859	.014	.4626
	1 year – 3 years	2.38571	.95730	.095	-.2387
	3 years and >	2.54690	.93850	.054	-.0260
	10 years and >	3.20484*	.93361	.006	.6454

***Staff with less than 6 months of service perceived KWS to be more useful than staff who were in service for 6 months to 1 year, and staff who were in service for 10 years and more.***

## Results (continued)

- ▶ The perceived usefulness of KWS correlated positively with frequency of use ( $r = .48, p < .01$ ).
  - ▶ *Staff who used KWS more frequently found KWS to be more useful*
- ▶ The perceived usefulness of KWS also correlated positively with comfort & competency in KWS ( $r = .32, p < .01$ ).
  - ▶ *Staff who perceived themselves as more comfortable and competent in using KWS found KWS to be more useful*
- ▶ There was also a significant positive correlation between staff's perception of the amount of training/support organization-wide and perceived usefulness towards KWS ( $r = .31, p < .01$ ).
  - ▶ *Staff who perceived that they received higher amount of training/support organization-wide also perceived KWS to be more useful*

# Discussion

- ▶ **Direct care staff perceived KWS to be more useful than administrative staff**
  - ▶ More direct-contact opportunities with clients
  - ▶ Clients' communication/speech-language profile
  - ▶ KWS served as a viable mode of communication to facilitate interaction

## Discussion (continued)

- ▶ **Staff less than 6 months in service perceived KWS to be more useful than staff in service of 6 months to 1 year, and staff in service of 10 years and more**
  - ▶ Staff less than 6 months in service: could possibly be less equipped in knowledge and skills in disability setting
  - ▶ Staff being more receptive towards KWS as an immediate communication strategy to interact with our clients
  - ▶ KWS use being introduced to new staff as part of induction program at organization level

## Discussion (continued)

- ▶ **Significant positive correlation between perceived usefulness of KWS &**
  - 1) **frequency of use**
  - 2) **perceived comfort & competency in KWS use**
  - 3) **perceived amount of support/training received at organization**
  
- ▶ Views about KWS would be reflected in how staff perceived KWS to be useful
  
- ▶ Attitude and beliefs of staff play a significant role in staff's acceptance and use of KWS

# Future Directions

- ▶ **Issues specific to Singapore context**
  - ▶ Signs used are from Australia - could we work towards adopting signs used in Singapore Deaf Community, & have KWS (Singapore)?
- ▶ **For staff who rated KWS lower in perceived usefulness**
  - ▶ Encourage staff to embrace KWS by fulfilling a number of KWS training hours (as part of continuous professional development)
  - ▶ KWS Champions being more actively involved to provide on-the-ground support
  - ▶ Ongoing KWS support from organization through various initiatives to motivate staff in using KWS
- ▶ **Consider next study - number of clients @ MINDS using KWS?**