



# CHANGING THE WORLD - ONE SCHOOL AT A TIME

**MS PATRICIA KOH**  
MAPLEBEAR INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLHOUSE PTE LTD



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**WE CAN CHANGE THE WORLD AND MAKE IT A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE IN BY CHANGING THE WAYS WE EDUCATE CHILDREN. MY MISSION IS TO CHANGE THE WORLD ONE SCHOOL AT A TIME.**  
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Mrs Patricia Koh is a prominent figure well-known as a veteran in the early childhood education industry with a passion to educate children. Having founded Pat's Schoolhouse back in 1988, she has the ability to handle all kinds of situations with finesse and skill. Now, holding the prestigious role of Chief Executive and Education Ambassador of MapleBear Singapore, she has made it even more of her role to make sure proper education is provided to children, at an affordable cost. "Having create a great education concept which man love but cannot afford, I decided that I should now spend time building more quality child care and education centres to meet the needs of many more young families," professes Pat passionately.

Incorporated in 2013 on Singapore's National Day, MapleBear Singapore takes care of the education of young children up to six years of age. Their schools are set up to provide a strong bilingual foundation for children and to ensure that their early learning journey helps them to develop future skills, and subsequently prepare the next generation for tomorrow.

Starting with just one center at The Grandstand in 2013, the company has grown by leaps and bounds. By the end of March 2019, they will have 37 partners, people who believe in what MapleBear can offer and want to have a part in making a difference in the lives of children. Most of them are also willing to give up high paying jobs to invest in early education. As Pat avers, "We are in the business to ensure that children will have a great and memorable childhood and still be ready for the future and not just for Primary One education."

Her colleagues can attest to Pat's stellar abilities, with some quoted as saying that her passion and expertise in bringing the best early years' programmes to Singapore has been outstanding. She is well known as a gifted teacher, lecturer, entrepreneur and the creative director of many successful educational programmes.

She strongly believes in doing everything she can to stay ahead of the fervent competition in Singapore, explaining that ever since she started providing quality preschool education in 1988, many others have jumped on the band wagon and started 'trendy' preschools to attract young parents who are looking for something 'different' for their children. She expounds, "It is not difficult to start a brand and to create a hype about what we can offer but it is not that easy to stay passionate and to keep the standards high. To stay as an industry star, we cannot be simply 'copying' other brands and producing 'cut and paste' curriculum."

Concluding, Pat firmly declares, "My long term goal is to ensure that all MapleBear schools in Singapore continue to provide the best care and education for all children. We hope in the near future, we will be able to provide a seamless education through to high school not only in Singapore but also in South East Asia."

## UP CLOSE & PERSONAL

### Do you foresee any major changes in the industry?

Over the years, I have seen many changes in the way we 'treat' education. Regardless of all the changes, I am true to what I believe is best for children during their early years and will always stand by it. Some competitors may call it 'outdated' methods but personally, I love the old fashioned ways children learn.

Children learn by being curious, observing, exploring, experimenting and doing. Such hands-on learning is more successful than virtual learning. Schools who have switched to using more tablets for children's learning have not considered the crucial developmental stages of young children.

Other changes may include a new emphasis on less reading and writing and more focus on a child-initiated curriculum which determines how children should learn. Such changes may impress the new generation of parents who do not truly understand what is best for their children.

### What is most important to you in this life?

What is most important to me is my children and my grandchildren. They are the reasons I am in this business. They inspire me with the things they say and do every day. I look forward to each day knowing that I have my children and grandchildren with me.

### How have your past experiences helped in your journey as an entrepreneur?

Over the years as an entrepreneur, I have experienced many crisis moments and have overcome them. The crisis moments are the ones that have taught me how to stay strong as we all know that "when the going gets tough, the tough gets going".

Staying focused too has helped me to be in the forefront and to make a huge difference in the lives of those who have connected with me one way or other.