Pre-schoolers who grew up during Covid-19 had fewer chances of socialisation and learning, but good parental support can prepare them for a new chapter

Research from around the globe suggests that some young children who grew up during the pandemic may have missed out on “social language” or being able to express how they think and feel, says Dr Mercy Karuniah Jesuvadian, a lecturer in psychology and child and human development at the National Institute of Education at Nanyang Technological University.

“Some pre-schoolers have managed to bridge that gap depend on many factors, from whether they were enrolled in pre-school during the pandemic, to whether they had access to online lessons at home,” she says.

At the same time, not all pre-schoolers have gained socially, says Dr Tan Su-Lynn, a psychological services and Think Psychology counsel with private counselling practices.

“We had kids who were overwhelmed having to interact and go out in crowded places. We had to work on anxiety management and exposure therapy.”

The ages from birth to three are recognised as the youngest members of society, who are the most primed to learn.

Ms Siti Ummu Aidilah Badar, 29, teaching her son Muhammad Al-Zaim Muhammad Shafiq, six, how to pack his bag for Primary 1.

Mr Saifudin Koolibai Bader, 29, teaching his son Mohammad Al-Amin Mohammad Shafiq, six, how to pack his bag for Primary 1.

Stefanie Sun’s husband shares his 13-year journey the Straits Times

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Help pandemic kids enter Primary 1

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Ms Tan says: “Early intervention services, supportive parenting and access to quality early education programmes can help mitigate the potential negative effects on children’s development and school readiness.”