

# THE NEWTON SCIENCE SHOW

Text and photos by  
Dr Tan Yia Swam, Editor

Being a mother to three young boys, I find that I don't indulge myself much anymore; instead, I indulge the kids!

When we celebrated my older boy's fifth birthday in May, he was in a science craze. His teachers at Learning Vision have taught the class concepts like recycling and reproduction; he liked watching *Nina and the Neurons* on cable TV and followed up by searching for relevant videos on YouTube. He could even tell me about how tornadoes are formed and the hunting habits of great white sharks.

Therefore, I thought to organise a science-themed party for his birthday. Google turned up a few relevant results and I decided to engage The Newton Show. From what I gathered, they have had eight years of experience in Europe and came to Singapore early this year. Their website is easy to navigate and provides details, as well as photos and videos, of previous events. There are recommended packages depending on the age group of the children you want to cater to. I sent in an enquiry and was promptly attended to. Arrangements were made via text messages and emails, and a deposit of 20% of the final fee was transferred. The remaining 80% was paid only after the event.

## Actual day

The birthday party was held in our condominium's function room with a buffet lunch (which was essentially

adults eating while the kids ran around like mad chickens), followed by the show. It's an hour-long programme for up to 30 kids with no limit on the number of adults. The only set-up required from us was a table and an electrical socket.

The show was conducted by "Professor Neon" (a young Indian lady whom my friend identified as a host from local television channel Vasantham). She was very good at engaging the kids! We had 12 kids whose ages range from three to seven years, three toddlers/babies in arms and close to 30 adults.

They conducted ten to 12 mini experiments with the kids, which were all crowd pleasers! The birthday boy was appointed the main assistant and had first dibs at most of the stuff, but all the kids present were given a chance for hands-on.

Professor Neon used various "simple" chemical and physics principles to put on a spectacular show. These included the use of dry ice, volcano foam and a "smoke" gun for shooting zombies. Everyone, including the adults, could also borrow diffraction glasses, enabling us to see a spectrum of colours in the flames when she set her hand on fire (I kid you not). She also taught the children some scientific terms and safety tips (eg, to always handle dry ice with gloves), and emphasised that none of this involves magic, but science.





Dr Tan Yia Swam is a consultant at the Breast Department of KK Women's and Children's Hospital. She continues to juggle the commitments of being a doctor, a wife, the SMA News Editor and the increased duties of a mother of three. She also tries to keep time aside for herself and friends, both old and new.



I fully endorse the show; it was great fun for both kids and adults. It was safe, interactive and visually captivating. Most important of all, there was no mess to clean up!

Additional items were available at a price. These items include laboratory coats and protective goggles for up to 30 children during the show, "disco with bubbles" (a bubble machine to produce loads of bubbles), "volcano cake", as well as "rocket launch" and "cola-gaser" (to be demonstrated outdoors). Goody bags were also available at \$15 each, comprising seven items: a pair of diffraction glasses, a 3 cm bouncy ball, a quail-sized hatching dinosaur egg, a 2 cm by 2 cm compass, a small chocolate coin, a small box of Smarties and a party blower.

### Areas of improvement

It was not without problems though, and those encountered were all minor but recurring.

Perhaps due to them being new in Singapore, there seemed to be a language barrier despite our communication being in English. The main contact person was a lady called Yulia. My first message to them indicated

that it was a birthday party, but it was misunderstood to be an expression of interest in their science camp. There were repeated queries on the number of kids, venue and date, in both WhatsApp and email correspondences.

Other problems include an email correspondence that invited me to choose a science-themed invitation card, with no subsequent follow-up. We had requested for orange-coloured goody bags, but the final ones received were blue. Finally, I had requested for the performance to start at 1 pm, and agreed when they requested to come later at 1.30 pm. However, they were late by more than half an hour (citing heavy traffic). As the kids were getting restless, we brought forward the cake-cutting and a few guests had to leave before the show started. Luckily, the guests were all close friends who were very understanding.

Despite the hiccups, I would still recommend this show for kids' parties. Everyone enjoyed the programme and the older ones were still excitedly talking about it in the weeks that followed. ♦

*Disclaimer: I paid for the show in full, without any benefits or perks, and received no incentive for this review.*



### Legend

1. "Look out! It's going to blow!"
2. Professor Neon demonstrating a dry ice experiment
3. The kids were captivated by the scientific tricks

