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**PARTICIPANTS** gathered at the Dragonfly Lake, Eco Grandeur, for morning walk to the event venue, EcoWorld Gallery.



## FROM MARGINS TO MAINSTREAM: HASA CHILDHOOD NEURODISABILITY DAY 2025 SPOTLIGHTS INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

**I** Dr. Muhamad Faizal Zainudin  
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**F**or too long, children with disabilities have remained on the margins, unseen, unheard, and often misunderstood. A United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) study revealed that 1 in 3 Malaysians believe children with disabilities should be kept hidden, while 43% think they would be disruptive in mainstream classrooms<sup>1</sup>. These sobering statistics reflect the ongoing need for awareness, advocacy, and cultural change.

Against this backdrop, and with the

powerful theme “Embracing Disability as Diversity,” the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine and the Department of Paediatrics, Faculty of Medicine & Hospital Al-Sultan Abdullah (HASA) jointly organised HASA Childhood Neurodisability Day 2025 on 21 June at EcoWorld Gallery, Puncak Alam. The event aimed to celebrate children with neurodisabilities, strengthen support networks among parents, and promote awareness and understanding within the wider community.

Over 30 children and their families took part in this uplifting event. The

day began with a morning walk around Dragonfly Lake, Eco Grandeur, at 9:15 am, setting the tone for a day of connection, celebration, and learning. At 10:00 am, the official ceremony was officiated by Dr Wan Najwa Wan Mohd Zohdi, Head of the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine. A vibrant senamrobik session followed, energising participants for the day ahead.

Attendees were then treated to a series of insightful educational talks by medical specialists on topics including epilepsy, choking and tube feeding, oral and dental health, and an introduction to para sports. A heartfelt sharing session by a parent of a child with disabilities provided a raw and authentic perspective, offering inspiration and reassurance to many in the audience.

Following the talks, participants enjoyed fun games and a gift ceremony, during which every child received a token of appreciation. The closing ceremony, officiated by Dr Nor Azizah Abu, Head of the Department of Paediatrics, brought the day to a meaningful close at 2:00 pm.

The event was further enriched by the presence of athletes and representatives from Persatuan Renang Para Selangor and Persatuan Boccia Selangor, who shared their personal journeys and triumphs in adaptive sports. Their stories encouraged parents to envision a future of possibility and achievement for their children.

In addition, complimentary dental and health check-ups were offered, thanks to the generous support of the Department



**GROUP** photo of the participants, organising committee, collaborators, and sponsors with MB Brownie, the Marrybrown's mascot.



**THE** organising committee members joining the *senamrobik* session led by the physiotherapy team.

of Paediatric Dentistry and the Department of Primary Care Medicine.

The success of HASA Childhood Neurodisability Day 2025 was made possible by the unwavering dedication of both departments, support from generous sponsors, and the enthusiasm of all participants. Parents shared heartfelt feedback, expressing gratitude for the safe space, resources, and new friendships the event fostered.

As we look to the future, we remain committed to creating more inclusive and supportive environments where every child, regardless of ability, can thrive and shine. We thank everyone who made this day possible and eagerly anticipate future events that continue to break down barriers and build up hope.

