

Sunny Tye

Dearest Jo-Wayne

I would like to share with you how a typical weekday goes by when you are about two years old attending school:

Get up at 6.45am, make milk, pack your school bag, change you into your uniform and go downstairs to wait for Dad & Mum to pick you up and drop you in school (Learning Vision @ Revenue House). Mum works in IRAS — both school and Mum's office are located within the same building.

As a toddler you were so keen to go to school, upon hearing “Go school”, you will jump up and ask for your uniform and bag and start calling your friends' names - Josh, Kang Kang, Clare, Deryn, Teacher Corinne, Li Xue Lao Shi etc. You will lie down to drink 4oz of Gain IQ milk and ask to play VCD and will demand for a particular title (you have a collection of more than 50 VCDs but your usual favourites are Barney, Hi-5, Power Ranger, Doraemon, Robot, Pingu and your latest collection — Bob the Builder). You like to imitate the characters — sing and dance. When the clock chimes at 7, (you know it is time to leave for school), you will start shouting: “Gong Gong, bao bao (means “carry” in Chinese), go school, go down. Bye bye, Ma Ma.” Gong Gong will carry you down the stairs.

While waiting for Dad to arrive, you would be chasing after any cat, dog or bird you see. You will say: “Gong Gong, catch bird!” and runs towards one. “Bird fly”, you would say, as it flies away.

Upon seeing Daddy’s car from afar, you will shout: “Daddy, Daddy take Wei-Wei go school”, and when the car stops, you will rush to open the door. Daddy will carry you onto the car seat and as you wait to be belted, you will say: “Jo-Wayne put belt.” You will then say: “Bye bye, Gong Gong. See you later,” followed by a big hug and kiss for Gong Gong.

The next programme would be to do marketing for lunch and dinner. I will head to the wet market to buy meat and vegetables. I always look out for your favourite fruits such as papaya, banana, grapes and nectarine. After lunch would be some free time for myself.

At about 4.30pm, I take an hour’s bus ride from Tampines to Thomson to pick you from school between 5.30pm and 6.30pm.

Meanwhile, Grandma will start preparing dinner for the family. She never fails to prepare dishes that you love! Among your favourites are French beans, cabbages, chicken, sausages and of course, soup.

When I arrive at your school, I’ll check your daily routine care checklist which records your appetite for meals, liquids consumed, sleep pattern, diaper change and bowel movements for the day. At the sight of me, you will rush immediately to hug me and yell: “Gong

Gong, Gong Gong!” After awhile, you will run back to your class to hug your teachers and friends and say “Bye bye” to almost everyone you come across and sometimes this can take 10 minutes! Then you will hold my hand and drag me to your class and ask me to help to carry your bag and water bottle. You will also remind me to sign and read the daily routine care checklist. We put on our shoes and take the lift to the 1st floor to wait for Mummy. Meanwhile, you will run around to explore whatever interests you.

When Mummy comes, you will call out: “Mummy, Mummy” and gives her a hug and kiss. Three of us will walk to the main road to wait for a taxi. When we board a taxi, you will say: “Go Tampines Street 12” and will start talking to the taxi driver. While in the taxi, you cannot keep still. You will fiddle with everything unless we give you some biscuits, fruits or sweets to occupy you.

When we are near our destination, you will give directions to the taxi driver: “Uncle turn right. Turn left to car park”. You will then turn to Mummy and say: “I want money, five dollars” with your right hand stretched out and palm wide open. Mum gives you either a \$5 or \$10 note. When we arrive, you will ask “How much?” and hand the money to the taxi driver. “Thank you very much! Bye bye,” you will shout and wave your hands to the taxi driver.

We will take the lift up and on reaching home, you will shout “Ma Ma, Ma Ma. I’m home!” and give her a hug and kiss. Grandma will be so

happy to see you and will carry and cuddle you. You will usually ask for Gain IQ milk and after which you will take a bath.

Ma Ma will prepare your bath and put your shower cream and pails aside. You will grab both the pails and will say: “Ma Ma one pail. Jo-Wayne one pail,” and you will give the bigger pail to Ma Ma. You will use the smaller pail to scoop water and splash on your body. Ma Ma will dry, powder and dress you. You will say: “Put powder. Wear shirt.” When you are ready, you dash out of the room and announce loudly: “Jo-Wayne bath-bath”.

Next, Ma Ma will sit you down and feed you dinner. At times, you would feed yourself and make a big mess! You will then have fruits — using a fork to poke each piece and feed yourself. “Jo-Wayne eat finish. Jo-Wayne so clever. I want wash bowl”, you will say and run to the kitchen. You drag a stool to the sink and attempt to climb on it and one of us will wash the dishes with you.

After that, you will occupy yourself by playing with toys, watching TV/CD, reading books or simply spending time with Gong Gong, Ma Ma, Uncle, Auntie, Daddy or Mummy.

You will ask for Gain IQ milk (sometimes many helpings) before falling asleep on your own, usually at about 9pm. Sweet dreams.

With lots of love,
Gong Gong & Ma Ma