

ANNUAL REPORT FY23

(01 April 2022 to 31 March 2023)

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About Us

We are a youth development charity that seeks to engage, empower and equip youths of today, both local and international, with essential personal development and leadership skills.

Founded by on the belief that Personal Values and Character are the key foundations and life-smith of every youth leader.

Message from the Chairman

Mental health is an increasingly important issue in many countries around the world, including Singapore. Singapore has made much progress in recent years in terms of increasing awareness about mental health and improving access to mental health services, but there is still much work to be done. At the Character & Leadership Academy (CLA), we hope to fill in the gaps and reach out to more youths and young parents, such that they can be more resilient and eventually be able to look out for themselves and their peers.

One of the main challenges facing mental health in Singapore is stigma. Mental illness is often viewed as a sign of weakness or a personal failing, which can prevent people from seeking help. However, the Singaporean government has launched numerous campaigns to combat stigma and raise awareness about mental health issues. At CLA, we will continue to work with our partners and stakeholders to reach out to more young people and our interfaith community. The diverse backgrounds and experiences of our Board members have allowed us to extend suicide prevention training to different religious leaders and also to the youth leaders in these religious organisations. This is an important area where faith leaders can be gatekeepers of life to save more lives and ensure our young people can continue to live their dreams and thrive.

Other than focusing on mental wellbeing and suicide prevention in our programs, character building and leadership training remain a core part of what we do. Leadership training helps individuals develop the skills they need to lead effectively. This is particularly important in Singapore, where there is a focus on developing strong leaders who can contribute to the country's economic growth and social development.

After overcoming the COVID-19 Pandemic, personal values are even more important for our youths for building a strong and cohesive society and promoting ethical behaviour in all areas of life. Values such as integrity, responsibility, and empathy must continue to be an important part of their DNA, so that they may learn to work together effectively and to appreciate the strengths and perspectives of others. This helps to build social cohesion and create a more harmonious society.

As Singapore continues to face economic and social challenges, it is important to prepare future leaders who can navigate these challenges and contribute to the country's success. Character building and leadership training help to develop individuals who are equipped to face these challenges and make a positive impact on society.

Lastly, I would like to thank my Board Members for their unwavering support in our mission and vision. We will be celebrating our 10th Anniversary this year and I am very optimistic that CLA will continue to thrive and impact the lives of our next generation!

Chua Seng Lee



Message from the Executive Director & Co-Founder

As we gather today to reflect on the past 10 years of our organization's work and look towards the future, we are reminded of the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. The past 3 years, in particular, have been a period of unprecedented disruption and change, as the COVID-19 pandemic has forced us to rethink many aspects of our work and personal lives. Despite these challenges, our organization remains steadfast in our mission to Engage, Equip, and Empower Youths through character and leadership education.

Over the past 10 years, we have made significant progress in these areas, but we know there is still much work to be done. As we move forward, we will be more intentional in our direction, programs, and initiatives, focusing on the 6Is as our guiding compass. We will be Inspiring Youths and Empowering the Next Generation, by providing young people with the tools and resources they need to develop their character and leadership skills. We will be Impacting Lives and Making a Positive Influence, by working to create meaningful change in the communities we serve. We will be Imparting Skills to the Future Generation, by equipping young people with the skills they need to succeed in a rapidly changing world. We will be Influencing Leaders of Tomorrow, by nurturing and developing the next generation of leaders who will make a difference in the world. We will be Integrating Communities to Care, by working to create more inclusive and caring communities that support the well-being of all members. And we will be Internationalizing Cultures and Preparing for a Globalized Society, by helping young people to develop a global perspective and the skills they need to navigate an increasingly interconnected world.

In addition to our focus on character and leadership education, we also recognize the importance of addressing mental health issues among our youth. Suicide prevention is a critical issue in Singapore, where it is the leading cause of death for those aged 10-29, which is the age range of our target beneficiaries. Our HappYouth program, launched in 2016, has trained more than 50,000 youths to build mental resilience and cope with stress and crisis. We hope to reach even more young people with this program and other initiatives that equip our youth with the skills they need to manage their mental health.

Leadership training is another key area where CLA takes pride in delivering. Our programs help youths to hone essential skills such as communication, delegation, decision-making, problem-solving, and dispute resolution. We believe that effective leaders not only contribute positively towards their organizations but also identify and develop future leaders within the organization, ensuring a smooth transition of leadership when current leaders retire or leave the organization.

We are grateful to our partners, such as Pivotal, for their support in holding the first Support for Peers' Equipping Engagement Day (in 2022). Peer support is an important aspect of mental health and wellbeing, providing individuals with a unique and supportive approach to managing mental health challenges. By equipping our youth with peer supporting skills and QPR techniques, we can reach out and help more people who are suffering in silence.

None of this would be possible without the support of our board members, donors, sponsors, and beneficiaries. We are grateful for your unwavering commitment to our cause, which has made it possible for us to make a positive impact in the lives of young people. As we forge ahead to our 11th year, we hope to build more friendships and partnerships to better serve our beneficiaries. We are thankful to our dedicated Board of Directors and team for driving CLA's mission forward.



Delane Lim

Overview of Charity

Character and Leadership Academy (CLA) was registered a Company Limited by Guarantee on 30/04/2014, and became a charity on 01/07/2015.

A Singapore Government Agency Website

CHARITY PORTAL About Us Charities and IPCs Fund-Raising News and Notices Resource and Training Login

By Charities

Search Results (1 records found) [Export to Excel](#)

Filter

Charity/IPC Name	Sector Administrator	Activities	Registration Date
CHARACTER & LEADERSHIP ACADEMY LIMITED UEN: 201412408N Status of Charity: Registered Primary Sector: Others Primary Classification: Children/Youth	Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth	Direct Services Research Supports other Charities Grantmaking Training & education Public awareness, promotion & advisory	01/7/2015

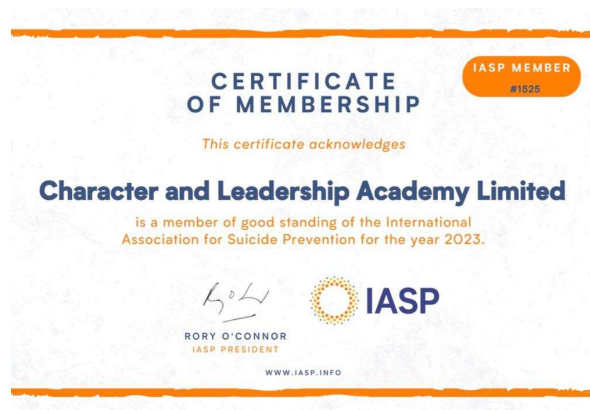
Unique Registration Number (UEN): **201412408N**

Registered Address: 1 Yishun Industrial Street 1
#08-31, A'Posh Bizhub
Singapore 768160

Auditor: Lo Hock Ling & Co.



111	CHARACTER & LEADERSHIP ACADEMY LIMITED	1 YISHUN INDUSTRIAL STREET 1 #08-31 A'POSH BIZHUB Singapore 768160	66942110	characterleadershipsg@gmail.com
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We are a member of the **National Council of Social Services (NCSS)** and a member of the **International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP)**

Guiding Principles

Principle 1:

Our charity serves our mission and achieves our objectives

**Principle 2:**

Our charity has an effective Board and Management

**Principle 3:**

Our charity acts responsibly, fairly and with integrity.

**Principle 4:**

Our charity is well managed and plans for the future

**Principle 5:**

Our charity is accountable and transparent.

**Principle 6:**

Our charity communicates actively to instil public confidence.



As encouraged by the Charity Council, CLA remains guided by a principle-based approach. We are active in reviewing CLA's operations to be aligned with the principles and guidelines of good governance, so that members of the public can make informed decisions to donate financially or support physically in our programmes.

Organisational Structure



Tin Pei Ling
Patron



Chua Seng Lee
Board Chairman



Delane Lim
Ag Executive Director



Chung Kwang Tong
Deputy Executive Director



Adrian Lee



Mike Lim



Chong Zhe Wei



Dr Wong Liang Fu



Yang Si Cheng



Laurence Goh



Betty Chee

Resource & Advisory Members



Professor Colin Beard



Jeff Baierlein



Harriet Turk



Valerie Yeo



Alvin Toh



Donald Lee

Board Members – Experience & Background

	Appointment	Name of Personnel	Experience & Background:
	Chairman	Chua Seng Lee (Appointed 30/04/2014)	Senior Pastor, Bethesda Bedok Tampines Church Mental Health, Community Service, Youth Leadership, Facilitation, Mentoring, Inter-faith, Counsellor, Life Coach
	Ag Executive Director	Delane Lim (Appointed 30/04/2014)	Consultant / Entrepreneur Mental Health, Suicide Prevention Trainer, Community Service, Youth Leadership and development, Facilitation, Mentoring, Corporate Services, Human Resource, Certified Filing Agent, Mediator
	Dy Executive Director	Chung Kwang Tong (Appointed 15/04/2021) (Dy. ED since 16/06/2022)	Full Time CLA Deputy Director / Taoist Priest Mental Health, Community Service, Facilitation, Mentoring, Inter-faith, Humanitarian, Youth Development, Mediator
	Board Director	Adrian Lee (Appointed 30/04/2014)	Group Head of Customer Systems, IHH Healthcare Corporate Services, Governance, Human Resource, System Development, Medical & Healthcare
	Board Director	Mike Lim (Appointed 30/04/2014)	Freelancer (Design & Media) Corporate Communications, Administrations, Media & Design
	Board Director	Chong Zhe Wei (Appointed 30/04/2014)	Co-Founder, SuperCandy Pte Ltd Corporate Strategy, Real Estate, Process & System, Management Consultancy
	Board Director	Dr Wong Liang Fu (Appointed 30/04/2014)	Medical Director Medical, Humanitarian, Mental Health
	Board Director	Yang Si Cheng (Appointed 15/04/2021)	Group Chief, MINDEF Communications Military Services, Communication, Branding and Leadership
	Board Director	Laurence Goh (Appointed 16/06/2022)	Lawyer Corporate Strategy, Legal Services, Certified Filing Agent, Mediator
	Board Director	Betty Chee (Appointed 16/06/2022)	Founder, Experience New Asia Travel, Foreign Services, Women Empowerment, Human Resource

Board Meetings

Name of Personnel	Appointment	16 JUN 2022	27 AUG 2022	1 DEC 2022
Chua Seng Lee	Chairman	✓	✓	✓
Delane Lim	Ag Executive Director	✓	✓	✓
Chung Kwang Tong	Dy Executive Director (Appointed 1 Jun 2022)	✓	✓	✓
Adrian Lee	Director	Apologies	✓	Apologies
Mike Lim	Director	✓	Apologies	Apologies
Chong Zhe Wei	Director	Apologies	Apologies	✓
Dr Wong Liang Fu	Director	✓	✓	✓
Yang Si Cheng	Director	Apologies	✓	✓
Laurence Goh	Director	✓	✓	Apologies
Betty Chee	Director	✓	Apologies	✓
Valerie Yeo	Member	✓	✓	✓
Donald Lee	Member	✓	Apologies	Apologies
Alvin Toh	Member	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies



Our Objects

The objects for which Character & Leadership Academy Limited is established are:

- (1) To organise (including partnership, support and co-organise) youth outreach programs and events to train and develop the youths in the area of leadership and character building by providing opportunities for the youths to participate in Youth-related Leadership or Character Education (workshops, symposiums, events and conferences) conducted locally and globally.
- (2) To encourage the spirit of volunteerism and build social cohesiveness through social, radical, transcultural integration related programs and youth community projects conducted globally and locally.
- (3) To manage all functions (from recruitment, selection, deployment and promotion) of all youth facilitators, volunteers and trainers as well as oversee and manage relevant certification for youths related courses and training programs.
- (4) To equip Singaporeans with necessary leadership skills and cultural sensitivity to take on opportunities at the global stage, encouraging cross cultural dialogues between Singaporean youths and youths of other nationalities through 10 key thrusts:-
 - Arts and Culture
 - Sports and Adventure
 - Community and Service Learning
 - Character and Leadership Education
 - Environment and Entrepreneurships Education



Our Purpose



Inspiring

Inspiring youth and
empowering the next
generation



Impacting

Impacting lives and making
a positive influence



Internationalising

Internationalising cultures
and preparing for a
globalised society



Imparting

Imparting skills to the
future generation



Influencing

Influencing leaders of
tomorrow



Integrating

Integrating communities to
care for one another

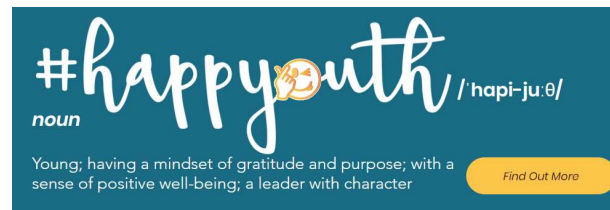
Highlights of FY 2023



- 1 HappYouth Workshops
- 2 Global Youth Leaders Summit (GYLS)
- 3 Gatekeeping for Interfaith & Religious Leaders
- 4 Adventure Therapy
- 5 MindYourMind Forums
- 6 Blessing in a Bag
- 7 World Mental Health Day
- 8 Suicide Prevention Day
- 9 Support for Peers' Equipping & Engagement Day (SPEED)
- 10 ASEAN Youth Community (AYC)



HappYouth Workshops



HappYouth is a programme created in 2016 as part of a suicide prevention initiative to address pressing mental health issues.

By imparting various skills, knowledge and frameworks on self-care and mental well-being, you too can become a HappYouth!

Our flagship module aims to equip youth with essential skills to manage emotions and stress, and be self-aware. All sessions will be conducted through experiential learning, increasing the retention and impact.

154 camps and workshops
>24,378 youths reached!





Global Youths Leaders Summit



Global Youth
Leaders' Summit

The Summit seeks to address pressing issues that youth face in today's world, and aims to be a catalyst for youth to gain the confidence and be equipped with skills to help them tackle these societal difficulties. GYLS aims to empower youth to realise that regardless of age, nationality, religion or race, empower youth and make a change in society, in the hopes for a better tomorrow. GYLS is held every July, as it marks an important occasion for youth - It is Youth Month, a season to celebrate youth and to provide opportunities for youth to discover themselves by learning, leading and serving.

On 17 July 2022, we had 152 youths present physically for GYLS at Singapore Bowling @ Rifle Range Centre, and from 32 countries and territories including China, India, Vietnam, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Kazakhstan, Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Cambodia, South Africa, Taiwan, Hong Kong, etc. Most of the participants are students from Institutes of Higher Learning and some just started working after graduation. Several embassies had helped to share the event with their youths residing in Singapore. Age of participants are mostly between 15-25 years old. We are grateful to have Minister of State Minister of State for Education & Ministry of Manpower Ms Gan Siow Huang, High Commissioner of the Republic of South Africa to Singapore H.E. Madiepetsane Charlotte Lobe, Grassroots Adviser for MacPherson Grassroots Organisations and Patron to CLA Ms Tin Pei Ling to join us at GYLS 2022.





Gatekeeping for Religious Leaders

The Gatekeepers' Suicide Prevention Programme for religious leaders and practitioners was launched by CLA on 26 April 2022. The Gatekeepers' Suicide Prevention Programme aims to help participants identify suicidal behaviours and reduce the likelihood of self-harm by providing practical training on suicide prevention and skills to manage emotions, stress and self-awareness.

The new programme was unveiled during the inaugural Inter-Religious Forum on Mental Health at the Singapore Jain Religious Society. The forum was attended by 20 leaders from 10 religions, as well as 30 practitioners and representatives from religious, youth and faith-based organisations.

Parliamentary Secretary for Culture, Community and Youth and Social and Family Development Eric Chua launched this pilot programme to equip our local religious leaders and practitioners with suicide prevention skills.

THE STRAITS TIMES

SINGAPORE

New programme launched to equip religious leaders with suicide prevention skills



Religious leaders, practitioners and representatives attended the launch of the Gatekeepers' Suicide Prevention Programme on April 26, 2022. PHOTO: CHARACTER & LEADERSHIP ACADEMY



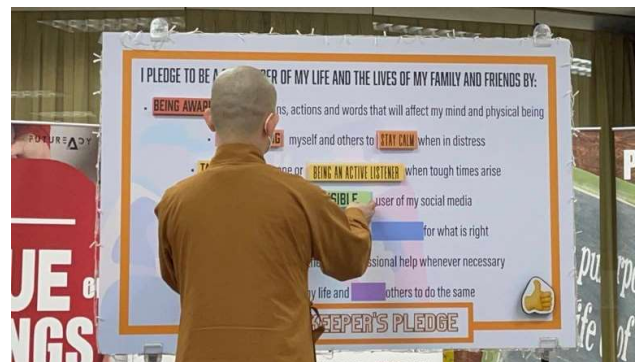
Goh Yan Han
Political Correspondent

PUBLISHED APR 26, 2022, 9:42 PM SGT

SINGAPORE - Recognising the role religious leaders and practitioners play in the lives of many Singaporeans, a new programme to equip them with suicide prevention skills was launched on Tuesday (April 26).

The Gatekeepers' Suicide Prevention Programme run by charity Character and Leadership Academy aims to help participants identify suicidal behaviours and reduce the likelihood of self-harm by providing practical training on suicide prevention and skills to manage emotions, stress and self-awareness.

The youth development charity's executive director, Mr Delane Lim, said all religious communities play a vital role in planting seeds of hope among its members.





Adventure Therapy

Mental health adventure therapy combines traditional therapy with outdoor activities to improve mental well-being. It offers opportunities for personal growth, self-reflection, and developing coping skills. Adventure therapy involves experiential learning, therapeutic interventions, physical engagement, and connection with nature. By facing challenges, individuals gain insights and develop resilience. Physical activities release endorphins, reducing stress and enhancing mood. Being in nature promotes relaxation and mental health. Group activities improve communication, teamwork, and problem-solving, providing support and community.

Adventure therapy empowers individuals, boosting confidence and transferring skills to everyday life. With the resumption of outdoor activities involving high elements in Singapore, participants will have more options to build their mental resilience and capacities.





Mind Our Minds Forums

CLA partners with Bethesda Care Services to initiate a new mental wellbeing programme 'Mind Our Minds' at the Institute of Technical Education (ITE) College East where lunch talks will be held for ITE students to better understand the importance of mental health and how they can look out for their peers.





Blessing in a Bag

CLA distributed over 10,000 units of goodies to share festive joy with underprivileged Singaporeans. During festivals such as Chinese New Year, Hari Raya Puasa, Mid Autumn Festival, Deepavali and Christmas, CLA will work with Grassroots Advisers and our community partners to distribute goodies and care packs for underprivileged families. Our team of volunteers coordinated with our community partners to procure, pack, sort and deliver the goodies to the families. We are thankful to the kind donors who supported us in this project.



Towards a CITY OF GOOD

[gi♥ing.sg](#) [Donate Today](#) [Be a Volunteer](#) [Fundraise Now](#) [Learn](#)

From Struggle To Strength During COVID-19

COVID-19 - Get the latest information from the MOH about coronavirus.

Watch on YouTube

Finding Life's Purpose In Helping Others

ICY - #BlessingInABag

by **Character and Leadership Academy Limited**

\$40,538
raised from 8 donors

27% of \$150,000 Expired

Donate Today

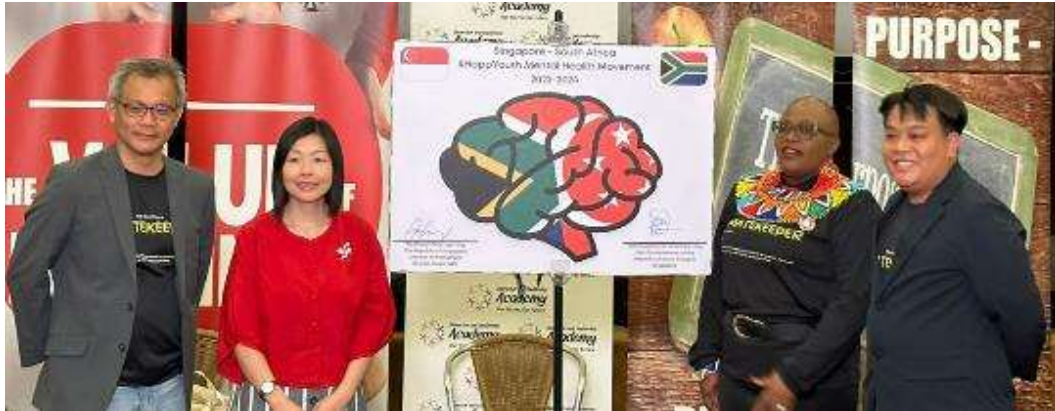
DONATE TODAY

FUNDRAISE FOR THIS CAMPAIGN

Fundraising can help to raise more and change more lives.



World Mental Health Day 2022



CLA celebrated World Mental Health Day 2022 with a QPR suicide prevention training for students from polytechnics, followed by a special hybrid interfaith dialogue on mental wellbeing with panel speakers from Singapore and South Africa.

We were indeed privileged to have Grassroots Adviser for Fengshan Grassroots Organisations Ms Cheryl Chan and H.E. Madiepetsane Charlotte Lobe, the High Commissioner of the Republic of South Africa, to Singapore to join us for the programme.





World Suicide Prevention Day



CLA observed the World Suicide Prevention Day by initiating the Gatekeeping Lives Movement with youths from ASEAN countries currently working or studying in Singapore. CLA hopes to work with the ASEAN youths to support their mental wellbeing by initiating meaningful programmes for them, together with fellow Singaporeans we can deepen our inter-cultural understanding and appreciation.

We are thankful for Senior Minister of State Associate Professor Faishal Ibrahim for joining us at the launch of the Gatekeeping Lives Movement for the ASEAN Youth Community. A dialogue with our board members and actor Ryan Lian encourages the youths to take care of their mental wellbeing and lookout for their friends and peers who may be in distress.





Support for Peers' Equipping & Engagement Day

CLA, together with Pivotal Youth, co-organised the Inaugural SPEED – which stands for Support for Peers' Equipping & Engagement Day. SPEED hopes to enable our peer supporters understand the landscape of Mental Health in Singapore and our roles as peer supporters.

Peer Supporting is everyone's responsibility and each and everyone can be a peer supporter. There is no need for an individual to hold leadership positions to lend support to peers. This programme saw more than 120 peer supporters identified by their respective schools and academic institutions.

We are grateful for Ms Nadia Samdin, the Grassroots Adviser for Ang Mo Kio Grassroots Organisations launched this inaugural programme.



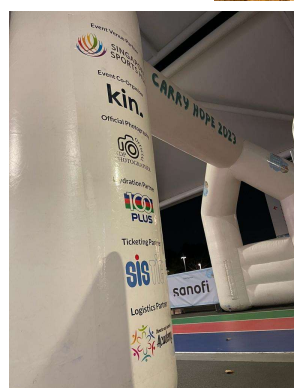


Bringing joy to others

CLA works with our community partners to bring joy to children from abusive and also underprivileged families. Kids were treated to a high-tea at Hotel Telegraph with magic show and activities to give them a safe space to enjoy the festive season and make friends.

Through close partnerships with our community partners, we gather resources together to help others who may be less fortunate or in need of support. Together, we can make a positive impact on the lives of others and contribute to the greater good. Collectively, we can create a better society by addressing such social issues and providing support to our vulnerable populations. This will eventually lead to a more just and equitable society where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Together, we can build a stronger and united Singapore!



CLA in the News

1

THE STRAITS TIMES Published: 26 April 2022

New programme launched to equip religious leaders with suicide prevention skills

2

yahoo!news Published: 18 July 2022

Comedian Jason Leong: Racial diversity and harmony are gifts we take for granted

3

yahoo!news Published: 10 September 2022

World Suicide Prevention Day: 2 initiatives to spot and help youths in distress

4

SINGAPURA
Berita Harian Published: 26 September 2022

Syor lengkapi pemimpin agama dengan kemahiran sokong individu hadapi tekanan mental

5



Published: 9 October 2022

Gatekeeping Lives: New Initiative Empowers ASEAN Youth To Provide Mental Health Support To Their Peers

26 April 2022

New programme launched to equip religious leaders with suicide prevention skills

SINGAPORE - Recognising the role religious leaders and practitioners play in the lives of many Singaporeans, a new programme to equip them with suicide prevention skills was launched on Tuesday (April 26).

The Gatekeepers' Suicide Prevention Programme run by charity Character and Leadership Academy aims to help participants identify suicidal behaviours and reduce the likelihood of self-harm by providing practical training on suicide prevention and skills to manage emotions, stress and self-awareness.

The youth development charity's executive director, Mr Delane Lim, said all religious communities play a vital role in planting seeds of hope among its members.

He added: "And hope helps to prevent suicide. It is therefore paramount for all of us as a community to be adequately equipped to help someone by being gatekeepers of their lives."

"If religion can give meaning to people's lives, then religion can also give meaning for them to live on."

The new programme was unveiled during the inaugural Inter-Religious Forum on Mental Health, organised by the Singapore Jain Religious Society at its premises in Eunus.

The forum was attended by 20 leaders from 10 religions, as well as 30 practitioners and representatives from religious, youth and faith-based organisations.

The session included a discussion on how religion plays a part in mental health.

Some forum participants, such as representatives from the Sikh Welfare Council and the Quan Zhen Cultural Society (Singapore), said they were keen to enrol their staff and volunteers in the new programme.

Master Liu Peihua, chairman of the Quan Zhen Cultural Society (Singapore), which trains Taoists priests, said: "As priests, we must not only be able to fulfil the spiritual needs of our followers, but also support them emotionally."

The programme consists of a four-hour virtual or physical workshop that covers case studies, role-play scenarios and quizzes.

THE STRAITS TIMES

SINGAPORE

New programme launched to equip religious leaders with suicide prevention skills



Religious leaders, practitioners and representatives attended the launch of the Gatekeepers' Suicide Prevention Programme on April 26, 2022. PHOTO: CHARACTER & LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Mr Lim said the Character and Leadership Academy aims to roll out the programme to more religious groups and faith-based social service organisations in the coming months, and may also do so with youth organisations in future.

Parliamentary Secretary for Culture, Community and Youth and Social and Family Development Eric Chua, who was guest of honour at the forum, said that it had been a tough two years for all Singaporeans amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

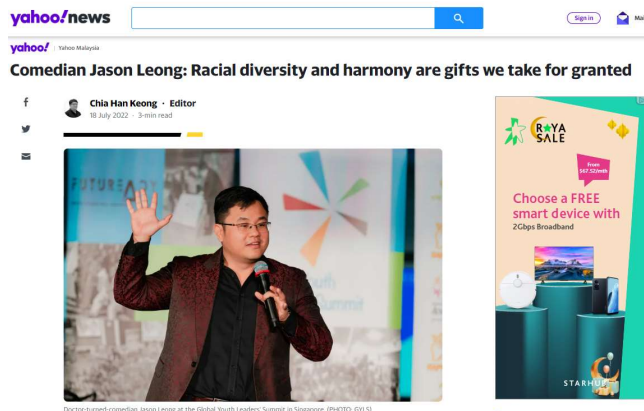
"This programme reinforces how important it is for us to be the eyes and ears for one another, especially for those who really need support," he added.



<https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/new-programme-launched-to-equip-religious-leaders-with-suicide-prevention-skills>

18 July 2022

Comedian Jason Leong: Racial diversity and harmony are gifts we take for granted



RACIAL diversity, tolerance and harmony in Malaysia and Singapore are gifts in which are often taken for granted, says popular stand-up comedian Dr Jason Leong.

The former doctor was speaking at the 14th edition of the Global Youth Leaders' Summit on Sunday (17 July), as he related how humour can go a long way to bridge social and cultural differences, and help youths around the world celebrate their uniqueness rather than be divided in their differences.

"Malaysia and Singapore have one thing in common; Our racial diversity, tolerance and harmony. It is a gift which we often take for granted," said Dr Leong, whose accolades include a win at the 7th International Hong Kong Comedy Competition and having his own Netflix special.

"In my profession and experience, comedy is a thread which binds the different racial fabrics together. At comedy shows, more often than not, people of different backgrounds all laugh together."

The Malaysian comedian went on to use humorous examples from his life to help the summit participants - which consisted of more than 500 international youth leaders from over 30 countries - see the lighter side of potentially problematic issues.

Focus on need for social cohesion despite differences

This year's summit - which was held in a hybrid setting with the majority of participants joining online - focused on racial and religious diversity among youth communities, as well as social cohesion despite racial and language differences.

A recent poll by Singapore's National Youth Council (NYC) found that two-thirds of youths have personally experienced or witnessed racial discrimination, with experiences differing for different races. This highlights the need to continue seeking common ground among the difference racial backgrounds of youths in the region.

Singapore's Minister of State for Education and Manpower Gan Siow Huang, who was the guest-of-honour of the summit, said in her opening speech, "I am happy that we can all come together in this manner to learn, unlearn, relearn about leadership, cohesiveness and giving.

"Regardless of where we came from, there are so many things we share in common."

Helping youths overcome mental-health challenges

Another key topic in the summit is on helping youths overcome mental-health challenges. A national study in Singapore in May, involving 3,336 young people aged 11 to 18, found that one in three youths reported internalising mental health symptoms such as sadness, anxiety and loneliness.

Harriet Turk, a motivational speaker and life coach, shared the need for youths to understand their value and rise up to challenges by focusing on their own strengths.

"My message to youths is that they know that they are valuable, life is tough and that they should find and own their brilliance. So often we watch others and compare ourselves with them, rather than developing our own talents and skills," she said.

The summit - which was organised by charity organisation Character and Leadership Academy - also saw the leaders taking part in bowling to raise funds for #HappyYouth, a mental health initiative to support fellow youths who are experiencing depression or having suicidal thoughts. The event eventually accumulated over S\$10,000 in pledged donations.



<https://sg.news.yahoo.com/comedian-jason-leong-racial-diversity-harmony-gifts-take-for-granted-014456169.html>

10 September 2022

World Suicide Prevention Day: 2 initiatives to spot and help youths in distress

SINGAPORE — The Gatekeeping Lives Movement, a new initiative which seeks to train youths to spot signs of stress, anxiety and suicidal tendencies among their peers, was launched on Saturday (10 September).

The first batch of 50 youths from the 10 ASEAN countries received their certificates and appointments as "gatekeepers" during a ceremony at Orchard Central's 10 Square Auditorium, which was graced by Minister of State for Home Affairs and National Development Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim.

These youths, aged between 16 and 25, were trained under the QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer), which is the most widely-taught gatekeeper programme in the world, and equips the youths with skills to recognise early warning signs and address worrying behaviours among their peers facing mental health issues.

One of those who completed the QPR programme is Nguyen Thao Nhi, a Vietnamese national who has been living in Singapore for 10 years. The 24-year-old believes the training has helped her feel ready to support and help her friends in conversations related to mental health.

"The skill to read red flags, catch signs, and make the other person comfortable is something that we should and need to learn, so that we can watch out for our loved ones," she said.

"QPR taught me that a simple but daring action of asking the right questions can potentially save someone's life."

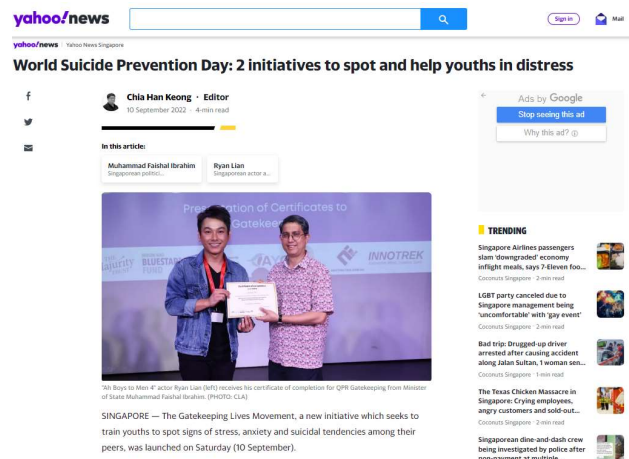
Panel discussion on mental health awareness

The launch of the initiative also saw a panel discussion on mental health awareness and curbing youth suicide rates.

One of the panellists is actor-singer Ryan Lian, best known for his role as Corporal "Ah Long" in Jack Neo's "Ah Boys To Men 4". The 37-year-old had also completed the QPR programme.

Lian shared candidly that, after years of difficulties and challenges in his early life, he attempted suicide when he was 30. He did not succeed, and had a change of heart as he realised that death is not the answer to his problems.

When one of his friends revealed suicidal thoughts to Lian, he realised that he could use his personal experience to help those in similar trouble. This led to him becoming a gatekeeper in the initiative.



According to reports by the World Health Organisation (WHO), suicide rates among people aged 15 to 44 have increased to such an extent that they are now the group at highest risk in a third of all countries.

A survey of over 300 ASEAN youth across 10 countries by Character and Leadership Academy (CLA) - which mooted the Gatekeeping Lives Movement initiative - showed that almost one in seven youths know of a friend in danger of ending their life due to stress and personal problems.

In conjunction with World Suicide Prevention Day on Saturday, CLA executive director Delane Lim hopes to continue working with foreign embassies and youth organisations in partnering countries to strengthen and grow The Gatekeeping Lives Movement to non-ASEAN countries like South Africa and Japan.

"The youths from our neighbouring countries often do not have many friends here to turn to. Even if they have, the friends may not know the right things to say or do. Hence, it is important that youth are trained to help when their peers are in trouble," he said.



Youth leaders from 10 ASEAN countries launch The Gatekeeping Lives Movement for ASEAN Youth Community 2022. (PHOTO: CLA)



<https://sg.news.yahoo.com/world-suicide-prevention-day-initiatives-spot-help-individuals-distress-110126856.html>

26 September 2022

Syor lengkapi pemimpin agama dengan kemahiran sokong individu hadapi tekanan mental

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ENCIK DELANE LIM: Masyarakat beragama memainkan peranan penting dalam menyemai harapan dalam diri anggotanya.

PEMIMPIN agama memainkan peranan penting dalam kehidupan ramai warga Singapura dan mereka juga perlu dilengkapi dengan keupayaan untuk menyokong individu yang menghadapi cabaran kesihatan mental.

Bagi memenuhi keperluan tersebut, sebuah program yang bertujuan melengkapi pemimpin agama dengan kemahiran pencegahan bunuh diri telah dilancarkan bagi membantu peserta mengenal pasti dan memahami tindakan serta sikap individu yang cenderung ke arah bunuh diri.

Program Pencegahan Bunuh Diri The Gatekeepers yang dilaksanakan oleh badan amal Character and Leadership Academy itu juga antara lain menyediakan latihan bagi menghulurkan bantuan kepada individu yang mengalami masalah emosi dan tekanan.

Pengarah eksekutif pembangunan belia badan amal tersebut, Encik Delane Lim, berkata semua masyarakat beragama memainkan peranan penting dalam menyemai harapan dalam diri anggotanya.

Beliau menambah: "Harapan ini yang membantu mereka mencegah bunuh diri. Sememangnya penting bagi kita semua sebagai satu masyarakat untuk melengkapkan diri bagi membantu seseorang sebagai pelindung kehidupan mereka.

"Jika agama boleh berikan makna kepada kehidupan orang lain, sememangnya agama juga boleh mendorong mereka untuk terus hidup," katanya.

Program tersebut merangkumi bengkel fizikal atau virtual yang meliputi kajian terhadap kes-kes, senario yang dilakukan serta kuiz.

Encik Lim turut menambah badan amal tersebut menyasarkan untuk melaksanakan program tersebut bagi pertubuhan khidmat sosial lain yang berasaskan agama dalam masa terdekat.

Menyentuh tentang usaha sedemikian, pensyarah bebas Ustazah Syariati Sulaiman berkata asatizah perlu melengkapi diri dengan kemahiran kaunseling atau dalam membantu individu menghadapi masalah seperti keinginan untuk bunuh diri.

"Sebagai asatizah hari ini, peranan kita bukan sahaja tertakluk kepada mendidik dan mengongsi ilmu berkaitan agama sahaja.

"Kita perlu meluaskan pengetahuan kita untuk merangkumi kemahiran dalam membantu masyarakat menghadapi isu-isu kontemporari, ini termasuk kemahiran kaunseling," katanya.

Ini kerana asatizah seringkali perlu berdepan dengan individu yang memerlukan bantuan dan panduan untuk mengatasi masalah emosi dan mental yang dihadapi, dan ini termasuk fikiran yang terkait dengan keinginan untuk bunuh diri.



<https://www.beritaharian.sg/setempat/syor-lengkapi-pemimpin-agama-dengan-kemahiran-sokong-individu-hadapi-tekanan-mental>

09 October 2022

Gatekeeping Lives: New Initiative Empowers ASEAN Youth To Provide Mental Health Support To Their Peers

What would you do if your friends were exhibiting signs of depression? How would you respond if someone told you that he was thinking about suicide?

Whether you are old, young, or somewhere in between, no amount of life experience can help you feel adequately prepared to deal with that information. Which is why the Character and Leadership Academy (CLA) has spearheaded The Gatekeeping Lives Movement, a new initiative that aims to reduce global suicide rates and increase mental health awareness among ASEAN youth, and in Singapore.

One way that they do this is by using QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) training to equip youths between the age of 16 to 25 to recognise signs of stress, anxiety, and suicidal ideation amongst their peers. From there, they can either help them, or encourage them to find a professional who can.

The Gatekeeping Lives programme was inspired in part by the CLA's HappYouth programme, which aimed to equip youth in Singapore to manage stress and to deal with their emotions. Executive Director of CLA, Delane Lim, shared that earlier this year, they started The Gatekeeping Lives movement after hearing from parents who were concerned about their children.

"Our Board decided that it is important to train our youths to be gatekeepers so that they can help themselves and keep a lookout for those around them," he said, emphasising that being a "life gatekeeper is everyone's responsibility."

"Gatekeepers can be anyone, who are strategically positioned to recognize and refer someone at risk of suicide... We do not select or choose the youths. All are welcomed as long as they are keen to be gatekeepers of their own lives and the lives of those around them - their family, relatives, friends, colleagues and neighbours.

"In fact we hope many youths will be trained to be gatekeepers. Our mission is to reduce suicidal behaviours and save lives by providing innovative, practical and proven suicide prevention training. The signs of crisis are all around us. We believe that quality education empowers all people, regardless of their background, to make a positive difference in the life of someone they know."

Trainings are held in person, as they require role playing scenarios, experiential learning activities, and adventure-based therapy – all of which are more effectively taught offline than online.



Minister of State Assoc Prof Dr Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim, Ambassadors and High Commissioners from Cambodia, Malaysia and South Africa, Executive Director of CLA Mr Delane Lim and youth leaders from 10 ASEAN countries launch The Gatekeeping Lives Movement.

During the movement's official launch in September 2022, the first 50 youths who were appointed as Gatekeepers were presented with certificates. One of them was Nguyen Thao Nhi, 24, a Vietnamese national who moved to Singapore 10 years ago on an A*STAR scholarship.

But despite the prestige, she struggled.

"During my first few years, I was in extreme stress due to the unfamiliar and competitive environment, to the point that I felt like I had lost my true identity," Thao Ni shared with us in an interview. "I was not close to my family then and actually argued with them every time I was on the phone. After secondary and going to JC, having a much stronger support base (from teachers, family members and friends) helped me to adapt better."

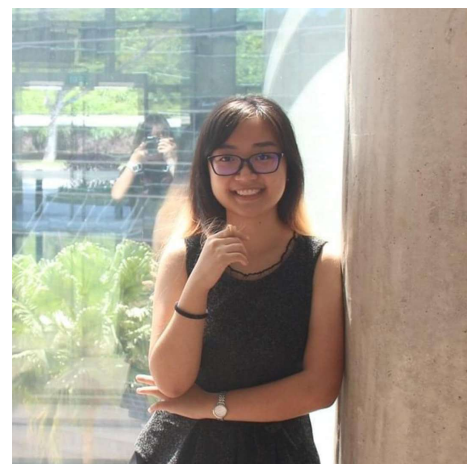


Photo Courtesy of Nguyem Thao Nhi



Audited Financial Statements

Special Thanks!



We are thankful to your kind support towards CLA!