

**SPEECH BY PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY FOR THE MINISTRY
OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION & MINISTRY OF
HEALTH RAHAYU MAHZAM
AT THE YOUTH ACTION CHALLENGE SEASON 3 OPEN MIC FINAL
(MENTAL WELLBEING) ON 29 JANUARY 2022, 9.25AM TO 12.30PM**

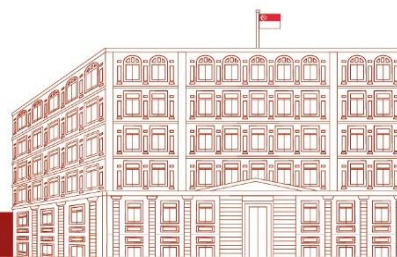
1. I am happy for the opportunity to join you at the Youth Action Challenge Season 3 Final Open Mic on mental well-being!
2. Thank you to all the teams for the ideas you have presented today. You have worked hard to develop good and meaningful ideas that have the potential to change how our society views mental well-being, and ensure that no one struggles with mental health alone.

Youth action challenge

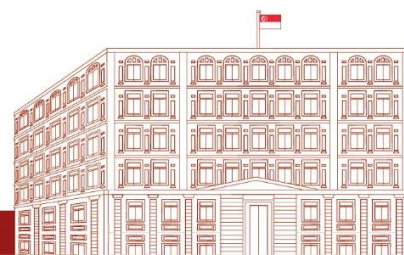
3. The Youth Action Challenge is a key driver of the SG Youth Action Plan, a national initiative for youths to envision what the future of Singapore would be like in 2025. Thousands of passionate youths contributed to this vision, and it tells us that you want an inclusive, sustainable, and progressive Singapore; a home where we care for one another, and have a fair shot at realising our dreams.

Whole-of-society effort needed to tackle issue of mental health

4. Today's theme, mental well-being, is an important issue that is close to all your hearts. Many of you shared your personal experiences and came up with practical solutions to address the issues.



5. There are many contributing factors to poor mental well-being – stress from the pressures in school or work, uncertainties about the future, and emerging adult responsibilities.
6. The disruptions caused by the pandemic have also exacerbated the stressors. Many youths have shared with us that their mental well-being has worsened during this period. Hence, we must pay greater attention to the mental well-being of our youths and the wider society during and beyond this difficult period.
7. The Government has rolled out various support measures and initiatives to support those in need of help and to address stigma, so that more will be willing to open up about their mental health challenges.
 - a) MCCY and NYC have also partnered with youth-led organisations such as Campus Psy and Happiness Initiative to curate resources and programmes where youths can learn tips on self-coping and resilience, as well as develop peer support skills to help others. These resources are available on Youthopia.sg, a first-stop portal providing resources and content for youths.
 - b) Every school and Institute of Higher Learning has peer support structures as well as trained counsellors for students to seek social, emotional, and psychological help.
 - c) There are also various support avenues in the community, including Web-CHAT, an online service operated by the Community Health Assessment Team (CHAT), where youth

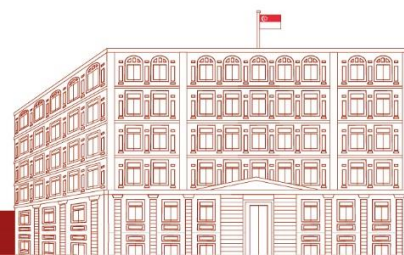


support workers provide mental health information and assessments for distressed young people who may be unsure about seeking help face-to-face. There are also subsidised mental health services at our family service centres and public healthcare institutions.

8. The Government is committed to promoting mental well-being and has adopted a comprehensive and multi-pronged approach. The **Interagency Taskforce on Mental Health and Well-being** has been set up to address cross-cutting mental health issues, through fostering inter-agency collaborations.

Challenges of online harms

9. We are also concerned about the cyberwellness of our youth. The internet is an integral part of our everyday lives, especially so with about 98% of Singapore's households connected to the Internet.
10. However, the prevalence of digitalisation has precipitated key concerns. Digital technology and social media have a strong impact on youth mental well-being. New forms of harm are enabled by digital technologies and proliferated online. While online harms can affect anyone, some of these harms are disproportionately targeted at women and girls.
11. The Government recognises the need to work with the community to help Singaporeans lead digitally-enriched lives and mitigate the risks of online harms, which is why we have partnered the people and private sectors to spearhead the Digital for Life movement.



12. MCI has also convened the Singapore Together Sunlight Alliance for Action (AfA) to tackle online harms, especially those targeted at women and girls. This AfA aims to close the digital safety gap and enable all Singaporeans to navigate the digital future with confidence.
13. For our efforts to be successful, we will need everyone's participation, in particular our youths.

Be empowered and be the change

14. I hope that you have enjoyed your journey at the YAC, made new friends, and walk away enlightened, and motivated. Regardless of the results today, all of you are champions of mental well-being and I encourage you to continue to work with the National Youth Council and other partners to bring your ideas to fruition.
15. I thank all the judges and participants for your time. Feel free to reach out to us and we will be happy to continue to guide and support you along your journey. Thank you NYC for organising this meaningful session. Have a great day!

