



CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR
YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

First Stop for Mental Health

Annual Report 2023-2024



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CHAT-
 Centre of Excellence
for Youth Mental Health

Leadership Insights From Our Programme Director

NAVIGATING THE POST-PANDEMIC WORLD

2023 marked the first full year of life beyond the pandemic for our nation. This year, our youths and young adults in Singapore navigated the complexities of a post-pandemic reality, finding new opportunities and ways to connect amidst uncertainty and rapid change. In a world that feels increasingly complex, the mental well-being of our youths and young adults has remained at the forefront of our mission.

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

It takes a community to nurture a child, and similarly, it requires collective effort to support a young person, helping them transition into an adult with strong mental health.

In this report, we reflect on the lessons learned and milestones achieved in 2023 and 2024 through our collective efforts to provide timely and appropriate mental health assessments and interventions in a safe and inclusive space. We have worked to improve access to mental health services and empower young people to be active participants in their mental health journey.

We have also focused on training communities and professionals to support young minds with sensitivity and skill. Additionally, our commitment to advancing research and sharing best practices has strengthened youth mental health literacy across Singapore.

ADVANCING YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH

We are also pleased to highlight a key collaboration between CHAT – Centre of Excellence for Youth Mental Health, Institute of Mental Health (IMH) Research Division, Ministry of Health (MOH) and NUS Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health (SSHSPH) to advance local youth mental research through the National Youth Mental Health Study (NYMHS). Recruitment of 2,600 individuals aged 15 to 35 was completed and the first tranche of results and findings were shared in a press release in September 2024.

This research will provide crucial insights into common risk and protective factors for poor mental health, guiding the strategies and service improvement of youth-centric services across Singapore.

Every accomplishment by CHAT in 2023 and 2024 reflects our team's dedication, resilience, and innovative spirit in collaborating with youths, young adults and key stakeholders. I hope you find this report both informative and inspiring.

A/Prof Swapna

A/Prof Swapna Kamal Verma
CHAT Programme Director



Perspective From Our Deputy Programme Director

SCALING UP: COLLABORATING FOR A BETTER MENTAL HEALTH LANDSCAPE

Over the past two years, CHAT has continued to build on our post-pandemic efforts to enhance access to quality mental health services for youths and young adults across Singapore. Our commitment to training diverse professionals from community-based agencies like CREST-Youth and Youth Integrated Teams has strengthened our capacity to support young people's mental health needs. Despite the challenges of a fragmented landscape and numerous stakeholders, we have made significant progress through collaboration and networking.

KEY MILESTONES IN 2023 AND 2024

One of the most notable highlights was our recognition at the Singapore Mental Health Conference (SMHC) 2023, where CHAT was spotlighted by Professor Patrick McGorry (Executive Director of Orygen, Melbourne) for our leadership in youth mental health. He also discussed the global youth mental health crisis and the urgent need for a paradigm shift towards one that seeks to create a new space in the health system located between childhood and later adulthood, sensitive to the transitional needs and the force of morbidity that threatens the lives and futures of youths and young adults.

Associate Professor Swapna Kamal Verma, Programme Director of CHAT, gave a plenary talk at SMHC, where she emphasised the importance of actively involving youths and young adults in designing care models to address their unique needs from the very outset.

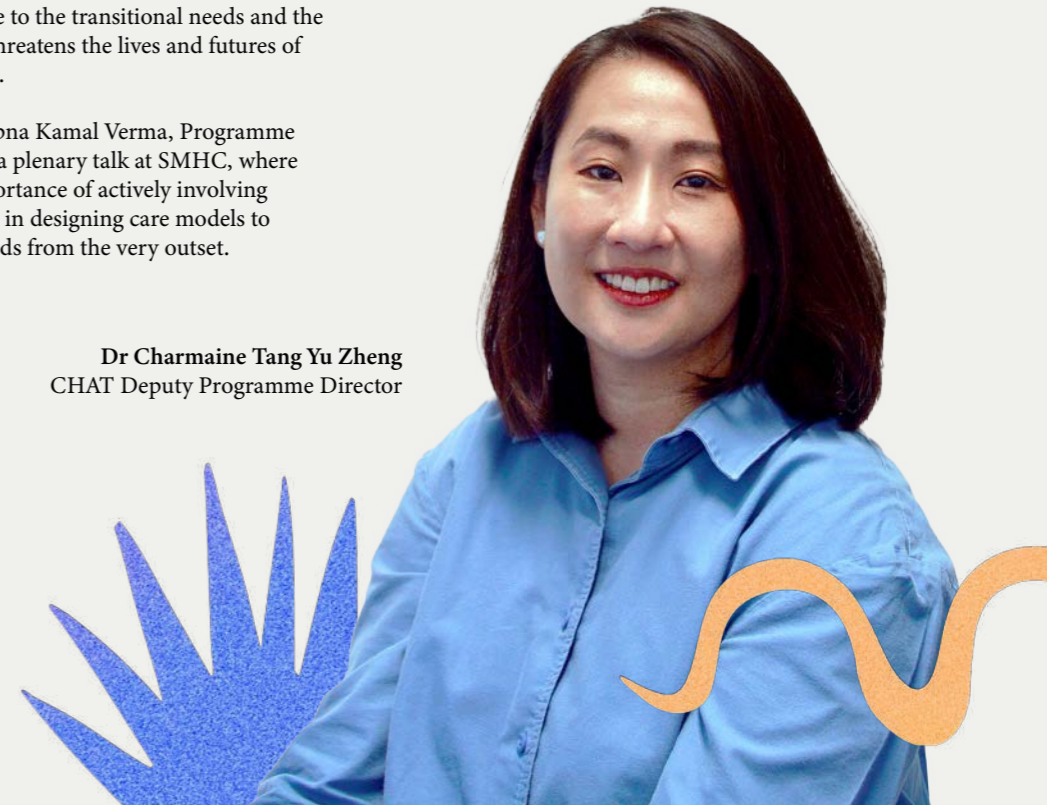
In 2024, CHAT's appointment as the National First-Stop Touchpoint for young people seeking mental health support marked a significant milestone. This designation underscores our pivotal role in providing accessible, timely, and quality mental health services, while also serving as a trusted partner in the national mental health landscape.

BUILDING THE FUTURE OF YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH TOGETHER

As we pursue our vision of transforming the youth mental health landscape, we invite you to partner with us in building a future where every young person in Singapore thrives, both mentally and emotionally, from adolescence to independent adulthood.

Dr Charmaine

Dr Charmaine Tang Yu Zheng
CHAT Deputy Programme Director



Get to Know CHAT



Young People's Minds Matter

CHAT – Centre of Excellence for Youth Mental Health

Established in 2009 by the Institute of Mental Health under Singapore's Ministry of Health (MOH). CHAT is a dedicated mental health service for young people aged 16 to 30. We provide timely, specialised mental health support in a safe and inclusive space, ensuring that young people receive the care they need.

OUR MISSION

1. Increase access to professional mental health services for young people across Singapore.
2. Provide young people with timely, expert mental health assessments and personalised care in a safe, inclusive space.
3. Advance research and share best practices to improve youth mental health literacy, service quality and outcomes for young people.
4. Partner and train a diverse range of individuals and professionals to deliver sensitive, skilled care to young people.
5. Empower young people by amplifying their voices and partnering them to shape youth mental health services.

OUR VISION

To lead the transformation of mental health support for youths and young adults in Singapore

OUR SERVICES

CHAT offers a range of in-person and online services tailored to the unique needs of young people, including:

- Mental health assessments
- E-counselling (webCHAT)
- Brief therapy
- Mental health literacy programmes

Scan for more details



A Nationally Recognised Leader in Youth Mental Health

In recognition of our leadership and commitment to accessible, high-quality mental health care, CHAT was awarded the National Clinical Excellence Team Award by the Ministry of Health (MOH) in 2022.

A Safe Space for Young People



Where to find CHAT
*SCAPE, 2 Orchard Link,
#04-07, Singapore 237978

Operating Hours
12pm to 9pm, Tuesday – Saturday
(Closed on Sunday and Public Holidays)

Telephone
6493 6500 / 01

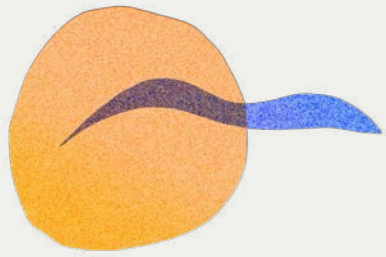
Email
chat@mentalhealth.sg

Website
www.chat.mentalhealth.sg

Since 2010, CHAT has served as a welcoming and supportive space for youths and young adults seeking mental health support. Designed to promote tranquillity, the centre features warm wood-toned interiors and gentle ambient music, creating a calming environment for our visitors.

CHAT offers comfortable, private rooms where individuals can openly share their thoughts, gain insight, and receive personalised mental health support from our dedicated team of youth support workers.

Our Growth and Impact Over the Years



2009

CHAT started as a National Youth Mental Health Outreach and Assessment service under the **National Mental Health Blueprint**, and was funded by **Ministry of Health (MOH)**.

CHAT started providing **mobile on-site Mental Health checks** at various **Institute of Technical Education Colleges**.

2010

CHAT was **officially launched** at *SCAPE Playspace on 26 June 2010.

IHL Counsellors Open House – To connect with partners who work with young people, CHAT organised its first open house for the **Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs)**. This has continued to become a regular networking session with counsellors to **discuss the management of youth mental health issues**.

2011

CHAT organised a suicide awareness campaign titled **'One Last Breath'** with a T-shirt design competition and roadshows at Nanyang Polytechnic and at *SCAPE.

2012

CHAT partnered with Health Promotion Board, Silver Ribbon Singapore and Samaritans of Singapore to launch the **Youth Support Youth (YSY) programme**, the first **local mental health peer support programme** targeting youths aged 17-25 years old.

'Burst the Silence' – CHAT organised its **first major campaign to destigmatise mental health issues and encourage youth to seek help early**. Highlights of the campaign included an installation of a giant bubble outside Shaw Centre, depicting the circumstances of youths with mental health condition, a carnival at *SCAPE Playspace and our first student-collaboration, **'Letter to Amanda'**.

2013

'Drop That Label' is a collaborative campaign between CHAT and NUS

Psychology Society, aimed at **raising awareness and challenging the stigma associated with mental illnesses**.

Poster Presentation at International Conference on Youth Mental Health 2013 organised by the International Association of Youth Mental Health (IAYMH) in Brighton, United Kingdom.

POSTER 1 - Preliminary Evaluation of 'Burst the Silence' Tumblr Project to destigmatise mental illness among Youths

POSTER 2 - Prevalence of Psychiatric disorders in youths presenting to a specialised youth mental health service in Singapore

POSTER 3 - Sources of referral to CHAT – free mental health service for distressed young people

2014

'Embrace(D)' is a student-led project aimed at **raising awareness about depression** and equipping friends, family, and caregivers with the **skills to support their loved ones**. It was planned and executed by students from the Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information at Nanyang Technological University (NTU).

'See the Full Picture' is a student-led project by National University of Singapore (NUS) undergraduates in collaboration with CHAT. The campaign **encourages a broader perspective on individuals with mental illness**— recognising them beyond their condition and

embracing them as whole individuals who contribute meaningfully to society.

JOURNAL PUBLICATION

CHAT published an article, **'Making in-roads across the youth mental health landscape in Singapore: The Community Health Assessment Team (CHAT)'** in the journal *Early Intervention in Psychiatry*.

2015

CHAT Ambassador Programme welcomed the first batch of ambassadors during its inaugural intake, offering a 9-month volunteer experience **for young people aged 16 to 30**. As advocates for youth mental health, CHAT Ambassadors play a **vital role in enhancing mental health services**. They provide valuable insights and feedback to improve CHAT's services, contribute to design and development of mental health resources, and explore new service initiatives. Additionally, they generate ideas to raise awareness of youth mental health issues, promote help-seeking behaviours, and actively support CHAT's marketing and publicity efforts.

'In(visible)' was an **interactive theatre experience** held at Singapore Polytechnic, showcasing **three prevalent mental health conditions— depression, anxiety, and psychosis**. The production was conceptualised, performed, facilitated by students from the Applied Drama & Psychology programme.

'The Days That We Wander/Wonder' is a visual arts exhibition with a focus

on promoting mental well-being through art. The exhibition was put together by *Arts Business Management graduates of Ngee Ann Polytechnic*.

Advertising on SMRT Trains – First use of public transport as **mass media** to share about CHAT services.

2016

'#mysecretbedroom' was the **inaugural Outreach project** led by CHAT Ambassadors, highlighting psychosis, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and depression. Designed as an immersive experience, the project featured a bedroom setting where visitors could **explore and recognise the signs and symptoms of these conditions, fostering greater awareness and understanding**.

'In My Shoes' was a collaborative project by social enterprise Uninhibited Space, in partnership with CHAT and *SCAPE. Featuring artworks co-created by aspiring artists and mental health community, the initiative aimed to **celebrate the resilience and aspirations of youths who have navigated personal mental health challenges**.

The **'COMPASSION'** series was a partnership between CHAT and *SCAPE aimed at **raising awareness of youth mental health and fostering empathy for those facing mental health challenges**. Held monthly, the series featured sharing sessions with individuals with lived experiences, mental health professionals, and youth mental health advocates.

The **'Work in Progress'** was an **engagement forum on workplace mental health** where young working adults with mental health concerns and industry experts share their stories and experiences with other working adults.

Launched in 2016, **webCHAT**, a **text-based service platform**, provides an **alternative support platform** for young people who prefer seeking help **without face-to-face interaction** or wish to remain **anonymous**.

ASCAT (Young Adult) project – CHAT started collaborating with the Agency of Integrated Care (AIC), to **provide capability training to community agencies such as Voluntary Welfare organisations (VWOs)**, which includes two tracks of training programmes tailored to the different needs of the social agencies.

2018

Youth Dialogue Session – CHAT conducted two youth dialogues sessions to gather insights from young people on what they want to see in the youth mental health space and service.

CHAT joined the **Youth Alliance**, a forged partnership with public agencies, Institute of Higher Learning (IHLs) and Social Service agencies. The Youth Alliance works towards anti-stigma efforts catalysed by designing and implementing sustainable and coordinated outreach efforts and mental health public education initiatives targeted at youths.

Our Growth and Impact Over the Years

2019

CHAT participated in Beyond the Label Festival.

JOURNAL PUBLICATION

CHAT published an article titled "Evaluating Singapore's CHAT Assessment Service by the World Health Organization (WHO) 'Youth-Friendly' Health Services Framework." in the journal *Frontiers in Psychiatry*.

CHAT celebrated its 10th Anniversary, a milestone of growth and impact.

2020

Enhanced CHAT Project

In collaboration with the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Agency of Integrated Care (AIC), CHAT scaled up its efforts to train CREST-Youths and Youth Intervention Teams (YITs) to provide youth mental health screening and assessments respectively for young people aged 12 – 25 across Singapore.

CHAT responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by providing virtual mental health support and online training workshops, ensuring continued support for youths remotely.



2021

CHAT was awarded with the National Healthcare Group (NHG) Team Recognition Award (TRA) 2021, Silver. This award recognises the teams for their tireless dedication and relentless pursuit for excellence in patient-centred care.

JOURNAL PUBLICATION

CHAT published an article titled, 'A decade of influence in the Singapore Youth Mental Health landscape: the Community Health Assessment Team (CHAT)' in the *Singapore Medical Journal*.

With support from Temasek Foundation, CHAT piloted CHATline, an after-hours text-based peer support service implemented to lend support to distressed youths. It was manned by volunteers, aged between 17 and 30, trained and supervised by CHAT to provide peer support.

2022

CHAT was awarded with the Ministry of Health (MOH) National Clinical Excellence Team Awards 2022. This annual award recognises the efforts of outstanding clinicians and their healthcare professionals for their achievements in advancing healthcare, improving the standards of patient safety, and driving research and education, which ultimately improve people's lives.

The study was undertaken by a multi-disciplinary team led by the Institute of Mental Health (IMH) and is a collaborative effort between four centres – IMH, CHAT, Ministry of Health (MOH) and Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health, National University of Singapore. The three-year study was funded by the MOH, Singapore. The project was led by A/Prof Swapna Verma, Chairman,

Medical Board and A/Prof Mythily Subramaniam, Assistant Chairman, Medical Board (Research) from IMH.

CHAT was rebranded from Community Health Assessment Team (CHAT) to CHAT – Centre of Excellence for Youth Mental Health, alongside facelift changes to the CHAT logo.

2023

CHAT was highlighted by Keynote Speaker, Professor Patrick McGorry (Executive Director of Orygen, Melbourne) at the 7th Singapore Mental Health Conference, where our team also chaired the Youth Track and delivered multiple presentations.

CHAT partnered the National Council of Social Service (NCSS) to provide leadership and guidance in the strategic planning of an integrated youth mental health space (slated to open in 2025) in Somerset, enhancing the support for young people. Dr Charmaine Tang, Deputy Programme Director of CHAT, was appointed as an advisory co-chair at the steering committee, providing expertise and guidance.

CHAT won the Platinum Facilitation Impact Award, organised by the International Association of Facilitators (IAF) World. This international award honours organisations that have achieved a measurable positive impact using facilitation.



CHAT participated in the media release of the National Youth Mental Health (NYMHS) findings.

CHAT led the Youth Mental Health Symposium at the 11th International Conference on Schizophrenia (IConS), organised by the Schizophrenia Research Foundation (SCARF) India, sharing insights on early intervention for youth mental health.

CHAT presented preliminary findings from our randomised control trial at the Solution Focused Approach Conference, highlighting the effectiveness of Solution Focused Brief Therapy for youth mental health.

JOURNAL PUBLICATION

CHAT published an article titled 'Efficacy of solution-focused brief therapy versus case management for psychological distress in adolescents and young adults in a community-based youth mental health service in Singapore: protocol for a randomized controlled trial' in the *BMJ Open*.

2024

CHAT was appointed as a National First-Stop Touchpoint (In-person) for young people seeking mental health support in Singapore.

First Stop for Mental Health



In 2024, CHAT - Centre of Excellence for Youth Mental Health, was appointed as a **National First-Stop Touchpoint For Youth Mental Health Support (In-person)** in Singapore.

It serves as a **key entry point** for young people aged 16 to 30 who may be experiencing mental health concerns but are unsure where to seek help.

REACH OUT, WE'RE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU

CHAT provides personalised and confidential mental health checks for young persons between 16 and 30 who are currently living in Singapore. Through the mental health assessments with our qualified mental health professionals at CHAT, you could gain an understanding of what's happening and explore ways to make it better, which may include seeing other professionals (e.g. psychiatrist or psychologist). However, please understand that our service is not intended to diagnose or treat mental illness/disorders.

NOTE
CHAT is not a crisis service.

To schedule a mental health assessment, visit: www.chat.mentalhealth.sg or scan the QR code below.



Self-referral



Refer for others

CHAT SERVICES INCLUDED

1

Mental health assessment
Private and confidential assessments to understand your well-being

2

E-counselling (webCHAT)
Text-based support when you need someone to talk to

3

Brief Therapy
Short-term counselling for mental health challenges

4

Case Management Support
Personalised guidance to connect you with the right support

5

Youth Mental Health Project Consultation
Expert advice for youth-focused mental health initiatives

6

Community Outreach
Promoting mental health awareness through events and roadshows

7

Training and Supervision
Developing mental health practitioners through education and mentorship

8

Youth Empowerment
Partnering with youth volunteers through the CHAT Ambassadors Programme

Our Guiding Tenets

01

It's All About People

We respect and care about the people we work with and those we serve. We are all about building trust-based relationships and establishing win-win partnerships. We care about results, but not at the expense of people. Everything we do should build trust.

02

We are Change-makers

Change is the only constant in CHAT. We do not just realise that; we enthusiastically embrace and drive ongoing change. We do not just dream about having a better youth mental health landscape. Using a combination of knowledge, resources and determination, we push through until this dream becomes truth, and then push some more. We are bold in what we do.



03

Growth and Learning is in our DNA

Our curiosity sparks endless appetite for learning. Struggling and challenges, trauma and illness may be devastating, but we also see them as sources of opportunities for growth. We learn from mistakes and strike to be better. We are always pursuing growth on all levels and fronts.

04

We are Passionate About our Work

We are here to create remarkable experiences. We get things done. Above all, we have passion for what we do, and we are proud of what we have accomplished. We are persistent and driven.

05

We Envision Big and Start Small

We are responsible risk-takers. We try new things without losing focus



on what really matters. We know that greatness comes from caring about the little day-to-day things.

06

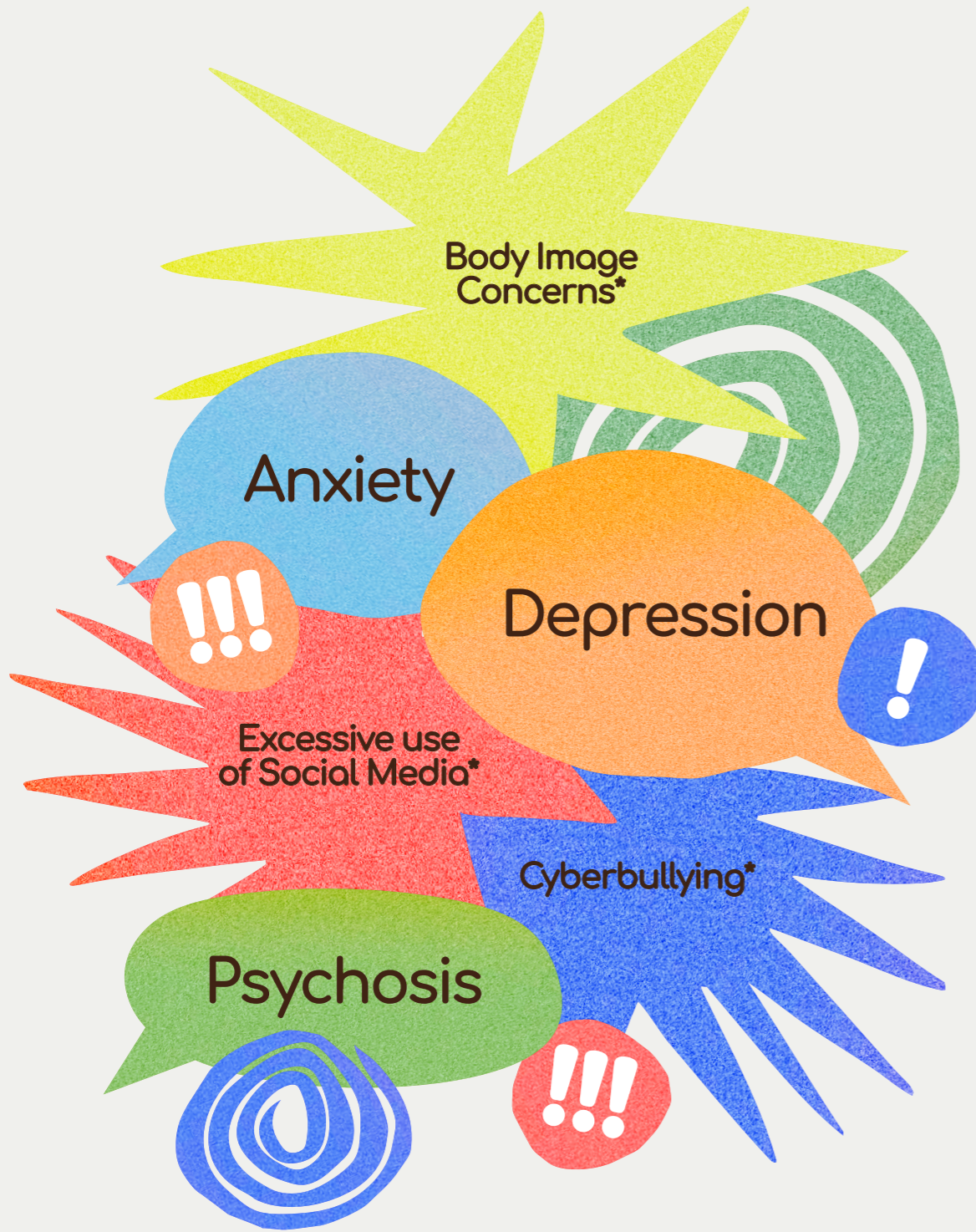
We are Generous Givers, Not Self-serving Takers

We give more than we take. We are always helping. We teach and educate. We are always setting people up for success.

07

We Will Laugh Hard, Loud, and Often

We enjoy our work, and we have fun while at it. We do not take ourselves too seriously.



SOURCE
 *National Youth Mental Health Study 2024



Hasya
 CHAT Ambassador 2024

Outreach: At a Glance

CHAT WEBSITE

CHAT's online presence continues to grow significantly, as reflected in the increasing number of website interactions. In 2024, our website saw a **31.7% increase** from the previous year. This surge in traffic underscores the growing interest in CHAT's resources and services.

Additionally, the number of individuals engaged through our website reached reflecting a **28.8% growth** from 2023. This upward trend highlights the effectiveness of our digital outreach efforts in connecting with more individuals and providing them with valuable mental health resources

CHAT WEBSITE

129,763 **31.7%**
UNIQUE PAGE VIEWS INCREASE FROM 2023

53,705 **28.8%**
WEBSITE VISITS INCREASE FROM 2023

CHAT FACEBOOK

7,528 **57.3k**
FOLLOWERS REACH

266%
INCREASE FROM 2023

CHAT INSTAGRAM

1,828 **36.2k**
FOLLOWERS REACH

265%
INCREASE FROM 2023

OUTREACH EVENTS

Roadshows, events and festivals provide a platform for CHAT to share mental health literacy and resources in varied settings, including Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs) and organisations. It is a great opportunity for the public to **engage and have meaningful conversations and address curious questions and concerns on youth mental health.**

Pioneering efforts in Singapore's youth mental health landscape, the CHAT Outreach Team continues to actively **promote mental health literacy** to diverse audiences at schools, communities, public and private organisations.



EVENT STATS

4,950
VISITORS PARTICIPATED IN EVENTS

5,000
REACH FROM SUPPORTING COMMUNITY EVENTS ACROSS SOUTHEAST DISTRICT

834
IN-PERSON ENGAGEMENTS WITH INDIVIDUALS AT CHAT BOOTH

54,375
MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES DISTRIBUTED IN 2024

1,080
PARTICIPANTS ENROLLED IN TRAINING COURSES AND WORKSHOPS IN 2024

If you would like to invite us to your school, organisation or event, email us at chat@mentalhealth.sg

CHAT Talks and Workshops

Talks

CHAT offers a series of talks and workshops aimed at **raising public awareness and understanding of youth mental health issues.** These sessions **promote supportive conversations and highlight available resources** and pathways that healthcare professionals (school counsellors, community counsellors, youth support workers, social workers)

parents, families and caregivers can access. Our initiatives enhance community awareness of youth mental health, foster supportive dialogues, and emphasise the resources available for assistance.

We provide complimentary* talks from a series of tailored mental health talks aimed at promoting well-being and addressing common mental health challenges faced by youths and young adults. These talks aim to equip

attendees with practical strategies for managing stress, supporting friends in distress, and navigating the transition into workforce. These interactive sessions, available both virtually and in-person, are led by our youth support workers. Participants can engage in discussions, activities, and Q&A sessions to deepen their understanding of mental health issues and disorders, build resilience and enhance their well-being.

**Complimentary talks require a minimum of 30 attendees per session. For more details, email us at chat@mentalhealth.sg*

Scan the QR Code below to request for CHAT Talks



Talk CT1
Mental Health Begins with Me
Gain a deeper understanding of the mental health struggles faced by youths and young adults and youths and young adults learn about common issues and available support options.
Click here.

Talk CT2
"I'm here for you, erm..."
Learn how to recognise signs of distress in a friend, provide support and discuss seeking professional help.
Click here.

Talk CT3
Get Involved with Youth Mental Health
Discover CHAT's mental health check service, explore mental health resources and collaboration opportunities with CHAT to promote youth mental health.
Click here.

Talk CT4
Transition to Work
Understand the challenges of transitioning to the workforce and its impact on mental health, along with tips for coping and maintaining well-being.
Click here.

Workshops

CHAT offers three workshops for in-depth learning on various topics.



Workshop CW1
Lifting Minds Empowering Lives (LiME)
This workshop aims to provide young people with a better understanding of youth mental health distress, skills to support a distressed peer, and knowledge about where and when to seek professional support for youth mental health problems.
Click here.

Workshop CW2
#OneGoodAdult
This youth mental health training programme will equip you with skills to help a young person in distress.
Click here.

Workshop CW3
Safety Planning
This youth mental health training programme will equip with safety planning skills to support a distressed young person at risk of harm to self.

For more information for peer helpers curriculum, click here.

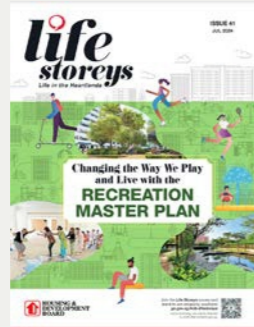
For helping professionals, click here.

Collaborating for Greater Impact

In 2024, CHAT collaborated with various organisations to co-create content and improve mental health literacy, including for the TikTok generation. Beyond content creation, CHAT was also recognised as a trusted mental health resource in a campaign that was launched on World Mental Health Day (10 October 2024).

MENTAL HEALTH LITERACY WITHIN LIVING COMMUNITIES

In partnership with HDB, CHAT contributed to two insightful articles in *Lifestoreys*, aimed at raising awareness and literacy about youth mental health. Through these articles, CHAT continues to engage and educate the community, reinforcing the importance of mental well-being and open conversations among youths. The article, 'The Unspoken Struggles of Youths' (Issue 41), reached 46,560 individuals and households. Contributors from the CHAT Team include Ong Shi Hui, Jolene Koh, Wong Su Ting, and Yap Ming Hui.



5TH EDITION OF THE MENTAL HEALTH FILM FESTIVAL 2024

CHAT was proud to be a booth partner at the festival, engaging attendees and promoting mental health literacy through interactive resources and conversations.

As part of the festival's efforts to spark meaningful discussions, Clarence Foong, a Youth Support Worker & Case Manager at CHAT, joined the panel 'Lighthouse: Paths to Seeking Help for Mental Health Concerns.'

Held as a post-screening dialogue for the film *Deepsea*, the panel explored the importance of seeking support and breaking the stigma surrounding mental health.



Through this collaboration, CHAT continues to advocate for greater awareness, understanding, and accessibility to mental health resources for youths and young adults.

CHAT FEATURED AS A SUPPORT RESOURCE IN MCDONALD'S 'LOVIN' ME' INITIATIVE

CHAT was featured as a mental health resource under the 'i'd like a listening ear' section, providing youths with access to e-counselling (webCHAT).

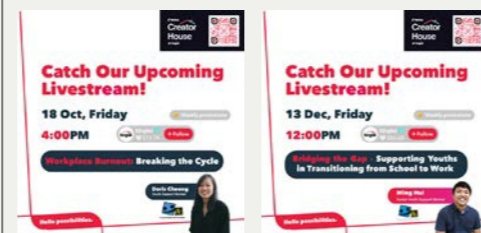
The campaign was launched to commemorate World Mental Health Day (10 October 2024).

CONNECTING FOR WELLNESS: SINGTEL HIGHLIGHTS MENTAL HEALTH IN LIVE, LOVE, LAUGH ON TIK TOK

To commemorate World Mental Health Month, Singtel invited CHAT to host two live-stream sessions in 2024, sharing insights on mental health literacy. Through these live streams, CHAT covered key mental health indicators, encouraged health-seeking behaviours, and empowered young viewers to take charge of their well-being.

LIVESTREAM TOPICS

- **Workplace Burnout: Breaking the Cycle** - featuring Doris Cheong, a Youth Support Worker & Senior Case Manager at CHAT
- **Bridging the Gap: Supporting Youths in Transitioning from School to Work** - featuring Yap Ming Hui, a Youth Support Worker & Senior Case Manager at CHAT



ACCESSIBLE MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION THROUGH DIGITAL CONTENT

In 2023, CHAT partnered with RICE Media to develop a series of mental health resources covering essential topics such as building resilience, navigating difficult times, preparing for a mental health assessment, and engaging in candid discussions on therapy culture, societal judgment, and the hope for a more compassionate future. This collaboration underscores the powerful role media plays in encouraging youths and young adults to take the first step toward seeking help.

Building on this initiative, CHAT commissioned RICE Media in 2024 to produce a video spotlighting a young individual's personal journey growing up with ADHD, further amplifying the conversation on early detection and intervention.

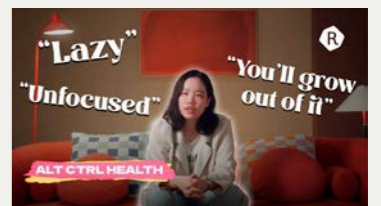
2024

- **VIDEO**
The Reality of Growing Up with ADHD Featuring Dr Oon Li Keat, a Consultant, Psychiatrist, from Early Psychosis Intervention Programme at the Institute of Mental Health (IMH). **54.3K VIEWS**
- **ARTICLE**
The Benefits of Therapy, and the Benefits After It. **4K VIEWS AND 31.8K REACH**



2023

- **ARTICLE**
What Does It Really Mean to 'Stay Strong'? **5.2K VIEWS & 34.2K REACH**
- **ARTICLE**
What It's Like Getting Your Mental Health Checked for the First Time **5.5K VIEWS & 33K REACH**
- **VIDEO DIALOGUE**
Gen Z & Millennials' Verdict on Therapy. **70K+ VIEWS & 53.3K REACH**



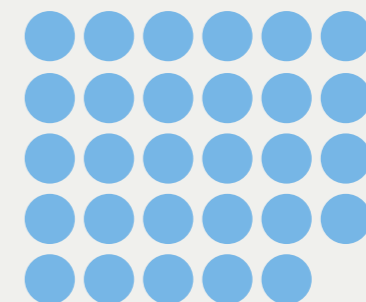
LEVERAGING ON BIG SCREEN

CHAT produced two mental health awareness campaign videos, *I Promise* and *Mr. Cat*, which premiered on 4-5 October 2023 at the 7th Singapore Mental Health Conference (SMHC) 2023. These videos offered an intimate look into the experiences of three youths and young adults navigating different life stages — grappling with career choices, managing anxiety before military enlistment, and confronting feelings of inadequacy ahead of their first day at work.

To extend the campaign's reach, CHAT leveraged out-of-home advertising, screening the mental health awareness campaign videos across 21 Golden Village (GV) cinema halls in Singapore.



21,733 VIDEO SCREENINGS



629,347 PEOPLE REACHED FROM VIDEO SCREENINGS

Watch them here



29x MORE PEOPLE REACHED THAN VIDEO SCREENINGS



Claire
CHAT Ambassador 2024

Access to CHAT collaterals & E-learning Modules

Over the years, CHAT has developed a range of **mental health resources** for distribution and has collaborated with aligned partners to co-create content. These resources cover essential topics such as **understanding emotions, stress management, coping skills, and recognising signs of mental health distress.**

Scan to request for CHAT collaterals



Explore our range of resources, from **pocket-sized guides to e-learning modules**, designed to help youths and young adults navigate the various stages of their mental health journey.

CHAT E-learning Modules

Additionally, CHAT offers e-learning resources on our website, allowing convenient access to knowledge anytime and anywhere.

NOTE
The e-learning videos are best viewed on desktop/laptop.

<p>1 Ask Questions about Coping</p> 	<p>2 Crafting responses using active listening</p> 	<p>3 Empathy vs Sympathy</p> 	<p>4 How Stress Affects Mental Well-Being</p> 
<p>5 Identify signs of poor mental health in youths and young people</p> 	<p>6 Learn about depression, anxiety, and common misconceptions of therapy</p> 	<p>7 Learn how to support others and get support for yourself</p> 	<p>8 Understanding Mental Health and Mental Illness</p> 

Your First Step Begins Here

Youths and young adults can initiate a mental health assessment through our website at www.chat.mentalhealth.sg or may be referred by a parent, friend, or school counsellor.

Parental consent is not required for a CHAT mental health assessment, ensuring privacy and confidentiality for all youths and young adults.

Address
*SCAPE, 2 Orchard Link,
#04-07, Singapore 237978

Operating Hours
12pm to 9pm, Tuesday – Saturday
(Closed on Sunday and Public Holidays)

Enquiry
6493 6500 / 01

WE'RE OPEN FOR YOU: FIND A TIME THAT WORKS

We know that juggling studies or work can make it tough to seek support. That's why CHAT's operating hours are **designed to fit your schedule** and make getting help more accessible.

Book an appointment for yourself

Book an appointment for someone you know



MENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT (IN-PERSON/VIDEO CALL)

As the Centre of Excellence for Youth Mental Health in Singapore, CHAT has been supporting youths and young adults with mental health concerns since 2009. We operate a national youth mental health outreach and support service for youth and young adults aged 16 to 30.

PERSONALISED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE

Our youth support workers support youths and young adults in their sessions by listening to their youths and young adults' life stories and helping them make sense of their concerns. They provide understanding and guidance **tailored to each individual's needs.**



OUR TEAM OF HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

CHAT's youth support workers are full-time employees who are **qualified allied healthcare professionals**, with educational backgrounds in psychology, social work and counselling.

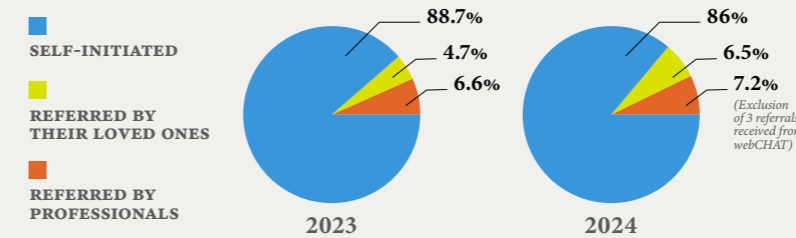
Our mental health assessments are conducted by these **trained professionals**, who receive **specialised training from psychiatrists at the Institute of Mental Health (IMH)** to assist youths and young adults facing mental health challenges.

Your First Stop for Youth Mental Health Assessment

At a Glance

SELF-REFERRALS VS REFERRALS BY OTHERS

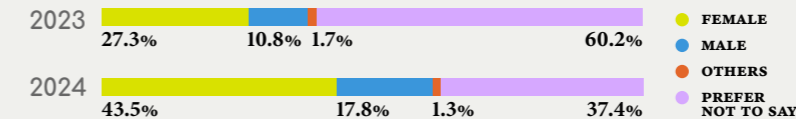
CHAT MENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT



TOTAL NO. OF SESSIONS (SUMMATION OF ASSESSMENTS AND WEBCCHAT SESSIONS)
2023: 2,452 | 2024: 3,049

TOTAL NO. OF REFERRALS
2023: 1,328 | 2024: 1,346

Gender of referrals who reach out for mental health assessment



REFERRALS TO A COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE OR PSYCHIATRIC SERVICE

To enhance accessibility to specialised mental health services, youths and young adults who have undergone CHAT's **mental health assessment** will be referred to the services best suited to their needs. This process is coordinated by CHAT's youth support workers, who make recommendations tailored to each individual's specific circumstances.

Based on these needs, CHAT discuss with youths and young adults, their

preferences and assist them in making referrals to community mental health support services. This includes **family service centres (FSCs), social service agencies (SSAs), counselling centres, or school-based counsellors.**

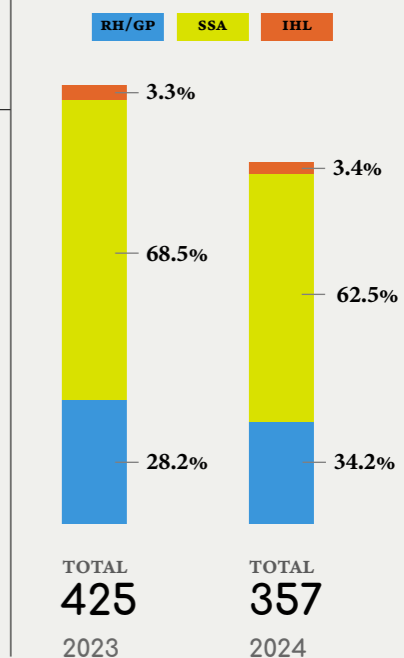
If psychiatric services are recommended, the youth support worker can initiate a **referral letter** for the youths and young adults to receive psychiatric assessment and **intervention at a restructured hospital (RH) at a subsidised rate.** Additionally, CHAT youth support workers will **continue to provide supportive intervention** until the first appointment at the hospital.

Top 5

Presenting issues of young people who underwent CHAT mental health assessment

2023	2024
Low Mood	Low Mood
Anxiety	Relationship with Family
Relationship with Family	Anxiety
Worry	Coping with Stress
School/Academics	Vocational/Work

Total of downstream referrals from CHAT to IHLs / SSAs / RHs



CHAT E-counselling (webCHAT)

Our webCHAT service offers a safe and confidential online platform for youths and young adults aged 16 to 30 in Singapore to seek clarity and support for their mental health. This service is tailored for those who prefer the convenience and privacy of text-based communication over face-to-face or video calls.

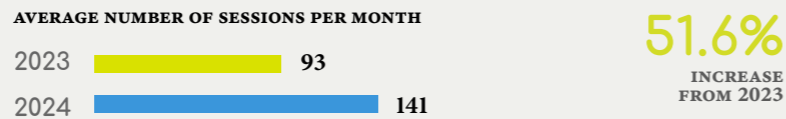
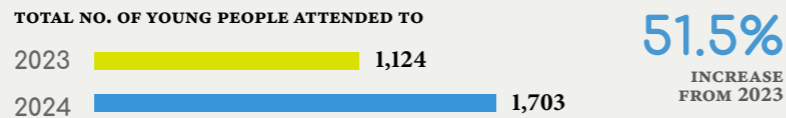
Top 5

Presenting issues on webCHAT

2023	2024
Low Mood	Coping with Stress
Coping with Stress	Low Mood
School/Academics	Vocational/Work
Vocational/Work	Relationship with Family
Anxiety	Anxiety

The youth support worker was nice and attentive to me, I felt like I was talking to a friend who knew me on a personal level, which is exactly what I needed at the time. We talked for less than 40 minutes but I felt her genuine concern for me to provide me with the relevant information I needed. So, thank you and I hope to meet you again in the future when I'm better :)

CHAT E-COUNSELLING (WEBCHAT)

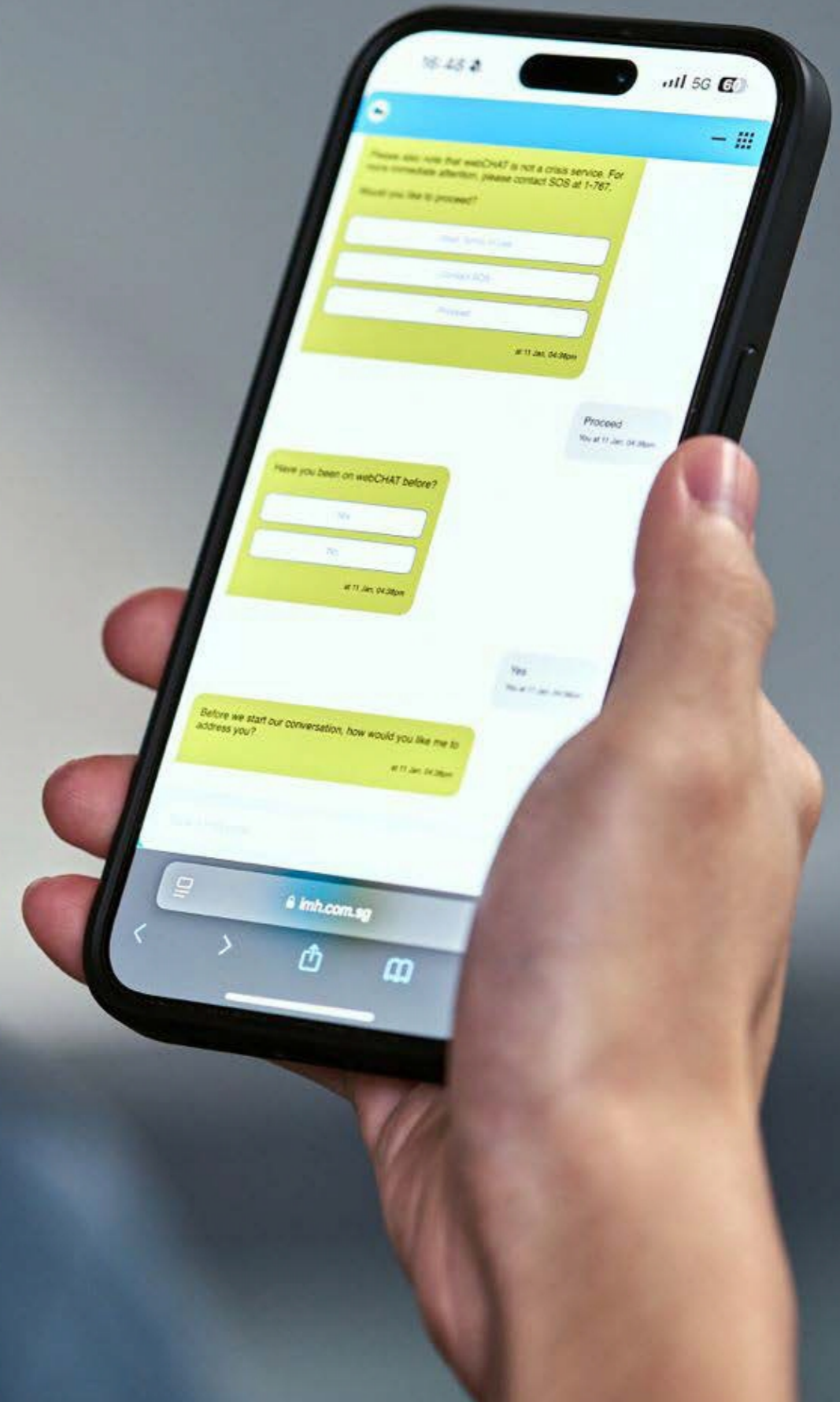


“ Thank you for the useful advice and listening ear :) webCHAT is a lifesaver and has been a wonderful resource for youths like me

The youth support worker was professional and helpful. He helped me understand my situation and found solutions to handle it better. I felt a lot better after speaking with him. Thank you so much.

“ The youth support worker listened to me, and he responded to me. which is really what I needed at the time. Thank you :)

“ The youth support worker was helpful and knowledgeable and I felt she cared strongly.



Empowering the Youth Voice

A volunteer-based youth participatory group, CHAT Ambassadors are youths and young adults aged 16-30, who represent the youth voice in CHAT team. They are empowered to initiate, design, and execute service improvement projects; join CHAT in strategic planning; and participate in various outreach/advocacy initiatives.

Since its inception in Dec 2014 till Dec 2024, **70 CHAT Ambassadors have been recruited**, 42 continued to stay beyond the minimum 9 months, and 4 were converted to full-time CHAT staff.

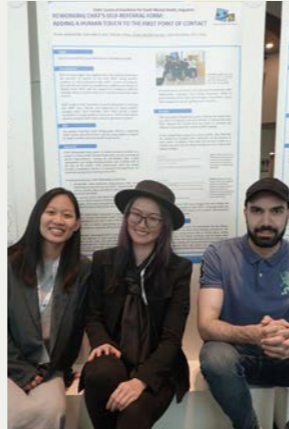
FUTURE PLANNING

Our 2024 batch of CHAT Ambassadors are currently optimising CHAT's service proposition and enhancing information-delivery to CHAT's young clients, guided by the design thinking process. As we approach the programme's **10th anniversary in 2025**, we are excited to celebrate a decade of our Ambassadors' invaluable contributions to youth mental health.



2023 SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

1. CHAT Ambassadors Rastin, Faith and Wei Xiang reviewed CHAT's mental health assessment service and suggested improvements to "bring in the human touch" to our online self-referral form. As the first point of contact and "first impression" of CHAT, it was important to the team that the online self-referral form: (a) is easy to fill in; (b) uses concise language; (c) aims to reduce uncertainties of seeking help with CHAT; and (d) creates an impression of trust in CHAT. The new form was implemented in May 2023, and a language guide was also developed for CHAT's future use in written communication to outreach to young people. The project was showcased at the 7th Singapore Mental Health Conference via poster presentation and with CHAT's Social Service Agency (SSA) partners via co-designed and co-facilitated sharing session.



2. CHAT Ambassadors Lauren, Yunn Jia, Keerthana, Nadera, Carmen and Joyce designed 'Lemonade', an interactive card game to normalise mental health in 2019. The project was showcased at the Singapore Mental Health Conference 2023 via poster presentation and with CHAT's Social Service Agency (SSA) partners via co-designed and co-facilitated sharing session.

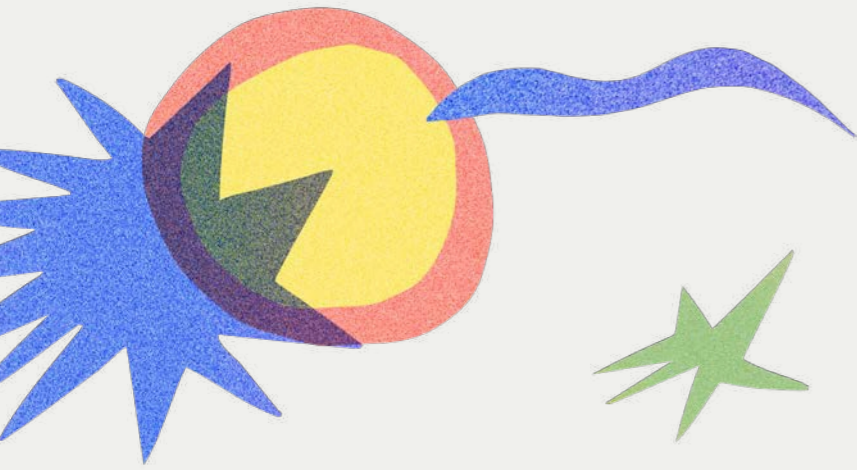


CHAT AMBASSADORS

- Singapore Mental Health Conference 2023** CHAT Ambassadors Faith and Si Ying partnered CHAT staff in moderating the conference breakout sessions.
- CHAT's FY24 Outreach Work Plan Retreat** 2 CHAT Ambassadors joined CHAT staff in a full-day strategic planning retreat to discuss outreach strategies for FY24.
- Mock Focus Group Discussion for Singapore Youth Mental Health Study** 2 CHAT Ambassadors participated in a mock focus group discussion, as part of the preparatory process for the Singapore Youth Mental Health Study.



Research | National Youth Mental Health Study (NYMHS) 2024



interviews with 2,600 young people between October 2022 and June 2023.

1 in 3 young people (30.6%) aged between 15 to 35 years in Singapore reported experiencing severe or extremely severe symptoms of depression, anxiety and/or stress.

2 in 3 young people (69.1%) sought help via informal or formal mental

Excessive social media use, body image concerns and being cyberbullied were significantly linked to mental health symptoms among youths.

The media release shared preliminary findings on:

- Prevalence of severe and extremely severe symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress.
- Factors linked to mental health symptoms in excessive social media use, body shape concerns and cyberbullying.
- Other factors mentioned were vaping, smoking and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) were found to be associated with severe or extremely severe symptoms of depression or anxiety.

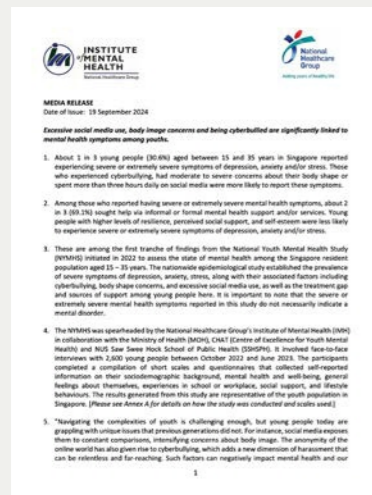
In addition, the study covered protective factors and sources of help and found that higher levels of resilience, perceived social support, and self-esteem were significantly associated with lower likelihood of severe or extremely severe symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress among youths.

One of CHAT's key missions is to enhance research and disseminate best practices, information and resources aimed at improving youth mental health literacy, service quality, and outcomes.

Initiated in 2022, the National Youth Mental Health Study (NYMHS) was spearheaded by the National Healthcare Group's Institute of Mental Health (IMH) in collaboration with the Ministry of Health (MOH), CHAT – Centre of Excellence for Youth Mental Health, and NUS Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health (SSHSPH).

On 19 September, 2024, the initial findings of a collaborative nationwide epidemiological study were released publicly and is part of CHAT's commitment to advancing local youth mental health research through NYMHS.

These are among the first tranche of findings among the Singapore resident population aged 15-35 years which involved face-to-face



Download a copy of the media release



Research | Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR)

Youth participation, defined as “empowering youths and young adults” as valuable partners in youth mental health to address and make decisions that affect them personally and/or they believe to be important”, has been a linchpin in ensuring CHAT's services remain relevant, appropriate, and acceptable to our service users since 2009.

Notably, CHAT Ambassadors are a selected group of youths and young adults who continually partner CHAT in making important service improvement and strategic decisions. Anecdotally, meaningful and sustained youth participation was achieved, as evidenced by how 60.3% continue to volunteer

beyond the minimum 9 months. Some Ambassadors have volunteered with CHAT for more than 9 years thus far. This is noteworthy, as youth participatory efforts in Singapore are rarely self-initiated and are often limited by the high pressures for academic excellence and achievements.

Since 2022, CHAT embarked on qualitative research to explore the factors that motivate youth participation and how youths have benefitted from their involvement as a CHAT Ambassador. Designed to be a Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) study, study team now consists of three CHAT staff and three Youth Co-Researchers.

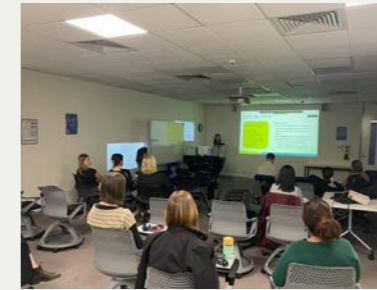
Through this research, we hope to uncover deeper insights that can (a) empower research participants and Youth Co-Researchers to advocate for changes in the way CHAT has engaged youths in youth participation; and (b) inform CHAT on how to involve youths in future youth participation initiatives, hence benefitting the community of youths in getting their voices heard.

We are currently in the data collection process and look forward to sharing new updates in time to come.





Health Manpower Development Plan (Team-based Award)



As the Centre of Excellence for Youth Mental Health in Singapore, it has been CHAT's ongoing mission and efforts to partner, train and foster a network of trained helping professionals and agencies that are sensitive and skilled in providing youth mental healthcare, hence improving the accessibility of mental health services for youths and young adults in Singapore.

In recognising the increased need to step up and fill the gap in youth mental healthcare within the Primary Care services, Dr Jayne Ho (Consultant Psychiatrist, CHAT), Doris Cheong (Youth Support Worker & Senior Case Manager, CHAT), Dr Eugene Chua (General Practitioner, NHG Polyclinic), Zeng Jin Liang (Senior Medical Social Worker, NHG Polyclinic) and Sister Letchmi (Nurse Manager, NHG Polyclinic) embarked on a three-week study trip to Melbourne in June 2023 to learn from their experiences in:

1. Provision of mental healthcare for youths and young adults in Primary Care
2. Care coordination and

collaborations between Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Care, and

3. Training and support required by Primary Care practitioners

During the three-week programme, the team learnt about the Australian mental healthcare system through various in-depth conversations with experienced clinician-researchers who were also thought-leaders in the youth mental health field, such as: Professor Lena Sanci, A/Professor Caroline Johnson, A/Professor Jo-Anne, Professor Grant Blanski, Professor Susan Sawyer.

They also had various opportunities for visits and observational sit-ins to existing clinical services and training programmes. These have allowed the team to enjoy a varied yet honest perspective of the challenges of youth mental healthcare provision in Australia.

Upon their return, Dr Jayne, Dr Eugene, and Doris shared their learnings with the rest of the CHAT team via our monthly team learning sessions, and implemented:

CHAT: A workgroup consisting of CHAT Operations Team, CHAT Outreach Team, CHAT Clinical Team and CHAT Ambassadors was created to look into improving the youth-friendliness of CHAT's physical space at *SCAPE.

We are grateful for the invaluable learning opportunities gained from our learning trip to Australia and look forward to continued collaboration with our NHG Polyclinic colleagues to enhance youth mental health support in primary care in Singapore.



Singapore Mental Health Conference 2023

The 7th Singapore Mental Health Conference (SMHC) took place on 4 – 5 October 2023, officially opened by Guest of Honour, Mr Ong Ye Kung, Minister of Health. Themed “Co-Creating Our Mental Health Ecosystem”, the conference aimed to unite professionals from various sectors, including healthcare, education, social services, best practices and foster collaborative networks for improved mental health.

The event featured esteemed international mental health professionals and policy stakeholders, including Professor Patrick McGorry, Executive Director of Orygen and Professor of Youth Mental Health at the University of Melbourne, and Ms Robyn Shearer, Deputy Chief Executive of the Ministry of Health, New Zealand.

As the Centre of Excellence for Youth Mental Health in Singapore, CHAT played a significant role in raising awareness about youth mental health during the conference. A plenary session, chaired by Dr Charmaine Tang, Chief, Department of Psychosis at Institute of Mental Health and Deputy Programme Director of CHAT, focused on the youth mental health landscape in Singapore and internationally.

Professor McGorry and Associate Professor Swapna Kamal Verma, Chairman, Medical Board & Senior Consultant at the Institute of Mental Health and Programme Director of CHAT, expressed concerns about the heightened risk of psychological disorders among youths and young adults today, stemming from the unique challenges of growing up in a fast-paced world. They emphasised the need for

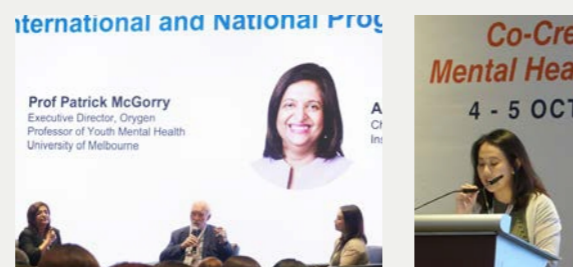
youth-friendly services that offer early intervention.

In line with this commitment, Ong Shi Hui, Youth Support Worker, CHAT, showcased how webCHAT, CHAT’s online text-based service, effectively provides tailored support to Singaporean youths and young adults by connecting them with appropriate professional help and resources based on the severity of their concerns, ensuring they receive assistance before their symptoms worsen.

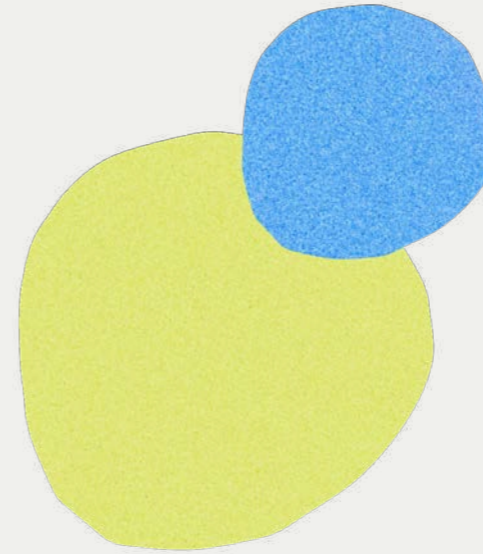
Additionally, in keeping with CHAT’s ongoing dedication to youth advocacy, two CHAT Ambassadors, Ong Si Ying and Faith Sim, were selected to serve as moderators for breakout sessions on Children and Youth Mental Health, alongside Doris Cheong, Youth Support Worker and Senior Case Manager, CHAT, and Jasmine Goh, Youth Support Worker, CHAT.

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

- 7th edition of Singapore Mental Health Conference, which is the leading conference in Singapore’s mental health sector. Held on 4 – 5 October 2023.
- Jointly organised by IMH, HPB, AIC and NCSS
- Themed "Co-creating Our Mental Health Eco-system", the conference aims to:
 - Emphasise the importance of shared understanding and collaboration in addressing our population’s mental health needs and building good mental health among Singaporeans.
 - Bring together professionals in healthcare, education, and social sectors + service users and caregivers to share best practices and form collaborative networks for better mental health.
- Tracks in the conference:
 - Mental Health and Resilience for Children and Youth
 - Wellbeing @ Work: Building a Healthy and Positive Workforce
 - Mental Wellness in the Silver Years
 - Enhancing Mental Health with Technology



Your First Touchpoint to Youth Mental Health



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Facebook & Instagram
[@letsCHATsg](https://www.facebook.com/letsCHATsg)

YouTube
[@CHATYouthInMind](https://www.youtube.com/@CHATYouthInMind)

REQUEST FOR CHAT TALKS & WORKSHOPS

Keen to improve your mental health literacy, or acquire practical skills to support a youth or young adult in distress? Get trained by mental health professionals who have extensive experience working with youths and young adults. CHAT provides talks and workshops for youths and young adults, and professionals such as school and community counsellors, youth workers, social workers, and mental health workers.

Learn more.

REQUEST FOR CHAT COLLATERALS

Use CHAT collaterals to raise awareness about mental health. We provide various items such as Mini Guides, Coping Cards, Pens and Post-it Pads to reach out to youths and young adults for your event or roadshow.

Learn more.

CHAT MENTAL HEALTH E-RESOURCES

Download CHAT’s mental health resources and share them with your friends. We offer guides on mental health, how to help a friend, our mental health check, and planning a mental health project.

Download Here.

JOIN US AS A CHAT AMBASSADOR

CHAT Ambassadors are passionate youths and young adults who provide insight and feedback to improve CHAT’s services. This group consists of students and working adults committed to advocating for mental health and making a positive change in Singapore’s youth mental health scene. Get to know our ambassadors today! Or, better yet, join them in their cause!

Learn more.



Young People's
Minds Matter

