

# YOUNG SINGAPOREANS CONFERENCE 2024



## MENTAL HEALTH

Monday  
16 September 2024

## **About the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS)**

The Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) was established in 1988 as an independent think-tank to study and generate public policy ideas in Singapore. IPS became an autonomous research centre of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore in 2008. Today, IPS continues to analyse public policy, build bridges between thought leaders, and communicate its findings to a wide audience. The Institute examines issues of critical national interest across a variety of fields, and studies the attitudes and aspirations of Singaporeans through surveys of public perception. It adopts a multi-disciplinary approach in its analyses and takes the long-term view in its strategic deliberation and research.

For more information about IPS, please visit [www.lkyspp.nus.edu.sg/ips](http://www.lkyspp.nus.edu.sg/ips).

**YOUNG  
SINGAPOREANS  
CONFERENCE**



## **YOUNG SINGAPOREANS CONFERENCE 2024: MENTAL HEALTH**

Monday, 16 September 2024

### **CONCEPT**

The theme of Young Singaporeans Conference (YSC) 2024 revolves around mental health. It aims to address critical aspects of mental healthcare for youths by focusing on two distinct yet interconnected dimensions: mental healthcare across early life stages and the gaps in mental healthcare provision.

### **FORMAT**

The conference will consist of a one-day in-person conference on 16 September 2024.

# PROGRAMME

## **Monday, 16 September 2024**

Orchard Ballroom 2, Level 3  
Orchard Hotel Singapore

8.15 am – 9.00 am

**Registration** (*Light refreshments will be served.*)

9.00 am – 9.10 am

**Video: *Let's Talk About Youth Mental Health: A conversation with experts and practitioners***

9.10 am – 9.30 am

**Opening Remarks and Prelude**

Dr Dilum Wewalaarachchi  
Research Fellow  
Policy Lab  
Institute of Policy Studies

9.30 am – 10.30 am

**Morning Group Discussions**

10.30 am – 12.00 noon

**Panel 1: Mental Health Across Stages of Youth**

The panel will focus on mental health during the formative and transitional periods of an individual's life, particularly during childhood, adolescence and young adulthood. It will examine how adverse childhood experiences can impact one's lifelong health and opportunities, as well as how the stress of transitioning into young adults can exacerbate pre-existing mental health issues. We hope that by examining the complications during the transitional periods of youth, we can drive a broader discussion of poor youth mental health and the support required.

### **Speakers**

Professor Kenneth Poon  
Dean, Education Research and  
Centre Director  
Centre for Research in Child Development  
National Institute of Education

Ms Vivyan Chee  
Deputy Director and  
Head, Flourishing Minds  
Singapore Children's Society

Mr Muhammad Syazwan Bin Mohamed Suhri  
Team Lead  
SAMH C'SAY CREST-Youth @ East  
Singapore Association for Mental Health

Ms Ling Anne Hsieh  
Managing Director and  
Co-Founder  
Project Green Ribbon Limited

**Moderator**

Mr Leon Lim  
Research Fellow  
Institute of Policy Studies

**Question-and-Answer Session**

12.00 noon – 1.00 pm

**Lunch**

1.00 pm – 2.30 pm

**Panel 2: Mental Health Provisions**

The panel will examine Singapore's current mental healthcare support system. We will begin by highlighting the resources and services currently available for youths experiencing mental health problems, and proceed to address the possible gaps in distributing these resources and services to those in the community. We hope the panel will further the conversation on the challenges faced by those working in mental health.

**Speakers**

Dr Rayner Tan  
Assistant Professor  
Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health  
National University of Singapore

Ms Andrea Chan  
Deputy Director  
TOUCH Mental Wellness  
TOUCH Community Services Ltd

Dr Syed Harun Alhabsyi  
Consultant Psychiatrist and  
Medical Director  
The Starfish Clinic of Psychiatry & Mental Wellness

Mr Chng Kai Fong  
Permanent Secretary (Information and Development)  
Ministry of Digital Development and Information

**Moderator**

Dr Robyn Tan  
Research Fellow  
Institute of Policy Studies

**Question-and-Answer Session**

2.30 pm – 3.15 pm

**Afternoon Group Discussions**

*(Light refreshments will be served.)*

3.15 pm – 4.25 pm

**Participants' Presentation to Guest-of-Honour,  
Senior Minister of State, Dr Janil Puthucheary**

4.25 pm – 4.55 pm

**Dialogue Session**

Dr Janil Puthucheary  
Senior Minister of State  
Ministry of Digital Development and Information and  
Ministry of Health

**Moderator**

Dr Clara Lee  
Research Fellow  
Social Lab  
Institute of Policy Studies

**Question-and-Answer Session**

4.55 pm – 5.00 pm

**Closing Remarks**

5.00 pm

**End**

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES



**Andrea CHAN** is heading a team of counsellors and social workers at TOUCH Community Services, committed to enhancing the lives of individuals with mental health struggles. With a background in counselling and a deep-seated passion for community welfare, Andrea plays a pivotal role in designing and implementing programmes that cater to various intervention needs within the community.

Known for her ability to connect with people and collaborate, Andrea believes in building partnerships and fostering collaboration among stakeholders for greater impact. Her efforts extend beyond mere service provision; she strives to empower individuals, promoting self-reliance and resilience. Andrea's career at TOUCH Community Services reflects her unwavering dedication to social justice and her belief in the transformative power of community support. Her contributions continue to make a meaningful impact, enriching the lives of many and inspiring others is shown through her work in Beyond the Label, Interagency Mental Health Taskforce and SG Well-Being Network.



**Vivyan CHEE** is the Deputy Director and Head of Flourishing Minds in Singapore Children's Society. They believe that mental health is a state of health, and it is an inalienable right that deserves to be promoted and protected. Hence, they provide a continuity of services from mental health promotion, accessible early interventions to recovery-focused services. Since 2011, Vivyan has had the privilege of working with at-risk youth, vulnerable children and youth in out-of-home care and those who struggle with mental distress or illness.



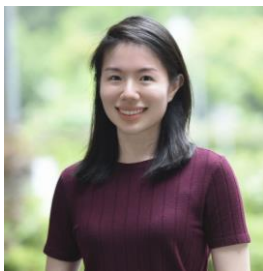
**CHNG Kai Fong** is currently Permanent Secretary (Information & Development) of the Ministry of Digital Development and Information and Permanent Secretary (Development) (Cybersecurity) in the Prime Minister's Office. He was previously the Managing Director of the Singapore Economic Development Board (EDB) between 2017 and 2021. Before EDB, Kai Fong served various roles in the Singapore Public Service, including as Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister from 2014 to 2017. He was also seconded to Shell from 2008 to 2010 to Shell's Downstream Strategy unit.

Kai Fong currently serves on the boards of DBS Group Holdings and DBS Bank, and the Singapore Symphonia Company Limited. He is also a member of Shell's New Energies Advisory Board. Kai Fong has a Master's in Engineering from the University of Cambridge, and a Master of Science in Management from Stanford University's Graduate School of Business, where he was a Sloan Fellow.



**Ling Anne HSIEH**, a mental health advocate and person in recovery, has developed a strong passion for social work in the area of mental wellness that stems from her personal struggles in life. She co-founded and is currently serving as the managing director of Project Green Ribbon, a purpose-driven organisation dedicated to lend support to those struggling in life and provide a platform for the unheard to be heard.

She hopes to provide the help that she did not get and send the message that no one is alone in their journey. Today, she wears many hats as a counsellor, mentor, life coach, youth protection and rehabilitation specialist, devoted wife and mother of three.



**Clara LEE** is Research Fellow at IPS Social Lab. She obtained her PhD in Political Science from the University of Pennsylvania. Clara's research in her current capacity extends across several domains, including social and economic mobility and the political economy of labour. This builds upon her prior academic endeavours examining labour immigration within the broader international and comparative political economy contexts. The role and influence of public opinion also

underpin much of her work, where she explores how beliefs and perceptions of various social phenomena shape decision-making and behaviour. Her research employs diverse methodologies and seeks to leverage interdisciplinary tools and epistemic frameworks to advance methods of inquiry.



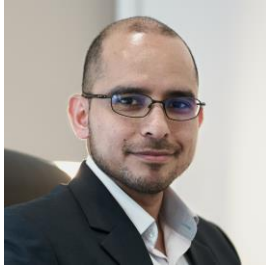
**Leon LIM** is Research Fellow with the Governance and Economy team at the Institute of Policy Studies. He draws on 19 years of experience across the public and non-profit sectors to distil insights from data, synthesise research from different domains, and provide new and relevant knowledge for decision makers.



**MUHAMMAD SYAZWAN Bin Mohamed Suhri** has been with the Singapore Association for Mental Health (SAMH) for over nine years, helping youths with varying risks and needs and working in leadership development. He is dedicated to supporting youths through mental health advocacy and promoting holistic wellness. Together with his team at SAMH C'SAY CREST-Youth @ East, he facilitates programmes designed to foster inclusivity and promoting overall well-being.

By bridging SAMH services with other community partners, Syazwan helps to create collaborative partnerships in ensuring comprehensive support for young people. Through these collaborative efforts, Syazwan aims to create a more inclusive and supportive community, empowering youths to thrive and succeed in their own ways.



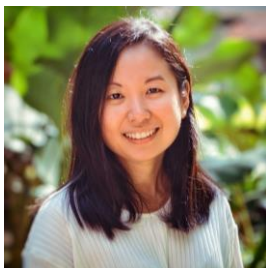


**SYED HARUN Alhabsyi** is Medical Director & Consultant Psychiatrist at The Starfish Clinic of Psychiatry & Mental Wellness.

He is a serving Nominated Member of Parliament and council member of the National Youth Council. He is also the current President of Lembaga Biasiswa Kenangan Maulud, a 59-year-old charity that supports the less privileged through educational bursaries and scholarships, and Honorary Secretary of the Singapore Psychiatric Association. He serves on several committees across different government ministries including as Vice-Chairperson for the Films' Consultative Panel and for the Review Committee for Welfare Homes, and as a member of the SCDF Medical Advisory Committee and the National Youth Fund Advisory Committee. He is a keen advocate of improving access to mental health in community, and of enhancing social mobility and upliftment through greater accessibility to education.



**Rayner TAN** is an Assistant Professor at the Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health, National University of Singapore and a Fulbright Visiting Research Scholar 2022/2023. His research interests include stigma and health, community engagement, implementation science, and health of vulnerable communities. He is President of Project X Society serving the needs of sex workers, and Director at The Greenhouse, a charity providing substance use recovery services for marginalised groups. He also serves as a co-lead at SG Mental Health Matters and Project Hayat, a community-led effort to develop Singapore's first national suicide prevention strategy.



**Robyn TAN** is Research Fellow at the Institute of Policy Studies. She has a PhD in Development Policy and Management from the Global Development Institute at the University of Manchester, United Kingdom.

Her research interests are broadly in the design, implementation and evaluation of policies, programmes and interventions in real-world policy and service settings. She has a keen interest in theory-driven evaluations, specifically, applying realist research to understand what works, for whom, under what conditions, and why.

Prior to joining the National University of Singapore, Robyn's work in the social service sector focused on building the monitoring and evaluation capabilities of social service agencies and community health organisations.



**Kenneth POON** is Lien Foundation Chair Professor. A clinical psychologist and early interventionist by training, he serves concurrently as Dean, Education Research, as well as Centre Director of the Centre for Research in Child Development at the National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University. His research focuses on the development of children, especially those with disabilities and those from low-income environments. Kenneth currently serves as Singapore's child representative to the ASEAN Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children. He also serves in consultancy, advisory and board roles to the government, social service agencies, as well as international organisations.



**Janil PUTHUCHEARY** is Senior Minister of State at the Ministry of Digital Development and Information, where he focuses on Singapore's Smart Nation strategy and government digitalisation initiatives. He is concurrently Senior Minister of State at the Ministry of Health.

He is Minister-in-Charge of the Government Technology Agency (GovTech), and a member of the Smart Nation Inter-Ministerial Committee. He chairs the Inter-Agency Task Force on Mental Health and Well-being and is a member of the Child and Maternal Health and Well-being Taskforce. He is also a member of the Ministerial Committee on Child Health and Development. He is a member of the National Integration Council and an Advisor to Cyber Youth Singapore. As part of the People's Association (PA), he is a Board Member, Advisor to the PA Youth Movement, and Advisor to Narpani Peravai.

He previously held portfolios at the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Transport. He chairs OnePeople.sg, which works to promote racial harmony in Singapore, and the Executive Committee of the People's Action Party (PAP) Community Foundation, which provides early childhood education and eldercare services. His political roles include Chair of Young PAP (the youth wing of the PAP), Chair of the PAP Mental Health Group, and Government Party Whip.



**Dilum WEWALAARACHCHI** is a cognitive and developmental psychologist with a PhD from the National University of Singapore (NUS). A Research Fellow at the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) Policy Lab, she previously served as an adjunct lecturer at the National University of Singapore, teaching courses on intelligence and social innovation. Before joining IPS, she conducted applied research at the Lien Centre for Social Innovation, focusing on unmet social needs. At IPS, Dilum leads and evaluates policy experiments centred on social innovation, with the goal of addressing societal challenges and improving the lives of underprivileged families in Singapore, and bridging academic research with impactful systemic change.