

MEDIA RELEASE

SAMH Launches SAY-IT! - A New Centre for SAMH's Youth Integrated Team

- *Piloted by MOH and AIC in January 2021, SAMH SAY-IT! Youth Integrated Team @ East has since assisted more than 250 youths who are at risk of or with mental health conditions, with about 40 youths no longer requiring active support.*
- *Latest launch highlights SAMH's tiered system of care, which it shares with its two other youth services and is aligned with the Interagency Task Force on Mental Health and Well-being's recommendation of tiered support to individuals with varying levels of mental health needs.*

SINGAPORE, 19 NOVEMBER 2022– The Singapore Association for Mental Health (SAMH) announced the official opening of SAMH SAY-IT! (Sports, Arts and Youths – Integrated Team!) today in conjunction with its biennial youth event, YOUth Alive!. Located in Bedok, the new centre will run the Youth Integrated Team (YIT) service by the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Agency for Integrated Care (AIC), which provides support services to people aged 12 to 25 who are at risk of, suspect of having, or with mental health conditions especially those residing in the East and North-east regions. The launch was officiated by Mr Alvin Tan, Minister of State for Ministry of Communications, Culture and Youth and Ministry of Trade and Industry.

According to public health statistics, mental health diagnoses are becoming more common in younger people, with ¹one in every three Singaporean youth experiencing mental health symptoms, and those aged 14 to 16 experiencing more severe symptoms, and suicide rates among youth aged 10 to 29 reaching an all-time high in 2021². SAMH recognises the government's push through the Interagency Task Force on Mental Health and Well-being to strengthen a tiered-based model of mental health care and has located SAMH SAY-IT! within the Bedok heartland in Singapore's eastern region, marking the organisation's first presence in this area.

¹ #SESSION 1 - State of Youth Mental Health - <https://www.philanthropyxchange.sg/tsc/articles/session-1-state-of-youth-mental-health/>

² Singapore's Suicide Rates decrease, yet rising youth numbers cause for concern - <https://www.sos.org.sg/pressroom/singapores-suicide-rates-decrease-yet-rising-youth-numbers-cause-for-concern#:~:text=Suicide%2C%20however%2C%20remains%20the%20cause, suicides%20recorded%20across%20the%20nation.>

YIT Singapore Association for Mental Health @ East has supported more than 250 youths who are at risk of, suspect of having, or with mental health conditions, with about 40 youths no longer requiring active support to date. The key focus of the programme is supporting youths through assessment, therapeutic intervention, case management, peer support and continual engagement. Aside from monthly curated activity sessions, the centre also conducts targeted outreach for youths through the modality of arts, sports, and interactive activities to increase awareness of mental wellness.

Adjunct Associate Professor Lee Cheng, President of SAMH said, "Today's generation is under increasing pressure to succeed not only academically, but also in terms of social standing, peer groups, and family units. Upstream prevention and early intervention are critical for fostering resilience in youths as they face life's challenges. The launch of SAMH SAY-IT! centre, along with our other youth services such as SAMH C'SAY CREST-Youth @ North and SAMH YouthReach, reinforces our ongoing commitment to closely support youths in their mental health journey."

To mark the launch of the new centre, SAMH organised the fourth instalment of its signature and biennial YOUth Alive! event to advocate for youth mental health through youth-led activities and to provide a platform for young people to share their mental health stories. This year's carnival-style event, SAY - IT@ YOUth Alive!, encouraged youths to begin their journey of expression by focusing on self-discovery, making a choice, and expressing themselves through words, arts, and actions. The event featured performances, a human library, and booths run by community partners and young entrepreneurs.

Minister of State for Culture, Community and Youth & Trade and Industry Alvin Tan said, "Early and upstream interventions are critical for those who need help. We must therefore continue to raise awareness on mental health issues among our youth and community, normalise conversations on mental health, and foster early help-seeking behaviour. I am delighted that social service agencies such as SAMH have stepped up to expand their services to support youths in their life journey."

###

Press Images

Download visuals here https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Ak47QLchf5NkQ-IJTDFAiKh2OA0jMxSt?usp=share_link

About Singapore Association for Mental Health (SAMH)

Established in 1968, the Singapore Association for Mental Health (SAMH) is a non-profit and non-government social service organisation that provides a comprehensive range of mental health services, which include rehabilitative, outreach and creative services, to the community in Singapore. SAMH aims to reintegrate persons with mental health issues back into society through community-based mental health programmes and services that provide rehabilitative care for these individuals, and support for their families and caregivers. With a vision to promote mental wellness for all, SAMH is committed to improve the lives of, and promote acceptance and respect for, persons with mental health issues and improve the mental resilience of the community. In 2018, SAMH celebrated its 50th anniversary where the Association pledged its commitment to step up efforts and address the growing challenge of mental health issues among the people, young and old. For more information, please visit: www.samhealth.org.sg.

About SAMH SAY-IT! Youth Integrated Team @ East

The Youth Integrated Team (YIT) increases awareness of mental wellness through targeted outreach to youth at risk of mental health issues. It provides assessment, therapeutic intervention and case management while engaging youths for ongoing monitoring and support. The team facilitates the formation of supportive relationship with family and peers, and works actively with other youth agencies, schools and community partners to provide holistic case management for the youths and their families. The Youth Integrated Team is one of the programmes under the Community Mental Health Masterplan developed by the Agency for Integrated Care (AIC), together with the Ministry of Health (MOH), which enables persons living with mental health issues and dementia to seek early treatment nearer to their homes and ensure that they are well-supported in the community.

The YIT is part of SAMH SAY-IT! Youth Integrated Team @ East region which serves youths, aged 12 to 25 years old through arts, sports and interactive activities.

About SAMH C'SAY CREST-Youth @ North

The Youth Community Outreach Team, also known as the Community Resource, Engagement & Support Team (CREST)-Youth, increases awareness of mental health and promotes early identification by organising outreach events for the youth population, as well as those in their circles of support. The team involves parents and peers in the recovery journeys through youth-for-youth initiatives. The team is also the community node linking youths and their families to appropriate health and social support networks. The youth community outreach team is one of the programmes under the Community Mental Health Masterplan developed by the Agency for Integrated Care (AIC), together with the Ministry of Health (MOH), which enables persons living with mental health issues and dementia to seek early treatment near their homes and ensure that they are well-supported in the community.

The CREST-Youth is part of SAMH C'SAY CREST – Youth @ North which, echoes the belief that youths should have a SAY! in their lives. As physical health and mental health are closely linked, this centre offers sports, outdoor and art activities to help spark conversations, promote general well-being, cultivate resilience, and prevent the onset of mental illness.

About SAMH YouthReach

SAMH YouthReach located in the central region conducts community psychosocial rehabilitation programme for youths, aged 13 to 21 years old, with emotional, psychological, and psychiatric conditions. The centre provides case management services where it partners with the youths their families, and community partners to achieve mutually agreed goals in a safe, caring, and inclusive society.