



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

*(Embargoed till 22 June 12pm)*

### **Rainbow Centre kicks off 35th anniversary celebrations with Learning Day to chart future focus in serving persons with disabilities**

*Foray into community-based adult disability services aims to address Post-18 challenges*

1. Rainbow Centre (RC) celebrates 35 years of serving persons with disabilities with a Learning Day event on 22 June (Wed) to showcase its efforts in building inclusive communities and commitment to expanding pathways for young adults with disabilities.
2. This event's theme: "*RC at 35: Empowering, Including and Thriving for Good Lives*" aims to inspire creative solutions through two panel discussions with partners, GovTech and SMRT Corporation Ltd, as well as six short presentations by RC clients with disabilities. Gracing the event is Guest-of-Honour Mr Eric Chua, Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth and Ministry of Social and Family Development.
3. Ms Tan Sze Wee, Executive Director, Rainbow Centre, said: "We serve a significant proportion of clients with high support needs, which drives us to pilot services which can solve challenges associated with the post-18 cliff and ignite more possibilities for the future."
4. Despite national progress<sup>1</sup> and substantial co-funding in supporting persons with disabilities, services for those with moderate to severe needs after they complete formal schooling at age 18 are still inadequate. Long waitlists<sup>2</sup> for day activity centres for adults with autism are affected by limited funding and a shortage of staff, leaving caregivers with few options for the future.

---

<sup>1</sup>

<https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/politics/parliament-more-support-needed-for-disabled-in-areas-like-healthcare-and-jobs>

<sup>2</sup>

<https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/politics/funding-for-day-activity-centres-catering-to-adults-with-disabilities-increased-by-3-million-a-year>

## **New community-based Services for Young Persons with Disabilities (PwDs)**

5. In response to growing needs from the ground, RC has piloted community based services as an alternative to existing day activity centres (DACs). Its **Connected Community Services** has served 33 clients with moderate to severe disabilities since 2020, who are unable or not keen to find placement in full-time services. Designed to enhance inclusion by connecting them to the community through a variety of relationships, the service includes (1) Coaching for families with young adults with disabilities unable to find placement in any full-time services (2) Community network mapping with their families and (3) Befriender support. It also involves training community partners to support the integration and continued engagement of the young adult. As part of this service, RC also set up **Young Adult Activities! (YAA!)**, a social activity club which brings 50 members and caregivers together through ability-appropriate activities like horticulture, horse-riding and yoga.
6. To support clients with complex care needs who struggle with a web of formal processes and assessments by different agencies, RC has partnered with Institute of Mental Health (IMH) on a pilot to develop an **Integrated Social Health Case Management** model, set to benefit 50 clients over three years. It aims to reduce stress and pain points for families so they receive coordinated care through one case worker and spend less time undergoing assessments and in-patient stays. At the same time, the pilot, which brings together teams in social service and healthcare, aims to build the ability of these professionals in managing such complex cases, in line with a national push towards stronger social health integration.
7. In the area of supported employment for young adults with higher support needs, an initiative is the **Micro-business Academy (MBA)**, where the young adult and caregiver receive business planning skills with highly person-centric skills-coaching. Its goal is to enable families to run small-scale enterprises or gain self-employment with meaningful participation. The programme has served 34 clients and counts partners like BlackRock Singapore and Sleek as its partners, where finance and accounting professionals coach them in areas like pricing, accounting and marketing.

## **Expanded Efforts to Enable Communities to Practise Inclusion**

8. Social inclusion and participation in authentic communities are critical to a good quality of life for our clients. Over the years, RC has stepped up efforts to model, partner and train individuals and organisations. Some examples are:
  - a. Since 2018, RC has recruited 110 Good Life Befrienders who play an important role in connecting students to community resources through shared interests and experiences. These befrienders are integral to our young adults being included in the community through shared interests and outings.
  - b. Through RC's training arm, Rainbow Centre Training and Consultancy, RC has deepened collaborations with organisations to incorporate inclusive practices into their organisations. Some partners include Changi Airport Group, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and National Library Board.
  - c. To increase accessibility for persons with disabilities and shape a more inclusive public transport system, RC partnered Land Transport Authority<sup>3</sup> in:
    - i. Co-creating educational content with SMRT for commuters and staff during Autism Awareness Month
    - ii. An exhibition at a bus-interchange and lunch-time Facebook Live show with Go-Ahead Singapore during Caring Commuter Week 2021.
    - iii. Beefing up our mobility training experience for students with refurbished two-seater MRT seats in schools for students to practise appropriate social behaviour.

## **Striving for Quality of Life past, present and future**

9. Since its inception, RC has been committed to establishing services for unmet needs:
  - a. Setting up Singapore's first school to educate children with multiple disabilities in 1987
  - b. Singapore's first programme for students with autism in 1989
  - c. Establishing of training centre for preschool professionals in 2000

---

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/old-mrt-train-seats-get-new-lease-of-life-in-yishun-void-decks>



d. Partnering with Autism Resource Centre to set up Pathlight School in 2004

10. In 2016, RC revisited its vision and mission and took on renewed commitment to enable its clients to thrive in communities.

~\*~\*~

## **FOR MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES**

Amanda Chang, Executive, Advocacy and Community Engagement

Email: [amandachang@rainbowcentre.org.sg](mailto:amandachang@rainbowcentre.org.sg)

Contact: +65 97620875

**PHOTOS** may be downloaded [here](#) for use.

## **ABOUT RAINBOW CENTRE**

At Rainbow Centre, we envision a world where persons with disabilities are empowered and thriving in inclusive communities. We work with our partners to create opportunities for persons with disabilities to make the most of their abilities and participate meaningfully in society. Through practical education, meaningful support and effective training programmes, we strive to increase the quality of life for them and their families.

In the last 5 years, this vision has guided our work and culminated in our development of the Good Life Framework that encapsulates our mission. Central to our work is:

### **Quality of Life: Our Good Life Framework**

Our goal is to build good lives, lives that are empowered and thriving. Adapting from the World Health Organisation's Quality of Life, we developed our Good Life Framework identifying 6 domains of being safe, being independent, being healthy, being connected, being engaged, being included and heard. Framing these in simple yet fundamental terms have empowered our students and families to articulate their aspirations.

### **Person Centred Care Planning**

At Rainbow Centre, we subscribe to the values of inclusion and the person-centred approach to influence how we develop relationships, plans of care, the tools we use and programmes we design. These shared values enable alignment and collaboration between an interdisciplinary team of professionals around the client, whom we partner with to enable their voices to be heard.

### **Activating Communities**

Over the years, we have stepped up efforts to model, partner and train individuals and organisations. We have also deepened collaborations with organisations and partners to increase accessibility and participation of persons with disabilities.