

**COMMITTEE ON THE
RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**

**WRITTEN REPLIES BY THE GOVERNMENT OF SINGAPORE
CONCERNING THE LIST OF ISSUES (CRC/C/Q/SGP/1) RECEIVED BY THE
COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD RELATING TO THE
CONSIDERATION OF THE INITIAL REPORT OF SINGAPORE
(CRC/C/51/Add.8)**

[Received on 8 September 2003]

CRC/C/RESP/43

PART I

1. Please provide disaggregated data (by gender, age groups, ethnic groups and resident status) covering the period between 2000 and 2002 on the number of children under 18 living in the State party.

Singapore's Department of Statistics captures demographic data on children living in Singapore through the Census of Population conducted every 10 years. The data are presented in age cohorts from 0-4 years, 5-9 years, 10-14 years and 15-19 years. This information is published in the Census of Population 2000 publication "Statistical Release 1: Demographic Characteristics". For non-Census years, resident population estimates by age group, ethnic group and gender are available in the annual publication "Yearbook of Statistics Singapore".

Males, Singapore Residents, as at 30 June (2000 – 2002)

Thousand

	2000				2001				2002			
	Chinese	Malay	Indians	Others	Chinese	Malays	Indians	Others	Chinese	Malays	Indians	Others
0 – 4 years	76.8	21.3	10.2	2.1	76.5	20.9	10.4	2.2	74.5	20.5	10.6	2.3
5 – 9 years	91.6	24.9	11.4	2.1	90.5	24.3	11.4	2.2	90.7	24	11.6	2.4
10 – 14 years	86.7	22.8	10.3	1.8	91	23.8	10.7	2	94.6	24.7	11.1	2.1
15 – 19 years	80.1	19	8.6	1.4	79.1	19.7	8.8	1.5	77.5	20.2	9.1	1.5

Females, Singapore Residents, as at 30 June (2000 – 2002)

Thousand

	2000				2001				2002			
	Chinese	Malay	Indians	Others	Chinese	Malays	Indians	Others	Chinese	Malays	Indians	Others
0 – 4 years	71.4	19.8	9.7	2	71	19.4	9.7	2.1	69.5	19	10	2.3
5 – 9 years	85.9	23.3	10.9	2	85.1	23	10.9	2.1	84.9	22.4	11.1	2.3
10 – 14 years	80.4	21.8	9.8	1.7	84.7	22.6	10.4	1.9	88.8	23.4	10.9	2.1
15 – 19 years	74.7	17.9	8.2	1.4	73.6	18.6	8.4	1.5	72.2	19.2	8.7	1.6

2. In light of article 4 of the Convention, please provide additional disaggregated data for 2001 – 2003, on budget allocations and trends (in percentages of the national and budgets or GDP) allocated to the implementation of the Convention, paying particular attention to ethnic groups and non-residents and evaluating the priorities for the budgetary expenditures given to the following:

As a multi-racial country, Singapore’s budget allocations and expenditure by Government Departments are not differentiated by ethnic groups. Budgetary expenditures are prioritised based on the effectiveness or usefulness of a programme, not by the ethnic composition of the programme’s beneficiaries.

Ethnicity is a factor in budget expenditure only in terms of Government’s grants to the four self-help groups¹ representing the four major ethnic groups in Singapore. These are MENDAKI (Malay self-help group), SINDA (Indian self-help group), Chinese Development Association or CDAC (Chinese self-help group) and the Eurasian Association (Eurasian self-help group). The Government contributes to MENDAKI, SINDA and the Eurasian Association through dollar-for-dollar matching grants for the funds raised from the ethnic communities. As CDAC is able to raise sufficient funds from the majority Chinese population, the Government does not contribute to this self-help group. Currently, there is no refugee (ie. non-resident) child in Singapore.

Budget expenditure data are reported in Financial Years or FYs, following the budgetary cycle of the Government and runs from April to March the next year.

a) Education (different types of education, i.e. pre-primary, primary and secondary education)

Expenditure for Education	Actual Expenditure for FY 01 as a percentage of GDP (\$ million)	Actual Expenditure for FY 02 as a percentage of GDP (\$ million)	Allocation for FY 03 as a percentage of GDP (\$ million)
Primary	S\$ 1,555 US\$ 883.5 ² (1.0%)	S\$ 1,551 US\$ 881.3 (1.0%)	S\$ 1,412 US\$ 802.3 (0.9%)
Secondary	S\$ 1,330 US\$ 755.7 (0.9%)	S\$ 1,523 US\$ 865.3 (1.0%)	S\$ 1,547 US\$ 879.0 (1.0%)
Total	S\$ 2,885 US\$ 1,639.2 (1.9%)	S\$ 3,074 US\$ 1,746.6 (2.0%)	S\$ 2,959 US\$ 1,681.3 (1.9%)

The education of our children has always been a priority for Singapore and this is clearly reflected in our national budget allocation. The budget allocation for Education (including the portion for tertiary education) has consistently been a major item of

¹ Self-help groups are formed by respective ethnic groups to further the social and economic progress of their respective communities.

² Conversion rate used: S\$1.76=US\$1

public expenditure, accounting for 24.3% of the total government recurrent expenditure in FY 02. In the 2003 World Competitiveness Ranking Study by the Swiss-based Institute of Management Development, the education system of Singapore was ranked third in terms of “meeting the needs of a competitive economy”.

b) Health care (different types of health services, i.e. primary health care, vaccination programmes, adolescent health care and other health care services for children)

Percentage Allocation of National Expenditure for Healthcare (2000-2002)

	Percentage Allocation for FY00	Percentage Allocation for FY01	Percentage Allocation for FY02
Health Expenditure	4.4%	5.8%	5.9%

Primary Health Care

The budget for primary health care (including children's mental health services) is expended through the School Health Services and the polyclinics. The following table lists the expenditure for FY01 (ie. April to March) to FY03 for the School Health Services.

Financial Year	\$ million *
2001	S\$ 42.0 US\$ 23.9
2002	S\$ 44.0 US\$ 25.0
2003	S\$ 50.0 US\$ 28.4

* Data on primary health care expenditure on children incurred by the polyclinics is currently not available.

Immunisation

The estimated immunisation expenditure for FY01 to FY03 were:

Programme	FY 01 \$ million	FY 02 \$ million	FY 03 \$ million
Infant and Preschool Immunisation	S\$ 1.0 US\$ 0.6	S\$ 1.0 US\$ 0.6	S\$ 1.0 US\$ 0.6
Immunisation Programme in Schools	S\$ 1.8 US\$ 1.0	S\$ 2.4 US\$ 1.4	S\$ 3 US\$ 1.7
Hepatitis B Immunisation Programme for students in upper secondary and tertiary education institutions, 2001-2004	S\$ 5.7 US\$ 3.2	S\$ 3.6 US\$ 2.0	S\$ 1.3 US\$ 0.7
Total (approx)	S\$ 8.5 US\$ 4.8	S\$ 7.0 US\$ 4.0	S\$ 5.3 US\$ 3.0

c) Programmes and services for children with disabilities

Programmes and services for children with disabilities including education, child care and early intervention programmes are funded by the Government, the voluntary sector, and with support from private corporations. Information on expenses incurred by the private sector is unavailable. The following table lists the expended budget for FY01 and FY02 and the allocated budget for FY03.

Programmes funded by Government	FY 01 \$ million	FY 02 \$ million	FY 03 \$ million
Integrated Childcare Programme	-	-	S\$ 0.3 US\$ 0.2
Early Intervention Programmes	-	-	S\$ 2.8 US\$ 1.6
Community Integration Support	S\$ 0.5 US\$ 0.3	S\$ 0.9 US\$ 0.5	S\$ 1.4 US\$ 0.8
Special Schools*	-	-	-

* In addition to the above, the Ministry of Education (MOE) provides funding to special schools of up to 2.5 times the recurrent cost of educating a primary school student in national schools. MOE also provides capital funding for the construction of purpose-built special education school buildings, renovation works and the five-yearly repair and repainting projects. The funding is on a 90:10 basis with MOE funding the major portion. The cost-sharing approach involves the community at large in looking after the welfare needs of the less fortunate members of our society.

A new special school (where MOE will fund up to 90% of the building costs) that caters solely to autistic children is set to open in January next year. The school will feature smaller class sizes, and have teachers trained to handle children with autism. The children will also be able to follow the mainstream school curriculum, and learn functional life-skills at the same time.

In July 2003, the Ministry of Health announced a new S\$17.5 million (US\$ 9.9 million) Child Development Programme which aims at early intervention and therapy for children with developmental problems such as autism and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. These children can obtain help at the Child Development Units in two polyclinics. With therapy, children with developmental problems can improve their learning and communication skills as well as their social and physical capabilities. With early intervention, the majority of these children can study at mainstream schools instead of special schools when they reach school-going age.

The Ministry of Health funds specialist hospital services for children with birth defects or special needs to ensure that they receive curative and rehabilitative care. The budget for these services is subsumed under the overall budget for public hospitals. There are combined therapy clinics for medical conditions such as spina bifida, where a team of multi-disciplinary specialists decides on the best treatment for these children. Children with congenital defects or disabilities are also referred to private or voluntary agencies for support services.

Recent advancements in technology allow early diagnosis for children with hearing impairment. Modern hearing aids and cochlear implants can improve the hearing of most of these children. The Ministry of Health initiated a national newborn hearing screening programme in 2001. Babies in public hospitals and polyclinics are screened for hearing loss, and these centres are linked by a common database. The Ministry has a national cochlear-implant programme in place for children since 2001. The cost of the implant is subsidised up to 80 per cent for eligible patients. Early detection, together with effective early intervention offers the best chance of achieving good results.

The following table lists the fund raising figures for each FY reported by the National Council of Social Service (NCSS).

Funds raised by NCSS	FY 01 \$ million	FY 02 \$ million	FY 03 \$ million
Special Schools	S\$ 12.2 US\$ 6.9	S\$ 12.4 US\$ 7.0	S\$ 13.1 US\$ 7.4
Early Intervention Programmes	S\$ 0.1 US\$ 0.1	S\$ 0.4 US\$ 0.2	S\$ 0.4 US\$ 0.2
Community Integration Support	S\$ 0.7 US\$ 0.4	S\$ 1.0 US\$ 0.6	S\$ 0.9 US\$ 0.5
Total	S\$ 13 US\$ 7.4	S\$ 13.8 US\$ 7.8	S\$ 14.4 US\$ 8.1

d) Support programmes for families

The Government and voluntary welfare organisations provide families with support programmes. These include financial assistance, counselling, public education and family life programmes. The following table lists the actual expended budget for FY01 and FY02 and the allocated budget for FY03.

Programmes funded by Government	FY 01 \$ million	FY 02 \$ million	FY 03 \$ million
Family Welfare Programmes	S\$ 1.8 US\$ 1.0	S\$ 2.1 US\$ 1.2	S\$ 3.0 US\$ 1.7
Family Service Centres ³	S\$ 6.9 US\$ 3.9	S\$ 10.0 US\$ 5.7	S\$ 8.7 US\$ 4.9
Public education on families/children	S\$ 2.4 US\$ 1.4	S\$ 3.2 US\$ 1.8	S\$ 3.9 US\$ 2.2
Baby Bonus/3 rd Child Maternity leave	S\$ 28.2 US\$ 16.0	S\$ 47.2 US\$ 26.8	S\$ 81.7 US\$ 46.4
Child Care Subsidy	S\$ 57.7 US\$ 32.8	S\$ 59.3 US\$ 33.7	S\$ 62.0 US\$ 35.2
Public Assistance Schemes	S\$ 6.8 US\$ 3.9	S\$ 7.7 US\$ 4.4	S\$ 8.4 US\$ 4.8
Fee Assistance for Student Care Centres	S\$ 2.5 US\$ 1.4	S\$ 3.1 US\$ 1.8	S\$ 3.7 US\$ 2.1
Rent and Utilities Assistance Scheme	S\$ 0.5 US\$ 0.3	S\$ 0.7 US\$ 0.4	S\$ 1.0 US\$ 0.6
Interim Financial Assistance Scheme	S\$ 2.1 US\$ 1.2	S\$ 3.3 US\$ 1.9	S\$ 4.5 US\$ 2.6
Special Grant Scheme	S\$ 0.3 US\$ 0.2	S\$ 0.6 US\$ 0.3	S\$ 0.6 US\$ 0.3
Total	S\$ 109.2 US\$ 62.1	S\$ 137.2 US\$ 78.0	S\$ 177.5 US\$ 100.8

e) Support for children living below the poverty line

Whilst Singapore does not have a poverty line indicator, programmes to help children from low income families to overcome their disadvantaged situations are in place. The actual expended budget for FY01 and FY02 and the allocated budget for FY03 (ie. families in the bottom 20th percentile of households) are:

Programmes funded by Government	FY 01 \$ million	FY 02 \$ million	FY 03 \$ million
Centre-based Financial Assistance Scheme for Childcare ⁴	S\$ 1.5 US\$ 0.9	S\$ 2.9 US\$ 1.6	S\$ 3.7 US\$ 2.1
Small Families Improvement Scheme ⁵	S\$ 1.9 US\$ 1.1	S\$ 1.8 US\$ 1.0	S\$ 2.1 US\$ 1.2
Healthy Start	S\$ 0.1 US\$ 0.1	S\$ 0.7 US\$ 0.4	S\$ 0.7 US\$ 0.4
Total	S\$ 3.5 US\$ 2.1	S\$ 5.4 US\$ 3.0	S\$ 6.5 US\$ 3.7

³ FSCs are one-stop neighbourhood social service centres, to support individuals and families in the community

⁴ includes monthly childcare subsidy to pay the cost of childcare and a one-time grant to pay the initial costs of placing their children in a childcare centre

⁵ provides subsidies/grants for housing and education

f) The protection of children who are in need of alternative care including the support of care institutions

The Government and voluntary welfare organisations (VWOs) run residential homes for children. Homes run by VWOs may also provide accommodation to children in need of temporary care. The budget for FY01 and FY02 and the allocated budget for FY03 for the following programmes are:

Programmes funded by Government	FY 01 \$ million	FY 02 \$ million	FY 03 \$ million
Children's Homes	S\$ 4.8 US\$ 2.7	S\$ 5.3 US\$ 3.0	S\$ 6.7 US\$ 3.8
Homes (those with court orders)	S\$ 12.4 US\$ 7.0	S\$ 14.2 US\$ 8.1	S\$ 15.8 US\$ 9.0
Total	S\$ 17.2 US\$ 9.7	S\$ 19.5 US\$ 11.1	S\$ 22.5 US\$ 12.8

g) Programmes and activities for the prevention of and protection from child abuse, child sexual exploitation and child labour

The Ministry of Manpower conducts routine inspections at work sites, and looks into complaints received. Investigations conducted by the Ministry of Manpower have not revealed any cases of child labour. The employment legislation in Singapore governs terms and conditions for employment and provides protection for employees, including the employment of children and young persons. Provisions in our employment legislation serve to deter child labour, as education is deemed to be the priority for children.

The Ministry of Community Development and Sports and the police invest in programmes and activities that prevent child abuse and child sexual exploitation. To address those who come into their care, MCDS and the police investigate all complaints and make abusers account for their offences. MCDS also operates the Fostering Programme, mandatory counselling and public education programmes. It provides financial assistance to voluntary welfare organisations. The actual budget for FY01 and FY02 and the allocated budget for FY03 for the following programmes are:

Programmes funded by Government	FY 01 \$ million	FY 02 \$ million	FY 03 \$ million
Child Protection & Child Welfare	S\$ 3.8 US\$ 2.2	S\$ 5.2 US\$ 3.0	S\$ 5.7 US\$ 3.2
Total	S\$ 3.8 US\$ 2.2	S\$ 5.2 US\$ 3.0	S\$ 5.7 US\$ 3.2

The substantial increase in budget is due to the implementation of new initiatives such as early intervention programmes for children at risk of abuse and mandatory counselling programmes. Budget for public education programme was also increased. To reach out to students at risk, we employed various media such as dramas and printed materials.

h) Programmes and services for street children and abandoned children

There have been no reported cases of street children. The incidence of unwanted babies abandoned is low. To help mothers with unwanted pregnancies, a public education programme on avenues of support for mothers was launched in FY03. They are given counselling and linked to community resources. These efforts aim to prevent the abandonment of babies. The allocated budget for this is included in the FY03 Child Welfare Programme listed above.

i) Juvenile justice and rehabilitation

The administration of juvenile justice involves the Courts, the Ministry of Community Development and Sports, enforcement agencies and other government departments. The budgets for the first two agencies are as follows:

Programmes funded by Government	FY 01 \$ million	FY 02 \$ million	FY 03 \$ million
Subordinate Courts*	S\$ 0.6 US\$ 0.3	S\$ 0.6 US\$ 0.3	S\$ 0.6 US\$ 0.3
Probation Services**	S\$ 4.3 US\$ 2.4	S\$ 4.8 US\$ 2.7	S\$ 5.5 US\$ 3.1
Total	S\$ 4.9 US\$ 2.7	S\$ 5.4 US\$ 3.0	S\$ 6.1 US\$ 3.4

* estimated budget

** actual expenditure for FY01 and FY02 and allocated budget for FY03

3. With reference to children deprived of a family environment and separated from parents, please provide disaggregated data (by age, gender, ethnic group and resident status) for the last three years in the number of children:

a) Separated from their parents

No children are separated from their parents forcibly or without the knowledge of their parents or guardians.

b) Placed in institutions

There are 17 Voluntary Children Homes (VCHs), 3 Government Homes and 4 Penal Institutions (including 1 Reformative Training Centre). Disaggregated data on the admissions to VCHs prior to July 01 are not available. Admissions to these institutions for July 01 to June 03 are as follows:

Admissions to Voluntary Children Homes

	July 01 – June 02	July 02 – June 03
Total	356	471
Race		
Chinese	179	214
Malay	126	146
Indian	50	50
Others	1	7
Age		
<6 years	19	28
6-9 years	69	69
10-15 years	211	251
>16 years	57	69
Gender		
Male	184	209
Female	172	208

The admission cases refer to children who are not staying with their families because:

- (i) their families are unable to provide for their physical needs and need assistance from the homes on a temporary basis;
- (ii) their families are unable to manage and supervise their children;
- (iii) their families are deemed by the Court to be unsuitable to care for and control the child; and
- (iv) the children have displayed deviant or anti-social behaviour and need to be placed in a community setting for rehabilitation.

Admissions to Government Homes

	2001	2002	2003 (January -June)
Total	270	383	259
Race			
Chinese	129	202	139
Malay	104	126	94
Indian	33	44	20
Others	4	11	6
Age			
<6 years	0	0	0
6-9 years	0	0	0
10-15 years	259	370	249
>16 years	11	13	10
Gender			
Male	216	304	199
Female	54	79	60

The increase in admissions to Government Homes corresponds with the increase in the number of juvenile delinquents arrested by the Police and charged by the Courts.

Admissions to Penal Institutions (including 1 Reformative Training Centre)⁶

	2000	2001	2002
Total	508	433	457
Age			
14 years	1	4	1
15 years	8	6	8
16 years	166	143	175
17 years	333	280	273
Gender			
Male	419	359	383
Female	89	74	74
Resident Status			
Citizen	397	344	375
Permanent Resident	7	6	10
Foreigner	104	83	72

⁶ includes those detained in Drug Rehabilitation Centres

c) Placed with foster families

Number of children placed in foster care* (2000 – 2002)

	2000	2001	2002
Total	43	57	93
Race			
Chinese	22	23	31
Malay	10	20	46
Indian	10	11	16
Others	1	3	0
Age			
<3 years	25	34	50
4-6 years	17 (age 4-16)	22 (age 4-16)	14
7-12 years	-	-	20
13-15 years	-	-	8
16-18 years	1	1	1
Gender			
Male	17	24	46
Female	26	33	47

* Foster care, a preferred option compared to institutional care and placements, has increased as more foster families step forward to serve.

d) Adopted domestically or through inter-country adoptions⁷

Domestic Adoptions by Gender (2000 – 2002)

	2000	2001	2002
Total	298	259	265
Gender			
Male	156	132	144
Female	142	127	121

Foreign Adoptions by Gender and Country of Birth (2000-2002)

	2000	2001	2002
Total	333	445	448
Gender			
Male	144	184	185
Female	189	261	263
Country			
Australia	1	0	0
Bangladesh	0	1	0
Brazil	0	0	1

⁷ Data on ethnicity of the adoption cases is not available.

	2000	2001	2002
Brunei	0	1	0
Cambodia	0	4	4
Chile	1	0	0
China	135	145	125
Germany	0	0	1
Hong Kong	2	1	1
India	22	22	18
Indonesia	111	130	118
Japan	1	1	0
Korea	0	1	0
Laos	0	1	0
Malaysia	41	101	152
Myanmar	0	0	2
Philippines	5	1	8
Taiwan	1	2	1
Thailand	8	17	10
United States	0	1	0
Vietnam	5	16	7

Adoption Cases by Age (2000-2002)

	2000	2001	2002
Total	631	704	713
0-3 years	461	534	535
>3-6 years	77	82	76
>6-12 years	64	52	71
>12-21 years	29	36	31

4. Please specify the number of children with disabilities, disaggregated by age, gender, ethnic group and resident status, covering the period 2000 – 2002:

a) Living with their families

Most children with disabilities live with their families and attend special schools or early intervention programmes. The exact number of children living with their families is however not available.

b) In institutions

32 intellectually disabled children were admitted into VCHs over the period 2000 – 2002. As at August 03, 29 children with disabilities were in the Homes for the Disabled. Disaggregated data on these children are not available.

c) Attending regular schools

About 63% of the hearing impaired and 55% of the visually handicapped pupils are in regular schools.

d) Attending special schools

The total enrolment at special schools is as follows:

Period	Total Enrolment
Dec 2000	3917
Dec 2001	4094
Dec 2002	4331
Jan 2003	4383

5. With reference to child abuse, please provide disaggregated data (by age, gender, ethnic group and resident status) over the period 2000 – 2002 on the:

a) Number of individual complaints received per year in the last three years

Number of Complaints received (2000 – 2002)

Year	Total no. of complaints received	No. of cases with evidence of abuse upon investigation
2000	177	65 (36.7%)
2001	195	72 (36.9%)
2002	193	69 (35.8%)

Child Abuse Victims by Race, Age and Gender (2000-2002)

	2000	2001	2002
Total	65	72	69
Race			
Chinese	29	22	22
Malay	26	40	35
Indian	6	9	12
Others	4	1	0
Age			
<3 years	8	16	14
3-5 years	9	8	6
6-11 years	31	28	21
12-15 years	17	20	28
Gender			
Male	39	35	27
Female	26	37	42

b) Number and percentage of reports which have resulted in either a court decision or other types of follow-up

Year	Total no. of complaints received	No. of cases with care and protection orders
2000	177	56 (31.6%)
2001	195	44 (22.6%)
2002	193	62 (32.1%)

All complaints are investigated by the Child Protection Service. Depending on the needs and circumstances of each case, all cases were either followed up by the Child Protection Service or the social service providers for casework and support services.

6. Please provide disaggregated data for public, private, religious and home-based schools (including by age, gender, ethnic group and resident status) covering the period between 2000 and 2002 on:

a) The enrolment and completion rates in percentages of the relevant group in pre-primary schools, in primary schools and in secondary schools

Net Enrolment Rate (in percentage)

Year	Primary			Secondary		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2000	96	95	96	92	91	92
2001	95	94	94	93	93	93
2002	95	94	95	92	91	92

The net enrolment rates pertain to the pupil enrolment in national schools. Based on 2002 Primary One registration records, about 4% of the cohort or 1,973 children did not register for national primary schools. Of this, about half were residing overseas. About a quarter of them are home-schooling, enrolled in Madrasahs or special education schools. The others could not be contacted.

Despite the high rate of enrolment, Singapore introduced Compulsory Education⁸ in National Schools in 2003 for all Singapore citizens up to Primary 6. The legislation ensures that every child has an opportunity to education by reaching out to the small minority who are not in school. The 6-year compulsory education aims to give all children a common core of knowledge that will provide a strong foundation for further education, and a common educational experience which will help to build national identity and cohesion.

Completion Rate

Year	Percentage of Primary 1 Cohort completing -	
	Primary Education (Sat for PSLE)	Secondary Education (Sat for GCE 'N'/'O' Level)
1980	89	58
1985	89	80
1990	91	80
1995	98	89
2000	98	92
2002	98	92

b) Number and percentage of drop-outs and repetitions

Please see above tables.

⁸ Students attending "designated institutions" (e.g. madrasahs), those receiving home-schooling and those with special needs are exempted from Compulsory Education.

c) Ratio teacher per children

The ratio of students to teaching staff is as follows:

Ratio of Students to Teaching Staff

	2000	2001	2002
Primary	24.9	25.2	25.1
Secondary	18.6	19.8	19.3

Class Size

Year	Primary (Average Class Size)	Secondary (Average Class Size)
2000	37.3	35.3
2001	37.4	35.9
2002	37.6	36.2

7. Please provide disaggregated statistical data (including by age, gender, ethnic group and resident status) on adolescent health, including early pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs); mental health, suicide, drug, alcohol and tobacco abuse as well as rates of infant and child mortality and of malnutrition covering the period between 2000 and 2002. Also, please provide the numbers of health professionals working in the health care services for children.

Number of Children (Aged 10 – 19 years)⁹ with STDs (2000 – 2002)

Type	2000		2001		2002	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Gonorrhoea	51	26	55	33	64	28
NGU	46	0	25	0	31	0
Candidiasis	0	42	0	32	0	24
Chlamydia	0	26	0	36	0	32
Herpes	7	10	5	7	0	13
Warts	17	16	9	10	3	11
Syphilis	6	12	6	8	14	5
Trichomoniasis	0	12	0	3	0	4
Others	5	24	4	23	2	7
Total	132	168	104	152	114	124

Number of Deaths Due to Suicide (Aged 10 – 19 years)¹⁰ (1999 – 2001)

Race	1999		2000		2001	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Chinese	6	5	8	6	11	11
Malay	1	1	0	1	0	2
Indian	1	1	2	0	2	1
Total	8	7	10	7	13	14

Number of New Cases Seen in Child Guidance Clinic¹¹ (2000 – 2002)

	2000	2001	2002
Total	1658	1811	2024
Age			
< 7 years	123	219	287
7 to 12 years	947	1019	1192
> 12 years	588	573	545
Race			
Chinese	1293	1477	1630
Malay	185	165	195
Indian	125	126	151
Others	55	43	48

⁹ No children aged 0–9 years were reported to have STDs.

¹⁰ There were no deaths from suicide for ages 0 –9 years.

¹¹ Primary Health Clinic for child and adolescent psychiatry.

	2000	2001	2002
Total	1658	1811	2024
Gender			
Male	1121	1261	1394
Female	537	550	630
Diagnosis			
Emotional disorders	261	330	295
Stress related Disorders	138	155	132
ADHD	221	397	457
Developmental Disorders	403	332	438
Conduct Disorders	242	188	158
Others	393	409	544

* The increase over the years is due partly to greater awareness of services and referrals.

Smoking Prevalence

According to the Singapore Global Youth Tobacco Study conducted in 2000 among secondary one to secondary four students (mainly aged 13-16 years old),

- 11.1% of the respondents smoked on at least one day in the past 30 days
- 13.4% of males and 8.8% of females smoked on at least one day in the past 30 days

From the National Health Surveillance Survey 2001 by the Ministry of Health, the prevalence of daily smoking among those aged 18-19 years old was 11.2%.

Alcohol Consumption Behaviour

According to the National Health Surveillance Survey 2001, among those aged 18-19 years old,

- 27.1% are occasional drinkers (i.e. drink alcohol monthly or less in the past 12 months)
- 0.5% are regular drinkers (i.e. drink alcohol daily in the past 12 months)

Child Mortality Rates (2000-2002)

Child Mortality Rates	2000	2001	2002
Neonatal mortality rates (per 1000 live births)	1.7	1.3	Not available ¹²
Perinatal mortality rates (per 1000 live and still births)	4.3	3.5	Not available ¹³
Infant mortality rates (per 1000 live births)	2.5	2.2	2.9

¹² 2002 neonatal mortality rate is still pending.

¹³ 2002 perinatal mortality rate is still pending.

Malnutrition

Malnutrition in children is not a problem in Singapore. There has been no reported case of death from malnutrition in children for the past few years. School Health Services collects data on children screened in school as part of the Screening and Immunisation Programme (Primary 1 {7 year olds} and Primary 6 {12 year olds}). The percentage prevalence of underweight children (children who fall under the 80% weight for height, nutritional status) are as follows:

Underweight Children (<80% Nutritional Status) – Percentage Prevalence

Year	Primary 1			Primary 6		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2000	2.44	1.93	2.19	13.82	13.49	13.66
2001	2.58	1.97	2.29	14.17	14.11	14.14
2002	2.37	1.70	2.05	13.92	13.75	13.84

Nutritional status = $\text{weight-for-height (\%)} = 100 \times \text{child's weight} / \text{reference weight of a child of the same height}$.

Health Manpower (2000-2002)

Health Manpower	2000	2001	2002
Doctors	5577	5922	6029
Dentists	1028	1087	1136
Pharmacists	1098	1141	1191
Nurses and Midwives	16611	17398	18034

The above figures include health care professionals providing services for both adults and children.

National Health Manpower Ratio (2000-2002)

National Health Manpower Ratio	2000	2001	2002
Doctors	1:720	1:700	1:690
Dentists	1:3,910	1:3,800	1:3,670
Pharmacists	1:3,660	1:3,620	1:3,500
Nurses	1:240	1:240	1:230
Doctor per 1000 population	1.4	1.4	1.4
Dentist per 1000 population	0.3	0.3	0.3

8. Please provide updated disaggregated statistical data (including by gender, age groups, region) on children infected or affected by HIV / AIDS, as well as information on programmes implemented to address the problems of these children.

Incidence of perinatally acquired cases of HIV/AIDS in children (Singapore residents)

Year	No of Cases
2000	1
2001	2
2002	2

HIV/AIDS & Sexuality Education Programme In School

Information on Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) and HIV/AIDS is included in the secondary two science syllabus and in the upper secondary biology syllabus. Primary school students are also taught in their health education syllabus that HIV/AIDS is one of the transmissible diseases.

The Ministry of Education (MOE) has a sexuality education programme, “The Growing Years” for schools. The School Health Service is represented on the Steering Committee and Working Group of this programme. The Growing Years series teach human sexuality and the consequences of sexual activity, including HIV/AIDS and STD infections, to help students develop healthy attitudes and make informed decisions. Different educational packages are developed for upper primary, secondary and pre-university levels. MOE provides training for teachers to conduct the activities on sexuality with confidence.

The School Health Service conducts the ongoing STD and HIV/AIDS education programme to raise awareness among students, prevent STD/HIV/AIDS infection and discourage promiscuous sexual behaviour. The HIV/AIDS Education Programme is targeted at all secondary schools, Vocational Training Centres, Institute of Technical Education, Junior Colleges, Centralised Institutes and Polytechnics. In 2002, a total of 190 programmes were conducted for almost 63,000 students from these institutions. Annual talks for secondary 3 students include discussions on STD and HIV/AIDS, the importance of abstinence, effects of pre-marital sex, and ways to prevent STD infection. Exhibitions and videos are used as a starting point for discussion on HIV/AIDS and the importance of taking preventive steps to protect themselves from infection. A comic book, “The trouble with Joe” is distributed to ITE students while a newspaper-style pamphlet, “StrAIDS Times” is distributed to pre-university and polytechnic students. A new magazine-style booklet on STDs, “Teenagers ask” is targeted at secondary school students.

The Government works closely with Action for AIDS (AFA), a non-governmental organisation, to raise awareness on prevention of HIV/AIDS. AFA’s mission is to prevent transmission of HIV/AIDS through continuous education targeted at vulnerable groups; advocate for access to affordable care and against HIV/AIDS discrimination; and provide support for people with HIV/AIDS, care givers and volunteers. Abstinence is emphasised and safer sex practices encouraged. Since 2001, 53 school talks were conducted, with average attendance of 500 students per talk.

9. Please provide appropriate and aggregated data (including by gender, age and type of crime) covering the period between 2000 and 2002, in particular on the number of:

a) Minors, who have allegedly committed a crime, reported to the police

Number Of Juveniles (Aged 7-15 Yrs) Arrested For Seizable Offences By Sex And Age (2000 – 2002)¹⁴

	2000			2001			2002 ¹⁵		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Total	1,045	553	1,598	946	468	1,414	1,513	690	2,203
7 years	5	1	6	7	0	7	5	2	7
8 years	9	4	13	4	4	8	14	6	20
9 years	21	5	26	17	8	25	27	6	33
10 years	35	17	52	35	16	51	32	11	43
11 years	38	27	65	45	21	66	78	24	102
12 years	85	72	157	80	57	137	173	78	251
13 years	191	122	313	164	135	299	292	186	478
14 years	295	157	452	285	112	397	438	200	638
15 years	366	148	514	309	115	424	454	177	631

The number of juveniles arrested in 2002 has seen a 55.8% increase, with students forming the bulk of those arrested. The increase of the juvenile crime rate is an area of concern. The Inter-Ministry Committee on Youth Crime comprising government, voluntary sector and community leaders have embarked on several measures to address the increase. As three-quarters of the juveniles were arrested for theft and related offences and most were still in school, an exhibition to inform students of the consequences of crime has drawn interest from the students. Social work agencies have also stepped up efforts to run outreach and youth programmes for unengaged young people and diversion programmes.

¹⁴ Figures refers to arrest statistics

¹⁵ Provisional data

Number of Juveniles (Aged 7-15 Yrs) Arrested by Type of Seizable Offences and Sex
(2000 – 2002)

	2000			2001			2002		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Total Seizable Offences	1,045	553	1,598	946	468	1,414	1,513	690	2,203
Crimes Against The Person	132	19	151	128	6	134	219	47	266
Violent Property Crimes	23	12	35	40	5	45	48	8	56
Housebreaking & Related Crimes	18	0	18	34	4	38	33	7	40
Theft & Related Crimes	725	496	1,221	621	427	1,048	1,042	599	1,641
Cheating & Related Offences	24	6	30	19	13	32	22	14	36
Other Seizable Offences	108	20	128	92	13	105	136	15	151
Seizable Offences Not Treated As Crime	15	0	15	12	0	12	13	0	13

Number of Juveniles (Aged 7-15 Yrs) charged in Court by Type of Charges (2000 – 2002)¹⁶

Type of Charges	2000	2001	2002
Total	1,912	1,745	2,094
Drugs-related offences	35	48	54
House-breaking/Lurking House Trespass	56	38	109
Robbery	63	107	104
Carnal Connection	46	24	38
Cheating	1	34	15
Fraudulent Possession	84	51	69
Unlawful Assembly	70	29	65
Rioting	47	35	103
Outraging of Modesty	34	28	29
Rape	0	0	7
Murder	0	1	0
Theft	732	590	721
Voluntary Causing Hurt	46	50	40
Offences under Films Act	217	298	232
Others	481	412	508

¹⁶ Figures include those who were eventually acquitted or let off.

Number of Juveniles (Aged 7-15 Yrs) charged in Court by Gender (2000 – 2002)¹⁷

	2000	2001	2002
Total	584	501	698
Males	488	411	566
Females	96	90	132

Number of minors¹⁸ convicted in Court by Gender According to Order/Sentence Given (2000 – 2002)

Offence	2000				2001				2002			
	Probation		Admission to Juvenile Homes		Probation		Admission to Juvenile Homes		Probation		Admission to Juvenile Homes	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Crimes Against Persons	44	6	13	7	66	4	24	1	87	10	30	2
Violent Property Offences	12	1	4	2	12	3	12	0	15	3	11	1
Housebreaking and Related Crimes	14	0	9	2	10	0	7	0	8	3	11	1
Theft and Related Crimes	149	34	59	14	128	40	59	12	144	55	79	22
Fraud and Forgery	9	1	0	3	13	4	0	2	24	5	4	2
Seizable Offences	153	20	10	6	129	19	15	5	130	27	22	12
Offences not treated as crimes¹⁹	6	0	2	0	8	0	2	0	18	0	3	0
Non-seizable offences	53	6	32	1	18	4	16	1	32	4	35	2
Total	440	68	129	35	384	74	135	21	458	107	195	42

¹⁷ Figures refer to those charged in Court.

¹⁸ Minors refer to persons aged less than 18 years

¹⁹ carnal connection

Number of minors convicted in Court by Age According to Order/Sentence Given
(2000 – 2002)

Age	2000				2001				2002			
	Probation		Admission to Juvenile Homes		Probation		Admission to Juvenile Homes		Probation		Admission to Juvenile Homes	
	<16 years	16 - <18 years	<16 years	16 - <18 years	<16 years	16 - <18 years	<16 years	16 - <18 years	<16 years	16 - <18 years	<16 years	16 - <18 years
Offence												
Crimes Against Persons	15	35	8	12	23	47	10	15	48	49	16	16
Violent Property Offences	6	7	5	1	6	9	7	5	11	7	7	5
Housebreaking and Related Crimes	4	10	6	5	5	5	3	4	4	7	10	2
Theft and Related Crimes	81	102	44	29	64	104	36	35	101	98	68	33
Fraud and Forgery	2	8	1	2	6	11	2	0	9	20	5	1
Seizable Offences	50	123	9	7	32	116	7	13	52	105	13	21
Offences not treated as crimes²⁰	1	5	0	2	1	7	1	1	3	15	0	3
Non-seizable offences	14	45	16	17	6	16	7	10	14	22	16	21
Total	173	335	89	75	143	315	73	83	242	323	135	102

Number of minors diverted to the Guidance Programme²¹ by Gender and Age (2000 – 2002)

	2000	2001	2002
Total	598	490	551
Gender			
Male	377	291	359
Female	221	199	192
Age			
< 11 years	18	6	8
11-14 years	354	197	231
15 & above	226	287	312

²⁰ carnal connection

²¹ Guidance Programme is not an order given by the court. It is offered to first time offenders, who commit minor offenses and whose parents are prepared to support them in the Programme. If they complete the programme successfully, they will be released without a police charge.

b) Minors who have been sentenced and the type of punishment or sanctions related to offences including length of deprivation of liberty

Type of sentence by age (2000 – 2002)

Type of sanctions/ punishment	2000		2001		2002	
	Imprisonment	Reformative Training	Imprisonment	Reformative Training	Imprisonment	Reformative Training
Total	340	98	298	73	279	142
14 years	1	0	3	1	0	1
15 years	8	0	3	2	3	5
16 years	103	42	85	35	88	72
17 years	228	56	207	35	188	64

Type of sentence by gender (2000 – 2002)

Type of sanctions/ punishment	2000		2001		2002	
	Imprisonment	Reformative Training	Imprisonment	Reformative Training	Imprisonment	Reformative Training
Total	340	98	298	73	279	142
Male	265	98	248	73	227	131
Female	75	0	50	0	52	11

Type of crimes committed (2000 – 2002)

Types of Crimes	2000	2001	2002
Total*	478	396	441
Crimes Against Person	28	26	30
Drug Offences	53	78	58
Immigration Offences	76	49	56
Property Crimes	115	102	150
Traffic Offences	6	3	2
Other Offences	200	138	145

*Figures exclude those detained in Drug Rehabilitation Centres.

c) Detention facilities for juvenile delinquents and their capacity

Capacity of Detention Facilities (2000 – 2002)

Detention Facilities	2000	2001	2002
Welfare Homes Gazetted as Approved Schools	380	380	320
Government Homes	492	492	492
Reformative Training Centre	150	150	150
Prisons School	300	265	265

d) Minors detained in these facilities and minors detained in adult facilities

Muster of Detention Facilities as at 31 Dec (2000 – 2002)

Detention Facilities	2000	2001	2002
Welfare Homes Gazetted as Approved Schools	171	147	117
Government Homes	478	428	425
Reformative Training Centre	119	153	214
Prisons School	62	63	39
Number of Minors detained in adult facilities	194	199	177

Most of the existing prison facilities in Singapore are not purpose-built. The Singapore Prisons Department is currently redeveloping its Changi Prison Complex to increase its capacity and gain greater synergy by centralising and clustering institutions and services. The new Changi Prison Complex has a design capacity of 23,000 and will be fully operationally ready by early 2008.

e) Minors kept in pre-trial detention and the average length of their detention

Under the Constitution of the Republic of Singapore, a person under arrest must be produced within 48 hours of his arrest before a magistrate. The person cannot be further detained in custody without the magistrate's authority. Detention of the accused person before trial takes place under the following circumstances :-

- (i) where the arrested person has committed a non-bailable offence;
- (ii) where more than 48 hours are required for investigation (subject to the magistrate or court's approval); and
- (iii) where the arrested persons has committed a bailable offence but is unable to furnish bail.

The number of minors (below 18 years) remanded over the period 2000 – 2002 are as follows:

Number of minors remanded in Government Homes²² (2000 – 2002)

	2000	2001	2002
Total	292	344	447
Gender			
Male	258	320	378
Female	34	24	69
Age			
<16 years	209	215	315
16 - <18 years	83	129	132

Number of minors remanded under Prisons Department²³ (2000 – 2002)

	Year 2000	Year 2001	Year 2002
Number of minors	334	361	408
Average length of detention under Prisons Department (days)	48	57	62

f) Reported cases of abuse and maltreatment of children occurring during their past arrest and detention

There were no reported cases.

g) Children, whose parents have filed a complaint that they are beyond parental control

Beyond Parental Control Cases by Age and Gender

	2000	2001	2002
Total	147	116	167
Age			
9-10 years	0	3	1
11-12 years	11	11	10
13-14 years	92	80	82
15-16 years	44	22	74
Gender			
Male	56	53	72
Female	91	63	95

²² Excludes cases where the child who is beyond parental control is remanded under the Children and Young Persons Act.

²³ Excludes minors in pre-trial detention at the police lock-up for investigation purposes.

10. With reference to special protection measures, please provide statistical data by gender, age, urban/rural areas) per year between 2000 and 2002 on:

a) The number of children involved in sexual exploitation, including prostitution, pornography and trafficking

There were no reported cases of pornography and trafficking for the period between 2000 and 2002. There was one reported case of a 12 year old child from a neighbouring country being involved in prostitution. In connection with the case, one person was convicted of rape and 4 persons were convicted of charges of abetment of rape and prostitution related charges. The child has been returned to the care of the Social Service Department of the child's country of origin.

b) The number of children involved in sexual exploitation who received rehabilitation treatments

The figures below refer to victims of sexual abuse who were referred to the Child Protection Service for casework and supportive services.

Sexual Abuse Victims by Race, Age and Gender (2000 - 2002)

	2000	2001	2002*
Total	15	17	29
Race			
Chinese	5	3	4
Malay	5	12	20
Indian	2	2	5
Others	3	0	0
Age			
<3 years	0	3	1
3-5 years	0	1	0
6-11 years	7	4	7
12-15 years	8	9	21
Gender			
Male	5	3	4
Female	10	14	25

* Since 2001, the Serious Sexual Crime Branch from the Criminal Investigation Department has been delivering talks to teachers and trainee teachers as part of the training workshops on Sexuality Education under the Growing Years series organised by the Ministry of Education. The talks cover legal issues relating to sexual crime as well as its trend, particularly those relating to Internet Relay Chat and the telephone chatline. This contributed to the increasing awareness of both students and teachers of the nature of sexual abuse. The overall increase in the number of sexual abuse victims in 2002 could be an indication of the success of the ongoing public education efforts by the Ministry of Education, as well as the Ministry of Community Development and Sports, in raising awareness in child protection.

c) The number of unaccompanied minors, asylum seeking and refugee children

There were no reported cases for the period between 2000 and 2002.

B. General Measures Of Implementation

1. In light of the Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Conference on Human Rights of 1993, please explain the reasons for the reservations and declarations to the Convention and provide information on any steps taken, or envisaged, to withdraw them.

Upon accession to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (“the Convention”), Singapore made 2 Declarations and entered 4 Reservations. Singapore takes her obligations and commitments in the Convention extremely seriously. Singapore has imposed very stringent criteria on herself in measuring and assessing her on-going efforts to implement the obligations in the Convention which she has committed to. The Singapore Government has reviewed her Declarations and Reservations to the Convention in good faith, and, for the reasons set out below, wishes to maintain them.

(i) Declaration in respect of a child’s rights as defined in the Convention, in particular, the rights defined in Articles 12 to 17 of the Convention

Upon accession, Singapore made the following Declaration:

The Republic of Singapore considers that a child’s rights as defined in the Convention, in particular the rights defined in article 12 to 17, shall in accordance with articles 3 and 5 be exercised with respect for the authority of parents, schools and other persons who are entrusted with the care of the child and in the best interests of the child and in accordance with the customs, values and religions of Singapore’s multi-racial and multi-religious society regarding the place of the child within and outside the family.

This declaration states Singapore’s position that the rights in Articles 12 to 17 of the Convention shall be exercised with respect for the authority of parents and those entrusted with the care and custody of the child and, taking into cognisance that Singapore is multi-racial and multi-religious in nature, should be read in accordance with Articles 3 and 5 of the Convention respectively.

(ii) Declaration in respect of Articles 19 and 37 of the Convention

Upon accession, Singapore made the following Declaration:

The Republic of Singapore considers that articles 19 and 37 of the Convention do not prohibit -

(a) the application of any prevailing measures prescribed by law for maintaining law and order in the Republic of Singapore;

(b) measures and restrictions which are prescribed by law and which are necessary in the interests of national security, public safety, public order, the protection of public health or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others; or

(c) the judicious application of corporal punishment in the best interest of the child.

Singapore subscribes to the concept of the family being responsible for raising children and having responsibilities in matters of discipline. Schools, having the welfare of the children in mind, are also permitted to take disciplinary action against errant students. Caning as a judicial sentence by the High Court and the Subordinate Courts (for males only) is only statutorily permitted for a short list of very serious

criminal offences which generally includes physical violence to the victims. Under the Children and Young Persons Act, it is expressly provided that notwithstanding the provisions of any other written law, no child (defined as a person who is below 14 years old) or young person (a person who is 14 years of age or above and below the age of 16 years) shall be sentenced by any court other than the High Court to corporal punishment. In the case of a youthful offender (defined as between 7 to 16 years old), caning shall be inflicted with a light rattan. In all circumstances, caning is imposed under medical supervision. A prisoner undergoing reformatory training or a young offender who is found guilty of an aggravated prison offence as stated in the Prisons Act may also be ordered to undergo corporal punishment as prescribed in the aforementioned Act. Accordingly, Singapore entered this declaration to clarify that these Articles do not prohibit the application of any measures prescribed by Singapore law for maintaining law and order.

(iii) Reservation in respect of the Convention vis-à-vis the Constitution of the Republic of Singapore

Upon accession, Singapore made the following Reservation:

The Constitution and the laws of the Republic of Singapore provide adequate protection and fundamental rights and liberties in the best interests of the child. The accession to the Convention by the Republic of Singapore does not imply the acceptance of obligations going beyond the limits prescribed by the Constitution of the Republic of Singapore nor the acceptance of any obligation to introduce any right beyond those prescribed under the Constitution.

Part IV of the Constitution of the Republic of Singapore enshrines certain fundamental liberties. Although the rights of the child are not specifically enshrined in the Constitution, the Constitution, together with the laws of Singapore, provide adequate protection and fundamental rights and liberties which are in the best interests of the child. The Reservation puts forth this point.

(iv) Reservation in respect of the Convention vis-à-vis the Immigration Legislation of the Republic of Singapore

Upon accession, Singapore made the following Reservation:

Singapore is geographically one of the smallest independent countries in the world and one of the most densely populated. The Republic of Singapore accordingly reserves the right to apply such legislation and conditions concerning the entry into, stay in and departure from the Republic of Singapore of those who do not or who no longer have the right under the laws of the Republic of Singapore, to enter and remain in the Republic of Singapore, and to the acquisition and possession of citizenship, as it may deem necessary from time to time and in accordance with the laws of the Republic of Singapore.

As Singapore is one of the smallest and most densely populated countries in the world, we have always asserted our right to determine our own immigration policy.

(v) Reservation in respect of Article 32 of the Convention

Upon accession, Singapore made the following Reservation:

The employment legislation of the Republic of Singapore prohibits the employment of children below 12 years old and gives special protection to working children between the ages of 12 years and below the age of 16 years. The Republic of Singapore reserves the right to apply article 32 subject to such employment legislation.

The Convention envisages protection in employment to be extended to a child up to 18 years of age²⁴. Singapore reserves the right to apply Article 32 of the Convention subject to Singapore's employment legislation that exists for children below 12 years old and below 16 years old²⁵.

(vi) Reservation in respect of Article 28.1(a) of the Convention

Upon accession, Singapore made the following Reservation:

With respect to article 28.1(a), the Republic of Singapore-
(a) does not consider itself bound by the requirement to make primary education compulsory because such a measure is unnecessary in our social context where in practice virtually all children attend primary school; and
(b) reserves the right to provide primary education free only to children who are citizens of Singapore.

When Singapore acceded to the Convention, although virtually all children attended primary school in Singapore, Singapore did not have a policy of compulsory primary education, hence the need for the reservation. There has been a recent change of policy. Primary education is now compulsory²⁶ and free for all children in Singapore who are Singapore citizens. The policy is not extended to children who are not Singapore citizens.

²⁴Definition of a "child" for the purposes of the CRC means "every human being below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier." (Article 1 of the CRC).

²⁵ Part VIII of the Employment Act (Chapter 91) and the Employment (Children and Young Persons) Regulations.

²⁶ Under the Compulsory Education Act (Chapter 51), "child of compulsory school age" means a child above the age of 6 years who has not yet attained the age of 15 years and who satisfies such conditions for receiving primary education as the Director-General may determine (section 2). A child of compulsory school age must attend compulsory primary education (section 3).

2. Please provide updated information on any new initiatives or mechanisms that have been established to co-ordinate policies for children.

Singapore set up an Inter-Ministry Committee on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (IMC-CRC) to implement and promote the CRC. The IMC-CRC also reports on and monitors the implementation of CRC principles. The IMC-CRC comprises representatives from various government agencies whose policies impact on children. The IMC-CRC plays a quasi-consultative role to ensure that the principles of the CRC are well-reflected in policies that affect our children.

Policies for children with respect to the different aspects of a child's life are integrated into the programmes of the different Ministries. For example, education policies for children come under the purview of the Ministry of Education, while those related to health come under the ambit of the Ministry of Health. This executive arrangement reflects Singapore's belief that the responsibility for policies for children lie with all the government agencies concerned. This promotes ownership of children's issues as they relate to the core missions of the respective Ministries.

At the working level, various committees, comprising members from different agencies, are formed to deliberate on areas of concern related to the rights of the child. Just like the IMC-CRC, these committees coordinate policies related to the respective areas of concern. An example of this is the Pre-School Qualification Accreditation Committee (PQAC). As the subject matter in this case is pre-school education, the co-ordinator in this instance is the Ministry of Education together with the Ministry of Community Development and Sports. Another example of the inter-agency coordination is the setting up of the Inter-Ministry Committee on Youth Crime which coordinates governmental and non-governmental efforts to address youth crime.

The government also works closely with the voluntary social sector and private sector in programmes and services for children and youths. This "Many Helping Hands" approach engages all levels of society to take ownership of and contribute to services for children. Agencies and professionals working with children are often invited to discuss issues related to children. They are represented in committees and work groups set up by the government to coordinate policies and programmes for children. They provide valuable feedback and ground information to the government in terms of matters concerning children.

3. Please explain processes for independent monitoring of the implementation of the Convention and possibilities for children to file individual complaints.

The composition of the IMC-CRC guarantees the effective coordination of activities among various governmental and non-governmental organisations. Whilst much has been done, Singapore recognises the need for continuous monitoring of the progress of implementation, either through independent or affiliated means. To that end, the IMC-CRC monitors the progress of implementation of the Convention on an ongoing basis.

The National Council of Social Service, which is the national umbrella body for voluntary welfare organisations, also conducts its independent monitoring of the implementation of the Convention through consultations with its members and other agencies and individuals.

Any child who has a complaint can approach his or her carer, teacher or family member. Children may also contact the IMC-CRC or the National Council of Social Service to register their complaints. In addition, children can complain or give feedback through various hotlines, service quality channels and websites. These include the Ministry of Community Development and Sports' enquiry hotline and e-mail; the National Youth Council's website and e-mail; and the Feedback Unit.

The Feedback Unit has also set up a Consultation Portal which is open to the public for discussion of various issues. A publicity statement illustrating the principle of the "Best Interests of the Child" has been posted on the consultation portal to raise awareness and facilitate discussion.

Other non-governmental channels also exist for children to voice their concerns. These include the Tinkle Friend Counselling Service; Child Protection and Welfare Service; Touch Youth hotline; and the Family Service Centre hotline.

4. Please provide information on existing systems for data collection regarding children's rights.

Mechanisms exist to systematically capture data related to children's issues and rights. At the national level, the Census of Population conducted by the Singapore Department of Statistics every ten years captures demographic data of the Singapore population, including children. These data provide indications on children's access to education, literacy, transport, religious practice, basic health and welfare. The General Household Survey, conducted at mid-Census years, provides information on the household situations of our children. Data collected by the Singapore Department of Statistics are available through publications and electronic means via the Singapore Statistics Website.

Besides these national data collection mechanisms, various government and voluntary agencies have their own data collection systems, capturing statistics to allow for more detailed analyses of children's issues under their purview. These statistics may comprise data arising from operational work or data gathered through surveys and interviews. For example, the Subordinate Courts publishes research bulletins related to cases seen at the Juvenile and Family Courts. The Ministry of Community Development and Sports collects and analyses data related to family well-being, youth perceptions and attitudes, child abuse, juvenile rehabilitation. The Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Health have data collection mechanisms for information related to children's rights as regards education, health and welfare, nationality, citizenship, youth crime, etc. Voluntary welfare organisations, such as the Singapore Children's Society and the Students Care Service, also conduct research studies on children's perceptions and values.

The National Youth Council serves as secretariat for the Youth Research Network, which is a central body overseeing youth research including those related to youth statistics. The National Council collates and publishes online up-to-date statistics and figures on current youth demographics and youth-related indicators and surveys. The State of the Youth report is published every two years and features information on youth in the area of health and welfare, education and literacy, religion and culture, volunteerism and interests, amongst other domains.

5. Please provide updated information on efforts to disseminate the Convention and the State party report.

As mentioned in the State Party Report, Singapore's accession to the Convention was publicised through the media to government agencies, non-governmental bodies as well as the general public. Systematic efforts were made to promote and create awareness about the Convention. Articles of the Convention were disseminated to government and non-governmental agencies. Various Ministries publicised the rights of children in relation to the areas under their purview. Dialogues were held with different organisations to discuss their views about the Convention.

Children and their families were also informed of the Convention through child-friendly materials which spell out the principles of the Convention, including videotapes, posters, place mats, booklets, etc. A 3-year partnership with Save the Children Singapore was initiated in 2002 to hold the Forum on the Best Interests of the Child. The Forum explores issues related to the Convention and invites discussions from organisations, professionals, parents and children.

To help organisations put the principles of the Convention into practice, a Statement on the Best Interests of the Child – Turning Principles into Practice, was created and publicised to organisations working with children. The Statement outlines child-centric practices in line with the Convention.

The State Party Report was disseminated to government and non-governmental agencies after it was published. It has also been featured in the Ministry of Community Development and Sports' website.

Part II

Please provide the Committee with copies of the text of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in all official languages of the State party as well as in other languages or dialects, when available. If possible, please submit these texts in electronic form.

A child-friendly postcard and booklet highlighting the principles and spirit of the Convention have been produced to create awareness among children and the public. The postcard spelling out the principles of the Best Interests of the Child has been translated into Chinese, Malay and Tamil, the official languages of Singapore. We are in the process of translating the booklet into the vernacular languages. We will also be translating the text of the Convention in the vernacular languages.

Soft copies of the translated texts of the postcard are attached as follows:

- a) English (Annex A)
- b) Chinese (Annex B)
- c) Malay (Annex C)
- d) Tamil (Annex D)

Part III

Under this section, the State party is to briefly (3 pages maximum) update the information provided in its report with regard to:

Introduction

1 The Government of Singapore is committed to maximising the potential of each and every child. Since the submission of its State Party Report in early 2002, Singapore has implemented numerous initiatives as part of its ongoing efforts to protect the best interests of the child. In tandem with this, the Government is mindful of its obligations as a state party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and is constantly reviewing its policies and programmes to align them with the spirit and purpose of the Convention.

2 New bills or enacted legislation

2.1 In 1990, the Code on Barrier-Free Accessibility in Buildings was introduced to require all new buildings, in particular the common areas, to be accessible to persons with disabilities. This Code was introduced with the intent of allowing persons with disabilities to be integrated fully into community life. The Code has since been revised in 1995 and 2002. The latest revisions included design guidelines for children with disabilities and families with young children, resulting in greater accessibility for all children in Singapore.

2.2 On 30 May 2002, Singapore ratified the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Equal Remuneration Convention 1951 which seeks to promote and ensure the application of the principle of equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value. Singapore also ratified the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention 1999 (ILO 182) on 14 June 2001.

3 New institutions

3.1 Whilst the Government encourages the use of the internet among its citizens to facilitate an enhanced accessibility to a wide genre of information, it also takes steps to ensure protection to children from harmful materials and influences. To this end, the National Internet Advisory Committee (NIAC), who advises the Media Development Authority on Internet policies, has set up a Cyber Wellness Task Force to look into ways to create a healthy Net culture among Singaporeans, particularly the young. These institutions provide guidance to young people and adults on using the internet safely.

4 Newly implemented policies

4.1 The Statement on Best Interests of the Child was launched in 2002. The adoption of a Statement on the protection of children's rights by Singapore stems from the recognition of the vulnerability of children, and the need to ensure their well-being through ethical principles of behaviour. The Statement is especially poignant in

resource-scarce Singapore, where children are regarded as valued members of the state's future development and success. The Statement was disseminated to all government and non-governmental agencies and professionals who work with children with the hope that these organisations and individuals will weave this credo into their respective agency's objectives, and more importantly, translate the principles of this statement into practice.

4.2 The National Standards for Protection of Children was launched at the Conference on Psychological/Emotional Maltreatment of Children on 27 February 2002. The standards outline the framework for the management of child protection and establishes a common understanding of the roles and responsibilities of various constituents of the child protection system in Singapore. The standards also guide child protection professionals in the discharge of their duties. With the standards, the public can appreciate how child protection services are carried out promptly and in the best interests of the child.

4.3 In June 2002, a best practice guide was launched by the Education Minister to ensure that special schools deliver quality therapy services to children. The guidelines were developed by the National Council of Social Service, in consultation with therapists from the special schools, to enhance standards of therapy services and maximise the potential of children with special needs.

4.4 In 2002, the Ministry of Education also increased the school subsidy for intellectually disabled children. With the new policy, state funding would be disbursed to intellectually disabled children from 4 years of age, lowered from 6 years of age previously. This move enables professional care and intervention to be carried out earlier for children with special needs, which would increase the likelihood of these children doing better in life and finding jobs in their adulthood. The subsidy given to a child with special needs, at S\$12,000 (US\$ 6,818.2) annually, is also about four times more than that for a normal child.

4.5 To enhance the level of foster care, the Ministry of Community Development and Sports launched a number of initiatives to support the fostering scheme in Dec 2002. These include an increase in the fostering allowance; the development of a manual on the fostering scheme and a handbook for the foster parents; the introduction of fostering co-ordinators; and an emergency after-office hours telephone hotline for foster parents. The initiatives help foster parents better understand the standards and the level of care expected from them. Increased support and training for foster parents helps to ensure that foster children are accorded special protection in alternative family care, and that the best interests of the foster child are not compromised.

4.6 In response to the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak in the region in 2003, policies and guidelines related to the containment of the disease were swiftly developed to minimise the risk of another outbreak. These policies and guidelines were put in place in childcare centres, schools, children's homes, juvenile residential institutions and all other facilities for children to ensure the safety of children and their families. Child-friendly materials were also disseminated to children to highlight precautionary and health measures for outbreak situations.

5 Newly implemented programmes and projects

5.1 To seek public consultation on how Singapore has translated the principles of the Convention into its practices, policies and programmes since its accession, a forum was jointly organised by the Ministry of Community Development and Sports and Save The Children Singapore in November 2002. About 320 participants, comprising professionals working with children, child rights advocates, parents and children and youths, attended the forum. Children and youths participated through a drama on their aspirations, as well as through youth representation during the plenary discussion. An open debate and lively discussion ensued, with the audience agreeing that Singapore has done well in the area of meeting the best interests of children. The participants appreciated the fact that there was a platform for a frank and open discussion on child rights.

5.2 In our ongoing efforts to publicise the Convention, the Ministry of Community Development and Sports commissioned a 30-minute play for primary school students in 2002 and 2003. Entitled "Just Like You", the play showed the students that they have fundamental rights, and that they can realise their dreams and aspirations. The scripting process involved child participation, with a focus group discussion with 11 year olds to find out what children of their age really want for themselves. The response for the play from both the students and teachers was overwhelming. For 2003 and 2004, an experiential drama programme related to the principles of Convention has been commissioned for secondary school students.

5.3 The National Library Board organises the annual Asian Children's Festival as part of their work to promote learning resources, programmes and products for the Asian child. The festival comprises innovative programmes that fuse literary arts with other art forms. For the Asian Children's Festival 2003, the National Library Board worked with children's book writers, illustrators, publishers, storytellers, puppeteers and child psychologists to create greater community awareness and support for the mental and physical health of the child.

5.4 The Ministry of Community Development and Sports supported the Children First! International Festival for Children in March 2003. Children First! is presented by a local drama company for children aged 2 to 12 years. The annual festival includes drama, dance, music, puppetry and outdoor theatre. The festival enhances the children's awareness of different cultures and global concerns such as world peace and environment conservation, whilst instilling values such as respect, courage and trust. This is in line with our vision for Singapore children to be world-oriented.

5.5 In 17 Jan 2003, the "Heritage On the Move" Bus was launched to encourage students to learn more about Singapore's heritage in a fun and innovative way. A public bus refitted with an interactive exhibition based on the myths and legends of Singapore, travels to schools and Community Development Councils to help children discover and enjoy their heritage through a range of workshops and activities.

5.6 In 2003, the Ministry of Community Development and Sports initiated the integrated childcare programme for children with special needs aged between 2 to 6 years old to maximise the development and potential of these children. This programme enables these children to learn and grow in a natural environment with their own peers and prepares them for a mainstream education. With the

Government's support, childcare centres set aside places for children with special needs.

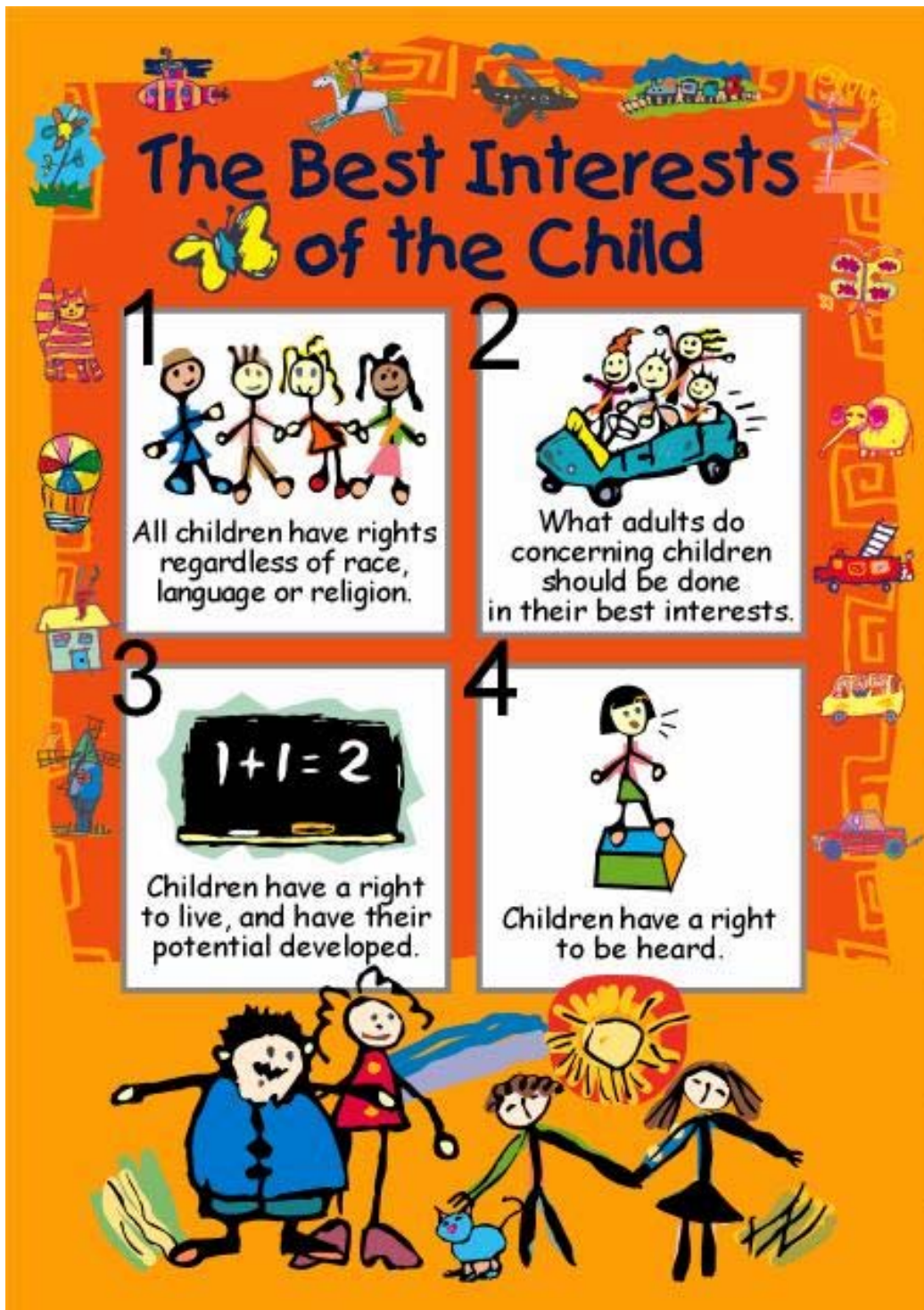
5.7 In 2002, the Prime Minister announced that a S\$10 million (US\$ 5.7 million) Education Trust Fund has been set up to assist Malay/Muslim families who cannot afford to send their children to pre-school, even after government subsidies. The fund will ensure that young children in disadvantaged families will have an opportunity to do well in school and enter the university. This fund aims to maximise the potential of the Malay/Muslim community so that the said community is well adjusted and well able to cope with the demands of a restructured Singapore economy and increased globalisation, and is part of the Government's efforts to ensure that the interests of the minority races in Singapore are being protected.

Conclusion

The profile of children in Singapore is changing, and their needs are changing in tandem. The Government is mindful that it needs to take concerted efforts to continually review current programmes and chart new strategies in youth development to stay relevant to the needs and aspirations of children. The following are some strategies which the Government will use to nurture its children and meet the vision for Singapore's children:

- (i) Raise quality of early childhood education;
- (ii) Ensure a safe, nurturing and conducive environment for children to develop;
- (iii) Nurture the values and dreams of our children and youth;
- (iv) Provide opportunities and support in the development of non-academic areas;
- (v) Create opportunities for global exposure; and
- (vi) Promote community involvement.


Attuned to the world heartbeat, yet anchored with strong emotional ties to the family and community at home in Singapore. This is Singapore's vision for her new generation of children and youth. Our programmes for children and young persons have been charted with the best interests of the child in mind. The Government is further committed to the continuous review of legislation, policies and programmes to ensure their relevance in our changing society.






Kepentingan Kanak-kanak

1




Setiap kanak-kanak mempunyai hak, tidak kira bangsa, bahasa ataupun agama.

2




Segala yang dilakukan oleh seorang dewasa yang melibatkan kanak-kanak haruslah dilakukan demi kepentingan mereka.

3




Kanak-kanak mempunyai hak untuk hidup dan menikmati pembangunan potensi mereka.

4



Kanak-kanak mempunyai hak untuk meluahkan perasaan mereka.



குழந்தைகளின் மிக உதும்மான நலத்திற்காக

1



அனைத்துக் குழந்தைகளுக்கும், அவர்கள் நத ஒரு இனம், மொழி, மதத்தை சார்ந்தவர்களாய் இருந்தாலும் அவர்களுக்கு 'ன்று உரிமைகள் உண்டு.

2



பெரியவர்கள் குழந்தைகளுக்காக எது செய்தாலும் அது குழந்தைகளின் நலத்திற்கு உகந்ததாய் இருக்க வேண்டும்.

3



குழந்தைகள், வாழவும், அவர்களின் திறமைகளை வளர்த்துக் கொள்ளவும் உரிமை உண்டு.

4



அவர்கள் சுறுவதை மற்றவர்களும் செவி கொடுத்துக் கேட்க வேண்டும், என்ற உரிமை குழந்தைகளுக்கும் உண்டு.

