



# Convention on the Rights of the Child

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## Committee on the Rights of the Child

### Fifty-sixth session

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## Replies of Singapore to the list of issues (CRC/C/SGP/Q/2-3) concerning additional and updated information related to its second and third periodic reports

### Introduction

1. Singapore's vision is for our children to enjoy quality health care and education, to have strong ties with their families and community, to be protected from harm, and to help them to fulfil their best potential. To achieve these outcomes, the government of Singapore invests a considerable amount of resources in promoting and safeguarding the interests, welfare and well-being of our children, through appropriate legislative and administrative measures, policies and strategies in the areas of health, education, social support, recreation and culture.

2. Children in Singapore enjoy a high quality of health care. In 2009, the infant mortality rate was 2.2 per 1,000 live births, compared to 26.3 per 1,000 live births in 1965. In UNICEF's report on "The State of The World's Children 2010", Singapore has one of the lowest under-5 mortality rates in the world, together with countries such as Finland, Iceland and Sweden. This significant improvement is attributable to improvements in obstetric care, and advances in medical care, especially in newborn care in Singapore. Over 9 in 10 of Singapore children are immunised against Tuberculosis, Diphtheria, Poliomyelitis, Hepatitis B, and Measles, Mumps and Rubella.<sup>1</sup>

3. In the area of education, our overall literacy rate is 96%. More than 92% of each primary school cohort complete primary education and go on to secondary and post-secondary education. Singapore provides diverse educational pathways to recognise different talents. We have set up specialised schools catering to different talents and needs of students. The Singapore Sports School, the School of the Arts, Vocational Institutes and Special Schools are some examples.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the Ministry of Health's (MOH) 2009 Health Statistics, 99% of Singapore children aged 2 years are immunised against Tuberculosis, 97% are immunised against Diphtheria, 97% are immunised against Poliomyelitis, 96% are immunised against Hepatitis B, 95% are immunised against Measles and 95% of children aged 7 years are immunised against Measles, Mumps and Rubella.

4. Singapore students have consistently fared very well in international benchmarking studies and competitions. In the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2009 conducted under the auspices of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Singapore students ranked fifth in Reading, second in Mathematics and fourth in Science, out of 65 countries and economies that took part in the Programme. Singapore also had the second highest proportion (12.3%) of students who are top performers in all three domains for Reading, Mathematics and Science. OECD highlighted Singapore as a high performing education system with features that other systems could learn from.

5. Singapore has been ranked as the best Asian City for quality of life in international surveys.<sup>2</sup> These surveys consider factors such as infrastructure, political and social environments, and access to medical care. We will continue our efforts to ensure that the needs of our children are looked after through regular review and improvement of our programmes, initiatives and services to ensure that these remain relevant to the changing needs of our children and are in line with our obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

## **Part I**

### **Reply to the issues raised in Part I, paragraph 1, of the list of issues (CRC/C/SGP/Q/2-3)**

6. The Children and Young Persons (Amendment) Bill (2010) was read in Parliament for the first time in November 2010 and will be read a second time in Parliament in January 2011, before it may be enacted into law.

7. In reviewing the Children and Young Persons Act (CYPA), which is the key legislation that provides for the welfare, protection and rehabilitation of children and young persons, the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS) held several discussions with relevant stakeholders to discuss the proposed changes. These include Government and Non-Government agencies involved in the care of children, the Courts, law academics, the Singapore Law Society and current members appointed to the various boards under the CYPA (for example, from the panel of advisors to the Juvenile Court). There was also a round of public consultation where the draft amendment bill was placed on the government consultation portal for members of the public to provide feedback.

8. The key changes covered in the Amendment Bill are:

- The inclusion of guiding principles: Firstly, that the parents or guardian of a child or young person have the primary responsibility for the care and welfare of the child or young person, and should discharge their responsibilities to promote the welfare of the child or young person. This principle underlies our continued efforts in engaging and working with families to enable them to protect and care for their young. The second principle states that in the administration and application of the Act, the welfare and best interest of the child or young person shall be the first and paramount consideration;
- Licensing of homes for children and young persons that provide residential care for children and young persons who are in need of care, protection or rehabilitation. This is in

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<sup>2</sup> Mercer's Quality of Living Survey 2010 and the Economist Intelligence Unit's Quality-of-Life Index 2009.

recognition that children in residential care are a vulnerable group, and their safety and well-being is of paramount concern;

- Addressing the safety, quality of care and the long term needs of children and young persons in residential care by including a requirement for all children in residential care to be reviewed by an independent Review Board;

- Enhancing the protection and privacy of the child or young person, through allowing the court to exempt the child or young person from having to attend court proceedings for child protection cases. This would help prevent instances where repeated appearances or facing the perpetrator in court may cause further trauma to the child or young person. Another new provision prohibits the publication or broadcast of information that may identify a child or young person that has been the subject of an investigation under the CYPA. This protects the privacy of the child or young person even prior to court proceedings.

9. In view that the changes in the CYPA will impact the residential care sector, MCYS has embarked on master planning for the residential care sector for the next ten years. Over 300 persons, including the management, staff and board members of the Homes, were involved in several dialogue sessions to identify a shared vision and mission for the residential care sector and new strategies to improve service standards. In the process, MCYS also consulted with the children in the Homes to hear from them what are their aspirations and hopes, and how the adults involved in their care could help them to achieve their goals. The voices of the children formed a very important context to the planning efforts of the MCYS and the residential care sector in coming up with the Children and Young Persons Homes Masterplan.

### **Reply to the issues raised in Part I, paragraph 2, of the list of issues .**

10. Since its formation in 1996, the Inter-Ministry Committee on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (IMC-CRC) remains the key platform for the coordination and monitoring of Singapore's implementation of the CRC. The IMC-CRC has proven useful in contributing to the continuity and consistency in Singapore's efforts to uphold the welfare and rights of children in Singapore.

11. The IMC-CRC is actively involved in reviewing Singapore's progress under the CRC. For example, the IMC has taken ownership of and directed efforts to ratify the Optional Protocol on the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, and has been studying the Optional Protocol on the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of the Child, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.

12. The Singapore Government is aware that issues pertaining to children and their families cut across the domains of the various government agencies. Hence, apart from the IMC-CRC, the Singapore Government works on a whole of government approach in dealing with on-going as well as emerging areas of work concerning children and families.

13. National level planning and co-ordination takes place within the different domains such as child health, education and child protection and rehabilitation. This allows for effective responses in specialised areas that are under the purview of the various agencies. Where necessary, the creation of structures for such co-ordination efforts is supported. Some of the key workgroups formed in the last three years to address specific issues include:

#### **Inter-Ministry Committee on Dysfunctional Families (IMC-DF)**

14. As mentioned in Singapore's Second and Third Periodic Report, the IMC-DF had concluded its review in 2008. In deliberating new policies, the IMC-DF had placed

emphasis on children, in an effort to avert the inter-generational effects of dysfunctional families and to give children from at-risk families a chance to do better in life. The recommendations from the IMC's report are currently being implemented. These include introducing intensive case management for dysfunctional families who have multiple needs to improve functioning of at-risk children as they develop towards adulthood; strengthening mentoring programmes for at-risk youth and strengthening psychological and casework support to children in residential care.

#### **Central Youth Guidance Office**

15. In July 2010, the Central Youth Guidance Office (CYGO) was established, comprising staff from MCYS, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and the Ministry of Education (MOE). CYGO looks into early intervention strategies to prevent youth at-risk, between 12 to 21 years old, from committing offences. The work of the Office is part of a wider continuum of initiatives to help dysfunctional families by focusing on youth guidance and early intervention. As the central co-ordinating agency, the Office will have a macro view of the offending spectrum and would focus its efforts on addressing the present systemic gaps.

#### **Children and Young Persons Homes Masterplan**

16. As elaborated under Question 1.

#### **Child Protection Service Review**

17. In June 2010, as part of ongoing efforts to enhance the child protection system in Singapore, MCYS undertook a review of the Child Protection Service to assess the effectiveness of current child protection processes and interventions, training and support, resource allocation and inter agency collaborations. Two overseas consultants were appointed for this review, which will also propose development plans and resources needed for a robust child protection system. Preliminary findings reaffirm the need for closer collaboration and coordination between the Child Protection Service and other government and community agencies. MCYS is also evaluating the need to develop more specialised services for children who have been abused. The review will be completed by March 2011.

#### **Child Care Masterplan**

18. MCYS has developed a Child Care Masterplan which outlines specific strategies and programmes to enhance the accessibility, affordability and quality of child care centres. The details are elaborated in Question 7.

#### **Pre-school Education Review and Educord**

19. The Education, Community Development & Sports Coordinating Committee (Educord), co-chaired by the Permanent Secretaries of MOE and MCYS, oversees the alignment and coordination efforts in pre-school education, and any other matters of interest. Both ministries have collaborated closely to ensure alignment in key policy areas in the pre-school sector, including a common set of minimum teacher qualifications and common standards of teacher training. More recently, a Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework has been rolled out for use by both kindergartens and childcare centres to assess their centres' standards in key areas like leadership, staff management, resources, curriculum and pedagogy. MOE and MCYS also work closely together on outreach efforts to ensure that holistic support and financial assistance is extended to children from families that face multi-faceted complex social problems.

20. The collective work of agencies represented at various working level and ministerial level committees reflect Singapore's commitment to children and to implementation of the Convention. To further the protection of our children, Singapore is considering harmonising

the work of the various inter-agency workgroups on children and families in a national plan of action for children.

### **Reply to the issues raised in Part I, paragraph 3, of the list of issues .**

21. Mechanisms exist to systematically capture data related to children's issues and well being. At the national level, the Census of Population conducted every ten years by the Singapore Department of Statistics captures socio-demographic data of the Singapore population, including children. Singapore has just completed its 2010 Census and is in the process of preparing the report. Figures on key demographic trends in population size, growth, demographic profile and broad geographic distribution of the Singapore population were released as of end June 2010. The General Household Survey, conducted at mid-Census years, provides similar information on children. Statistical reports and indicators are available at the Statistics Singapore website ([www.singstat.gov.sg](http://www.singstat.gov.sg)).

22. Besides the Population Census and General Household Survey, indicators pertaining to education, health and welfare, nationality, citizenship, youth crime are also available from other government and non government sources. Examples of indicators on children that are available annually include enrolment ratios compiled by the Ministry of Education (MOE), infant mortality rate compiled by the Immigration and Checkpoint Authority (ICA) and the proportion of children who have received selected vaccinations compiled by the Ministry of Health (MOH). MCYS collects and analyses data related to family well-being, youth perceptions and attitudes, child abuse and the rehabilitation of juvenile offenders.

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

### **Reply to the issues raised in Part I, paragraph 4, of the list of issues .**

24. The Singapore Government strongly believes in the "many-helping hands" approach and works closely with the private and people sector in implementing policies, programmes and services for children. This includes NGOs, the National Council of Social Services (NCSS), which is the umbrella body for NGOs in Singapore, partnerships with organisations such as the National Family Council, and think tanks such as the Institute of Policy Studies.

25. There are mechanisms in place for the Government to consult the public on policies, proposed legislative changes and other issues that concern children and their families. Members of the public and key stakeholders are invited to public consultations on proposed amendments to laws or introduction of new Bills before being passed by Parliament.

26. MCYS also works closely with academics from local and regional universities in research, development and evaluation of programmes for children and families. The Family Research Network was launched in 2008 as a network of academics, researchers and policy-makers to engage in regular discussions on family research, with the aim of informing policies and practices. Some of the areas the Network has addressed include child and youth development and delinquency prevention, and research and policies on child development and resilience. The Network also funds research that promotes the understanding of trends and issues affecting Singapore families.

27. Non-governmental organisations such as the Singapore Children's Society (SCS) also play an independent role in monitoring and critiquing the work of government agencies for the welfare of children. SCS conducts independent research on children in Singapore, such as SCS's research on children's social and emotional well-being in Singapore released in 2008, which seeks to inform on the state of children in Singapore.

28. The IMC-CRC has also sought feedback on the programmes and services that are in place for children so as to better assess and, where appropriate, improve on our efforts at implementing the provisions of the Convention. The UNCRC Consultation Forum which was held on 2 July 2008 was attended by over 250 policymakers, social service professionals, educators, academics, child delegates and representatives from the UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office. Another forum is being planned for early January 2011. About 300 participants, including child participants, are expected to attend.

29. At the regional level, Singapore has appointed a representative for children to the ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC). The ACWC was recently inaugurated in April 2010 to encourage regional co-operation in promoting and protecting the rights of women and children, and to promote their well-being, development, empowerment and participation in society.

30. Singapore continues to engage NGOs, both locally and regionally, in sharing best practices and efforts to promote the rights of children and the implementation of the Convention.

### **Reply to the issues raised in Part I, paragraph 5, of the list of issues .**

31. Age of criminal responsibility: The age of criminal responsibility in Singapore is currently at 7 years (section 82 of Singapore's Penal Code). The law also provides that nothing is an offence which is done by a child above the age of 7 and under 12 who has not attained sufficient maturity of understanding to judge the nature and consequence of his conduct (section 83 of the Penal Code).

32. As Singapore's juvenile justice system is a strongly restorative one, the current age of criminal responsibility allows for early intervention to prevent young children from progressing into delinquent or even criminal behaviour. It also serves the aim of deterring the use of young children by adults in criminal activities. In cases where young children exhibit offending behaviour, Singapore has ensured that there are systematic and appropriate responses to these children and their families. Singapore recognises that when a very young child presents with offending behaviour, there are other factors or child protection concerns that need to be addressed and the child should not be labelled as a delinquent.

33. In 2009, there were 71 cases of children between 7 and 10 years old who were involved in offending behaviour. None of them were charged and these cases were referred to diversionary programmes and other assistance.

34. There are safeguards to ensure appropriate treatment of offenders of different ages and mental capabilities. Court diversionary measures are also in place to re-direct first-time young offenders who commit minor crimes into voluntary rehabilitation programmes. The restorative approach of our system allows for juveniles to be rehabilitated using a broad range of community and residential-based measures depending on the needs and risks of each juvenile.

### **Minimum age of employment**

35. The Employment Act was amended in 2004 to raise the minimum age for children to engage in light work from 12 to 13 years. Singapore is fully compliant with the International Labour conventions on minimum age of employment and child labour. While children above the age of 13 years and below the age of 16 years may work, there are restrictions on the type of work and maximum hours they may be employed. They are not allowed to be employed in any industrial undertaking or any vessel. Labour inspections are carried out to enforce the compliance of the Employment Act. In 2009, 327 inspections were carried out and no cases of infringement were found. The penalty for employing a child without protection is a fine not exceeding S\$5,000 or to imprisonment not exceeding 6 months or to both, and for a second or subsequent offence to a fine not exceeding S\$10,000 or to imprisonment not exceeding 2 years.

36. In Singapore, majority of those aged between 13 years and 18 years are engaged in schools or vocational training. It is not uncommon for students in Singapore to take on part time or short term work during school holidays to garner work experience or to earn extra pocket money.

37. A small proportion of those aged 16 to 17 years are engaged in full time work. In June 2009, 2.6% (2,900 persons) of the resident population aged 16 and 17 were employed. Of these, 77% (2,200 persons) were employed in part-time jobs. All of them were employed either in retail trade or restaurants.

### **Extension of the CYPA to cover all persons under the age of 18**

38. In the process of reviewing the CYPA, Singapore had considered whether to extend the CYPA to cover all persons under the age of 18. Considerations were the existing laws in conjunction with the CYPA that protect those above 16 years of age, as well as the programmes and services available for those above 16 years of age.

39. The CYPA recognises the vulnerability of children below the age of 16 years and provides the statutory powers to intervene when they are in need of care, protection or rehabilitation. While the CYPA currently defines the child and a person below the age of 14 years and a young person as a person above 14 years and below 16 years of age, in practice the care and rehabilitation of young persons may extend for longer. For example, the court may make an order with regard to a person below 16 years that may provide for the protection or rehabilitation of the CYP for a period that extends beyond the person turning 16 years of age.

40. In the Children and Young Persons (Amendment) Bill currently before Parliament, it is proposed that in cases where the person is above 16 years and a care and protection or rehabilitation order is in force, the court may vary the order to change the conditions of the order. This amendment also enshrines in legislation our current practice of reviewing the care and rehabilitation plans for the individual, even after they are above 16 years of age, and where necessary, taking court action to ensure these plans are adjusted accordingly to meet their needs.

41. For offenders above the age of 16 years, there are in place a range of rehabilitation options. The Probation of Offenders Act provides that youth offenders above 16 years of age who are first time offenders may also be placed on probation, which is a community based rehabilitation option. Since 2006, the Community Court has dealt with offenders aged between 16 to 21 years. It adopts an approach that combines deterrence, restorative justice and rehabilitation. The new community based sentencing options that have been provided for through the amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code in June 2010 will also provide more rehabilitation options for the Community Court. These are further elaborated under updates on new bills, laws and regulations in Part II of this document.

42. In addition, girls who may be trained or used for immoral purposes are protected by the Women's Charter up to 21 years old. The amended Penal Code also provides greater coverage for protection against exploitation for commercial sex offences and these provisions cover all persons regardless of gender who are below 18 years of age.

43. Singapore is satisfied that the current legislative provisions and the planning and implementation of programmes and services for persons between 16 and 18 years of age, are adequate. We will continue to review our position as part of our ongoing efforts to ensure that our legislation, policies and practices protect children comprehensively.

### **Reply to the issues raised in Part I, paragraph 6, of the list of issues .**

44. All Singapore citizens, including those under the age of 18, are guaranteed the right to freedom of speech and expression, the right to assemble peaceably and without arms, and the right to form associations under the Singapore Constitution. These rights are, however, subject to certain prescribed categories of limitations, permitted by the Constitution that must be imposed by Parliament through law. Restrictions on the rights guaranteed by article 15, paragraph 1 of the Convention are envisaged in article 15, paragraph 2.

45. Singapore's laws recognise that all persons have the competency to give testimony in court. There are special protections for child witnesses below 16 years of age who, with leave of court, may give evidence through a live video or live television link in any trial, inquiry, appeal or other proceedings. A vulnerable witness protection programme is also available to provide emotional support to child witnesses during court proceedings.

46. In particular, the CYPA requires that the court consider the welfare of the child brought before the court, whether the child is a victim in need of protection or one who is in conflict with the law. The court directs welfare officers appointed under the CYPA to prepare a social report which takes into account information that may enable the court to deal with the case in the best interest of the child. In preparing the social report, there are protocols in place to ensure that officers have sought the views of the child and the family. Where there are concerns that the views of the child and the family have not been adequately addressed, the judge may redirect officers to address these issues. The judge may also speak to the child or young person involved to ascertain the wishes of the child.

47. MCYS has also worked to put in place practices that allow for the views of the child to be heard in child protection work. One such practice is the use of Family Group Conferencing, (FGC), an empowering and restorative model of working with families which enables families to take the lead in deciding what needs to be done to ensure that children are safe and well cared for. This model has been used with child protection cases since 2005. In 2007, MCYS conducted training on the use of FGC for seven Children and Young Persons Homes. Plans to publish a book on FGC practice in Singapore are in progress.

48. With the Women's Charter (Amendment) Bill, there are proposals to mandate couples who have children and who intend to divorce to attend mediation and/or counselling (in appropriate cases where the court considers that it is in the interests of the parties and the children, the court may order that the parties attend with their children). Counselling and mediation are intended to address child related issues, as well as for the parties to attempt to come to an agreement on what is in the best interests of the children. When in place, this proposal will work in hand with the CHILD (Children's Best Interest, Less Adversarial) programme initiated by the Family Court in 2008, which provides for the resolution of custody disputes to focus on the needs of the child. These initiatives continue



to ensure that the child's views and wishes are considered in dealing with divorce and custody issues.

49. Currently, the views of children are sought through trained counsellors in the Family Court in the course of their preparation of reports such as Custody/Access Evaluation Reports. Views may also be sought through mental health professionals from external agencies (e.g. Family Service Centres or Child Guidance Clinic) who may be tasked to put up reports for high conflict cases. In addition, judges may also interview the children directly, where appropriate.

50. Children and youth in Singapore are encouraged to share their views and aspirations. The Government has actively followed up on their suggestions for spaces and platforms to allow for avenues whereby children and youth may express their views. \*Scape, a 1.2 ha youth space housed in the heart of Singapore's shopping district, was launched in June 2010. \*Scape offers facilities for various youth community, recreational and cultural activities such as performances, carnivals, exhibitions and youth outreach activities. YouthInk, a weekly column in the Straits Times, a major newspaper in Singapore with a national audience, was launched in January 2005 to allow young writers to contribute their thoughts on issues concerning them. These had been suggestions raised by youth in a national youth consultation exercise held in 2004.

51. Regular dialogue sessions with the Prime Minister and the Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports are organised by the National Youth Council to provide youth a platform to share their views on social and national issues. Efforts have also been made to engage children and youth online. In 2009, an online forum was created for youth to share their views prior to the Ministerial Dialogue. The recently revamped Youth.SG (a web portal that seeks to engage Singaporean youths in the community) now allows youth to express their views and opinions instantly and directly on the website, in the form of article commentaries and forum discussions.

52. Youth have also participated in various forums that promote youth dialogue such as the ASEAN+3 Youth Caucus in June 2009, the APEC Voices of the Future in November 2009, the 6th UNESCO Youth Forum in October 2009 and the UNESCO Asian Youth Forum in July 2009 and September 2010, and the first ASEAN Children's Forum in October 2010.

### **Reply to the issues raised in Part I, paragraph 7, of the list of issues .**

53. The Singapore Government, in partnership with the community, aims to create a family friendly environment that is conducive for the upbringing of children, to promote the importance of families and to bolster the family's capacity to care for and nurture its members.

#### **Assistance for parents in their child-rearing responsibilities**

54. The Singapore Government provides a comprehensive array of assistance and benefits to support parents in their child-rearing responsibilities. This includes provision and subsidies of childcare services, cash and tax benefits after child birth and work-life support. Childcare services and facilities are widely available to support working parents and also to cater to young children's need for social, emotional, intellectual and physical development. As at September 2010, there were 849 childcare centres providing over 75,000 places. This caters to 38% of the cohort aged 18 months to less than 7 years. Children less than age 18 months can be placed under infant care programmes. As part of the Child Care Masterplan, 200 new child care centres will be built by 2013 to ensure that there is one child care centre within 300 km of a child's residence in public housing estates.

55. To raise the quality of the services provided, the minimum qualifications for child care and kindergarten teachers have been raised and scholarships introduced for early childhood professionals. Childcare centres will also adopt an integrated curriculum framework and introduce a teacher-child ratio to ensure that there are adequate trained teachers in childcare centres.

56. To make these services affordable to parents, Singapore has doubled the subsidies for infant and child care since 2008. To assist children from low-income families to attend childcare and pre-school, a range of financial assistance schemes has been developed. With these subsidies, families with low-income and disadvantaged/at-risk children, pay nominal fees for child care services.

#### **Parent Education Programmes**

57. The Singapore Government recognises that parents play a critical role in the development of their children. Positive and effective parenting helps children grow up happy, healthy and well adjusted. Consequently, parents must possess the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of their growing child. MCYS works closely with a network of partners including the community organisations, schools and employers to deliver a variety of parenting programmes and resources, including:

58. Parent Education in Pre-School (PEPS) and School Family Education (SFE), school-based programmes offering a continuum of parenting and family life education programmes. The programmes have expanded over the years to now include 453 pre-schools and 222 primary and secondary schools respectively. Schools on these programmes are given funding support to organise talks, provide family life education resources or set up a family life centre or corner within their schools.

59. Workplace talks and public seminars such as the 'Singapore Parenting Congress' that aim to enhance parent-child communications and relationships.

60. Interactive workshops/talks in the community to equip parents with practical parenting tips and tools

61. Singapore has also launched a 'Dads for Life' national movement to inspire and involve fathers to be good influencers in their children's lives for life. Driven by a community-led Fathers Action Network, several studies were completed that sought to understand the state of fatherhood in Singapore. In November 2010, the "Me and My Dad – Fatherhood through the Eyes of Children" survey findings was released, capturing the voices of children articulating what fathers did that made them happy and sad, and their hopes for all fathers.

62. The Dads for Life website, launched in April 2010, ([www.dadsforlife.sg](http://www.dadsforlife.sg)) serves as a one-stop resource point for fatherhood research, tips and stories as well as the latest developments and events under the movement's calendar. Along with key events, Dads for Life has also released various newspaper supplements in time for school holidays to encourage fathers to spend quality time with their children during their school break. To encourage fathers' involvement in schools, the Fathers@Schools programme was developed, offering schools S\$2,000 annually to organise father-child activities and/or father-focussed training to equip fathers with the skills to play more active roles in their children's lives.

63. In the area of training, the Dads for Life Conference (May 2010) and the Fatherhood Research Conference (June 2010) were organised to equip the general public, as well as researchers and practitioners, with knowledge on fatherhood in various contexts.

64. The Businesses for Families Council, a people-sector-led Council, aims to make Singapore a country of choice for families by encouraging businesses to be family-friendly

through services and infrastructure that cater to families. The Council, supported by the government was set up in June 2009. Some of its programmes include:

Businesses for Families Grant (S\$2 million fund) given to businesses to assist them to adopt and implement business practices that welcome families;

Businesses for Families Pledge, a sign of commitment from businesses that they will undertake efforts to make their businesses welcome families; and

Businesses for Families Mark, a national accreditation programme which gives further impetus for businesses to go the extra mile to cater to families.

### **Children Beyond Parental Control**

65. Children beyond parental control (BPC) refer to those children below 16 years of age and who may have serious behavioral problems in school or at home. The court, upon the parents' application, may make an order of supervision of for a residential stay for such cases.

66. The main aim of the BPC programme is to intervene early to help the parents to cope with the behavioral issues of their children, teach them effective parenting skills and also to prevent the child from spiraling further into offending behavior and entering the juvenile justice system. In some cases, where serious and persistent conflict between the child and family has caused the child emotional harm, child protection concerns may be raised, and the case referred instead to child protection services.

67. MCYS works closely with the Singapore Children's Society to ensure that where possible, cases are diverted from the court. These measures include:

- Pre-Complaint Screening – A screening process whereby the complainant (the parent or guardian) is heard. This takes place when parents come to court with the intention of making a BPC application. Opportunity is given for grievances to be aired between the parents and the child. The parents and their children will be referred for help through community agencies such as a Family Service Centres.

- Pre-Complaint Counselling – If the parents still decide to go ahead with a BPC application, the parents and child undergo 4 to 8 sessions of mediation and counselling with the aim of dealing with the situation in an amicable way.

- BeaconWorks – Parents and children who voluntarily admit themselves to this diversionary programme will undergo 6-months of counselling and case work which focus on the child's parents and other family expectations and needs.

68. If the situation improves after the diversionary programmes, parents can avoid filing a BPC case with the court.

69. For BPC cases, a supervision order would be the preferred option over residential care, unless the child has been assessed to be at high risk of offending or harming themselves or there is serious conflict in the family that may place the child in danger of harm. With the proposed amendments to the CYPA, the minimum length of a residential stay under a BPC order will also be removed. Previously, the length of stay was between 2 to 3 years. This will allow for greater flexibility for the court to order shorter terms of residential stay, depending on the needs of the child.

70. Review processes are in place for BPC cases. The court may, on the application of the parent of MCYS, vary or discharge the order if it is satisfied that it is in the best interest of the child to do so. BPC cases in residential care will also be reviewed by the new Review Board that will be appointed under the amended CYPA. This ensures the independent review of these cases, including decisions on the discharge and reintegration plans for BPC cases.

**Reply to the issues raised in Part I, paragraph 8, of the list of issues .**

71. The Singapore Government takes violence against children and families seriously. There are laws in place to protect children and other family members from violence and various forms of abuse in the CYPA, Penal Code and Women's Charter.

72. As highlighted in its second and third periodic report (CRC/C/SGP/2-3), the key platform for the management of family violence in Singapore is the Family Violence Dialogue Group (FVDG), established in 2001. The Group is headed jointly by MCYS and the Singapore Police Force. The dialogue group comprises the Courts, the Prisons, Ministry of Health (MOH), Ministry of Education (MOE), Chairpersons of Regional Family Violence Working Groups, the National Council of Social Service, and social service agencies. The role of the Dialogue Group is to facilitate work processes amongst the agencies, coordinating public education efforts and developing new areas for collaboration on family violence. At the operational level, the National Family Violence Networking System was established in 1996 to provide a network of support and assistance, linking the Police, Prisons, hospitals, Family Service Centres, the Courts and MCYS.

73. The FVDG has worked to ensure a common understanding of how to assist family violence cases is established among agencies. In 2009, the FVDG reviewed the manual for inter-agency management of family violence and included new initiatives for more proactive and coordinated approach in family violence intervention work. These include:

- The identification of high-risk family violence cases by the Community Court;
- Alerting the victims of family violence before the perpetrators are released from jail. Agencies will work closely to facilitate the set-up of a community safety net for the victims;
- Conducting the mandatory counselling programme in the prisons for offenders who were issued with a mandatory counselling order, to ensure the continuity of the rehabilitation programme.

74. In general, the Homes run by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are dissuaded from using corporal punishment and most have moved away from the use of such disciplinary methods. To ensure that residential care workers understand the philosophy and approach in providing care for children and young persons, MCYS, together with National Council of Social Services' Social Service Training Institute, has developed the Certificate Course in Residential Care for Children and Young Persons. The course is targeted at residential care staff with two years of experience or less.

75. In addition, MCYS works with the Homes to help them develop clear procedures on the management of residents in their care, including how discipline and behavior management will be carried out. Such procedures will also be subject to inspection under the licensing framework for Homes, when the amendments to the CYPA come into force.

76. For offenders undergoing rehabilitation in the Juvenile Homes or in institutions, corporal punishment may be used as a form of punishment in instances of serious misconduct and only as a last resort. Corporal punishment in institutions is subject to regulations and procedures to ensure checks and balances are in place. The use of harsh or degrading methods of punishment is prohibited. (Please refer to Question 14 for further elaboration on the regulation of corporal punishment in institutions)

77. In schools, maintaining discipline and order is an integral and crucial aspect of education. Schools develop safe, secure and nurturing environment in which their students can learn and to interact with one another. School leaders work with teachers and para-educators in a whole school, multi-pronged approach, which incorporates both preventive and corrective measures. The inculcation of moral and civic values and the teaching of social and emotional competencies provide students with the internal compass to guide

their daily behaviours and interactions with teachers and peers. When students commit offences or breach school rules, the goal of any school action is to help the students understand why they are wrong, the consequences on themselves and others of their actions, the need to take responsibility for their own actions, and the corrective actions that need to be taken to lend closure to the matter.

78. With the aim of correcting the behaviour of the individual offender, punishment may also be imposed for an offence. Punishment is not used to set an example to the rest of the school, as we recognise that severe punishment, thoughtlessly and unduly inflicted, can be damaging, especially in the case of an emotionally-sensitive child. The ultimate aim is to elicit a change in the student's behaviour to one that is socially acceptable. Discipline is an educative process and the goal is to instill self-discipline in the student. In place of imposing punishment on students, schools also help them understand the logical consequences of their actions and help understand what it means to take responsibilities for their actions. Where necessary, schools will impose severe disciplinary measures, including corporal punishment and suspension, to be implemented under clearly defined procedures, and only where other pastoral measures have been tried and have failed.

79. Corporal punishment in schools is subject to regulations which permit corporal punishment only in the form of caning, administered with a light cane and on male pupils only. MOE guidelines specify that corporal punishment should not be carried out in anger and should be done with a light cane. Parents are to be informed by the school of the details of the offence and punishment meted out. If they are of the view that the punishment has been excessive, they can report the matter to MOE, which will look into their complaints and take the appropriate action against errant school personnel.

80. MOE treats bullying seriously. Our schools are provided with guidelines to manage discipline and eradicate bullying in schools. Within these guidelines, each school formulates its own specific set of rules and measures, taking into account its student profile, so as to ensure a safe school environment for all students.

81. Schools have programmes to raise students' awareness of bullying and to equip students with the knowledge and skills to handle such challenging situations, e.g. help-seeking, self-management, relationship management and responsible decision-making. A 'School Bullying Management Kit' has also been developed by MOE for schools' use. This kit further enhances the school administrators' knowledge of what bullying is, how they can reach out to and assist students who have been bullied and how teachers can help students to respond positively to bullying.

82. To manage bullying and prevent offenders from re-offending, schools use a combination of counselling, mediation and disciplinary measures to educate and correct offenders. We acknowledge that instilling good discipline in our young is a shared responsibility amongst parents, schools and the community. MOE works closely with parents and the community to help our schools better identify potential problems and nip them in the bud.

### **Reply to the issues raised in Part I, paragraph 9, of the list of issues.**

83. A multipronged, multi-agency approach is needed to ensure that appropriate medical care, education and social support is available for children with special needs. Early identification and intervention are pivotal to the prognosis of the child with special needs as these are crucial years for the child's development intellectually, socially and emotionally.

84. The Ministry of Health (MOH) oversees nation-wide neonatal screening programmes where all neonates are screened physically for overt physical and developmental abnormalities. Childhood developmental screening is provided by primary

care doctors, as well as paediatricians. Parents of every newborn receive a standardised health booklet with important information on developmental milestones in the child's development. Information in the health booklet also allows children to be screened by preschool teachers while they are at infant care centres, child care centres, nurseries and kindergartens. There are referral channels for a comprehensive developmental assessment, should it be necessary for further assessment of the child.

85. MOH also runs a comprehensive Child Development Programme (CDP) through two tertiary hospitals with specialised child development units. CDP is targeted at children from birth to 6 years of age with behavioural and developmental problems. It aims to support and prepare children with developmental disabilities to achieve their full potential in the appropriate educational stream.

86. The Ministry of Education (MOE) has worked to increase the capacity of mainstream schools to support children with special needs and to ensure quality and appropriate education for children with severe needs in alternative specialised settings. MOE also has in place various fee subsidy schemes and outreach efforts to ensure that children with special needs have access to an education.

87. For children with special needs from birth to 6 years old, the Early Intervention Programme for Infants and Children provides social, educational and therapy services. There are 12 government-funded centres today. To help families defray the cost of the programme, the Government provides a S\$300 monthly subsidy for every citizen child in the programme. In addition, means-tested subsidies are provided to low income families.

88. MOE actively develops and improves existing processes to help mainstream schools to better identify and support children with special needs. The highest incidences are children with dyslexia, mild autism (ASD) and other learning disabilities such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorders (ADHD). MOE works closely with the Dyslexia Association of Singapore in providing psychological assessment and specialised remediation for children with dyslexia.

89. MOE has also collaborated with the Institute of Mental Health, under MOH to introduce REACH (Response Early Intervention and Assessment in Community Mental Health) service in mainstream schools in 2007. The REACH service includes a helpline for school personnel to consult psychiatrists and other mental health professionals, and referral services to the REACH multi-disciplinary team for assessment and intervention.

90. Since 2005, all trainee teachers are given a compulsory module on special needs during their training at the National Institute of Education. MOE has also rolled out school based awareness workshops and certificate level training for teachers in special needs. Since Allied Educators were first introduced to provide in school support to children with special needs in mainstream schools in 2004, MOE has now achieved its aim of providing at least one Allied Educator (Learning & Behavioural Support) in all schools by 2010.

91. To further integrate children with special needs, MOE has established satellite partnerships between mainstream and SPED (special education) schools since 2008. This provides SPED pupils purposeful and appropriate interaction opportunities with other children. These activities include social integration programmes such as joint-Core Curricular Activities, Community Involvement Programmes, National Education Activities as well as academic integration programmes which allow SPED children to study in satellite classes sited in mainstream schools.

92. These efforts have helped increase the number of children with special needs that can continue to attend mainstream school. There are about 12,500 students with disabilities reported to schools. Out of this, about 7,600 (60%) are enrolled in regular schools, while

about 4,900 (40%) are enrolled in alternative specialised settings such as SPED schools and satellite classes sited in mainstream schools.

93. The Compulsory Education Act makes it compulsory for a child who is a citizen of Singapore and who is residing in Singapore to attend a mainstream national primary school, unless he or she is exempted. Exemption from the Compulsory Education Act is not an exemption from primary education. Home-schoolers may be exempted but their parents are required to provide sufficient assurance that they are in a position to provide their children with an education commensurate to that offered in the mainstream national primary schools before exemptions are granted. These children are subsequently tested to ensure that they have indeed achieved the standards required of them in mainstream national primary schools. Similarly, designated schools (i.e., non-mainstream national primary schools) must also ensure that their standards are upheld in order for their students to be exempted from mainstream national primary schools.

94. All children who are unable to attend mainstream national primary schools due to their special needs are also exempted under the Compulsory Education Act from attending mainstream national primary schools. However, this does not mean that they are not receiving primary education. Almost all children with special needs already attend SPED schools or national schools (for cases of mild disabilities). A very small number of children (e.g. 8 children from the 2010 pupil cohort) do not attend school each year because very severe disabilities or medical conditions prevent them from doing so. Enforcing Compulsory Education on this group of children with very severe disabilities will not benefit them as their needs are better met with home-based care. Children with special needs will also be catered to in SPED schools where they can learn at their own pace with the support of specially trained teachers and para-medical personnel that cater to their specific needs – they are thus receiving their primary education in a setting most appropriate for them. It would impose a severe burden on their families, and it would be educationally unsound, to insist that children with special needs must be sent to mainstream national primary schools.

95. The Government's goal is ultimately to provide these children with special needs an appropriate education catered to their unique circumstances, as well as to provide the holistic support and services that they require in the best possible way. This is better achieved through the "many helping hands approach", with voluntary welfare organisations (VWOs) that specialise in specific types of disabilities and who are able to access support internationally in the delivery of specialised programmes in their schools, rather than to nationalise all special needs schools to be run centrally by MOE. The current approach has yielded de-facto universal coverage of primary education. It should also be noted that MOE currently already provides special needs schools with per-capita funding that is two and a half times that of mainstream national primary schools. Coupled with generous donations from the community, special education schools are typically funded, on a per-capita basis, up to four times that of the per-capita funding received by mainstream national primary schools.

### **Reply to the issues raised in Part I, paragraph 10, of the list of issues.**

96. Singapore has instituted compulsory education firstly to provide young Singaporeans with a foundation for life-long learning, and secondly, to enhance national identity and social cohesion through a common educational experience in national schools. In Singapore's context, compulsory education is defined as education in national schools. Singapore respects the rights of non-citizen children to attend a non-national school. As such, Singapore does not have any plans for the Compulsory Education Act to require that all non-citizen children must attend national schools. However, non-citizen children who

have chosen to enrol in national schools are also extended the same quality education and learning.

**Reply to the issues raised in Part I, paragraph 11, of the list of issues.**

97. Singapore has placed increasing emphasis on the promotion of mental wellness among its population in recent years. A National Mental Health Workgroup was convened in 2006 with inter-ministry representation to develop a national framework to improve the mental wellbeing of children and adolescents. Agencies discuss strategies and programmes to cover three aspects – education and prevention, early detection and intervention, evaluation and monitoring. A sub-working group focusing on children and adolescents was also set up to plan and identify long-term directions, strategies and targets for the promotion of mental wellness among the young. Various programmes and initiatives have been developed to strengthen education and prevention efforts, as well as to facilitate early detection and treatment of mental health conditions in children. These include increasing the coping capacity of children and adolescents, increasing caregivers' awareness and capacity to provide necessary support and assistance, as well as improving the accessibility and quality of mental health services.

98. In 2007, the Ministry of Health (MOH) formed the multidisciplinary mental health community team REACH (Response, Early Intervention, and Assessment in Community Mental Health for students) to target school children with emotional and behavioural disorders aged between 6 and 18 years of age who are within the school clusters located in four geographical school zones (North, South, East and West) of the nation. These community teams focus on integrating and strengthening the capability of community partners in early detection and treatment of mental health problems and educating frontline staff on the identification of suicide risk factors or at-risk behaviours. REACH aims to provide rapid and timely intervention and direct secondary support to reduce distress to families, schools and the community and alleviate the severity of situations during a crisis, such as the setting up of a helpline for school personnel to consult the team on strategies to help children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and a multi-disciplinary mobile team, which provides direct and secondary support to schools on site.

99. As many of the suicides that occur in the young are among out-of-school youths, the REACH teams have started working closely with voluntary welfare organisations (VWOs) since May 2010, to reach out to this group. In collaboration with National Council of Social Services, REACH is working with four pilot VWOs to coordinate and facilitate community and clinical support for at-risk groups. In addition, the team has provided training attachments to VWOs to build up their capability in providing early detection and intervention services within the community. This will help in strengthening the social safety nets available to these youths, and provide them with a means of support in times of distress.

100. The Child Guidance Clinic of the Institute of Mental Health is devoted to caring for mental health of children in Singapore. This clinic offers specialised diagnosis and treatment for children referred there. The increase in attendance at the clinic reflects a greater awareness and acceptance of referrals for more child-centred and specialised assessments.

101. Recognising the importance of nurturing the mental wellbeing from an early age, the Health Promotion Board (HPB) and the Ministry of Health has developed a comprehensive youth mental wellness promotion programme which seeks to: equip youth with knowledge and skills to foster mental wellness; empower them to deal with the common challenges of growing up; and help them develop mental resilience.



102. HPB also conducts on-going mental health education programmes to promote mental wellbeing and emotional resilience, which are protective factors against psychological stress and suicidal factors. These programmes conducted in the educational institutions schools and community aim to empower the young to build their capacities in coping with challenges in life.

103. In conjunction with the World Suicide Prevention Day which falls on 10 September, the Samaritans of Singapore (SOS) held a two-day conference on 8 and 9 September 2010. The conference covered suicide prevention, intervention and postvention. There was also a panel discussion on the approach the community should take towards suicide prevention. Workshops during the conference included topics tailored for teachers and youth workers.

### **Reply to the issues raised in Part I, paragraph 12, of the list of issues.**

104. As part of Singapore's Desired Outcomes for Education, we hope for children in Singapore to acquire on top of academic knowledge and thinking skills, life-skills, cultural values and social responsibility. Schools therefore impart skills such as self-awareness, self-management and decision making to students as part of socio-emotional learning. These build students' resilience and help them cope with stressful situations.

105. The Primary Education Review & Implementation (PERI) Committee was formed in October 2008 to study ways to enhance primary education. Among its recommendations, the Committee suggested the use of more holistic assessment methods to support learning, and for schools to go into a single-session so that there is a more conducive environment for learning and growing in non-academic aspects. A shift in the curriculum time towards Physical Education, and Arts and Music appreciation (PAM), with the aim of developing more holistic individuals, will help contribute towards reducing school-related stress.

106. Currently, schools are piloting the use of more holistic assessment methods. In July 2010, 16 Holistic Assessment Prototype schools have shared their holistic assessment journey and showcased their schools' practices and assessment resources. Training of teachers to use summative and formative assessments appropriately in lower primary levels are being scaled up and will be completed by 2013. The Programme for Active Learning (PAL), currently being prototyped in 12 PAL Phase 1 partner schools, will be implemented in another 24 primary schools in Phase 2 in 2011. It will then be progressively rolled out to all primary schools in tandem with the implementation of single session primary schools. In 2010, there are 83 primary schools (47%) which are single-session schools, with another 5 primary schools turning single-session in 2011. Most government and government-aided primary schools would move to single-session by 2016.

107. The Teach Less Learn More (TLLM) movement started in 2006. With learners as the focus, schools are encouraged to develop their School-based Curriculum Innovations (SCIs) to address their students' learning needs and issues. With the students' learning needs in mind, teachers customise their learning and teaching by designing relevant and meaningful content and employing varied forms of pedagogy and assessment modes. Teachers also leverage on information and communications technology in the curriculum to better engage students in their learning. To date, 266 schools have embarked on TLLM. These schools have received consultancy from curriculum specialists and education experts. Through the development and implementation of SCIs, school leaders and teachers have become more reflective about the learning and teaching process. As part of TLLM, reductions of up to 30% have also been made to the curriculum content, to provide teachers with more scope for innovation in their teaching, and to give students more time to take part in learning activities that would hone critical thinking and other key competencies.

108. Besides reducing curriculum content to lighten the curriculum load on our students to reduce stress, full time school counsellors in every school work closely with teachers and parents to provide guidance and counselling to students and to identify those who may not be coping well, be it for academic or other difficulties they may be facing. Schools also make use of the vacation period to conduct co-curricular activities such as camps and overseas exchanges. These programmes allow students to be given additional support or enrichment in their development, and provide students a break from the academic rigors during the school-term.

### **Reply to the issues raised in Part I, paragraph 13, of the list of issues.**

109. Singapore has legislation that provides for the prosecution of offenders of acts of sexual abuse or sexual exploitation committed within Singapore. The CYPA provides penalties for sexual exploitation of children and young persons in Singapore. The Women's Charter has provision against offences against females, including prostitution of female children in Singapore. The Penal Code provides penalties for sexual intercourse with a girl below the age of 14 years irrespective of consent, and protects against commercial sex with minors under the age of 18 years, locally and abroad. It also provides penalties for incest and aggravated penalties for incest with a girl under the age of 14 years.

110. Singapore's laws also protect children from trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. Section 12 of the CYPA provides protection against the unlawful transfer, possession, custody or control of a child. Sections 7 and 11 of the CYPA provide penalties for sexual exploitation of children and young persons in Singapore. The Women's Charter provides protection for women and girls up to the age of 21 years and criminalises trafficking in women and girls, importation of a woman or girl by false pretences and offences relating to prostitution. Penalties include imprisonment, fines and caning.

111. Singapore's Penal Code has also been amended to enhance the protection of young persons against exploitation for commercial sex in Singapore and in other countries. Sexual grooming of children has also been made an offence under the Penal Code. In 2008 and 2009, there were no reported cases of child sex tourism while there were 4 cases of sexual grooming in the same period. Singapore remains vigilant for any such cases and stands ready to prosecute offenders to the fullest extent possible.

112. In the area of protection against child pornography, the Films Act, Penal Code and Undesirable Publications Act, have provisions dealing with obscene films and publications and the sale of obscene books.

Singapore is a party to the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others. In November 2008, Singapore also adopted the Rio de Janeiro Pact to Prevent and Stop Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents.

113. Singapore has few reported cases of trafficking of children for the purposes of sexual exploitation. In 2008 and 2009 each, there was one substantiated case of trafficking involving a minor under the age of 18 years. Harsh penalties act as deterrents to potential abusers and the robust legal framework is backed up by the tough enforcement stance we adopt against offences of child abuse and exploitation.

114. Aside from legislative protection, building awareness of actions constituting sexual abuse and exploitation, help to empower children in seeking timely help when needed. At the community level, public education efforts have contributed to the increasing awareness of both students and teachers of the nature of sexual abuse and exploitation. MCYS has commissioned plays for primary school students during assembly time in school since 2007 to teach children what family violence and child abuse is and the need to seek help and

keep safe. In 2009, MCYS reviewed the assembly roadshow and modified the format to enable greater interactivity and audience participation. Instead of staging one play, two open-ended short plays were performed for students, after which, the students engaged in small-group discussions, which were facilitated by social workers.

115. In cases where a child or a young person is in an unsafe environment or where his or her parents are unable to provide adequate care, the CYPA provides for the removal of that child or young person to a Place of Safety or an Approved Home, or the placement of the child or young person under the care of a suitable person, such as a kinship carer or a foster parent. In recognition of the challenges that foster parents face in caring for children and to provide them support, MCYS initiated a support group for foster parents in 2007. A support group for foster children was piloted in 2010 through collaboration with a Family Service Centre to provide the children support and help them adjust to the challenges of being in a foster care environment. A book, "Living with a Foster Family", was launched in 2010 to help children placed in foster care to adapt, learn about what to expect while in care, and be informed about safety issues and various avenues to seek help.

116. Treatment programmes are available for sexual abuse victims with the aim of providing specialised treatment to help children and adolescents overcome their negative sexual abuse experience. The programmes typically provide these children and adolescents with psycho-education of possible effects of sexual abuse and to equip them with the essential skills to cope with related emotions, thoughts and behaviours.

#### **Combating child sex tourism related offences**

117. The government takes a serious view on the issue of child sex tourism. This is consistent with the strong position we have taken with regard to child abuse locally. The recent amendments to the Penal Code, which has extended extraterritorial jurisdiction over crimes involving commercial sex with minors, will ensure that greater protection is extended to victims and that perpetrators are effectively dealt with.

118. The Singapore Government recognises that child sex tourism is transnational in nature and that any efforts to eradicate the problem of child sex tourism would require strong cooperation with other countries, in particular, our regional partners. To that end, we continue to support the Regional Education Campaign against Child Sex Tourism, an initiative by ChildWise, among ASEAN member states and Australia. Recently, the focus of the campaign was to encourage responsible tourists to report suspected cases of child sex tourism by their nationals overseas. Information developed by ChildWise, which included the Singapore Police Force hotline, was distributed to promote reporting of cases of child sex tourism.

119. Singapore is also a member of the ChildWise Regional Taskforce, which comprises government representatives from all ten ASEAN Member States. The Taskforce meets annually to exchange experiences, report on development and trends and look into regional strategies for tackling child sex tourism issues in the region.

#### **Reply to the issues raised in Part I, paragraph 14, of the list of issues.**

120. The Singapore Government does not promote the use of corporal punishment. In the few situations where corporal punishment may be used, its use is heavily regulated by relevant laws and guidelines, described below.

121. Corporal punishment is only statutorily permitted for a short list of very serious offences, which generally include physical violence to victims. Only the High Court may sentence a juvenile to corporal punishment. Under the Criminal Procedure Code, no person 18 years and below is liable to be punished with the capital penalty while only males

between the ages of 7 and 16 years can be caned with a lighter rod different from that used for adults, for not more than 10 strokes per execution. For criminal cases tried in the High Court from 2005 to 2009, there were no incidents where the sentence of caning was imposed on juvenile offenders.

122. In institutions for the rehabilitation of juvenile offenders, corporal punishment is not the only form of discipline that is used. Positive forms of discipline and reinforcement are promoted and corporal punishment is utilised only in very serious cases where the juvenile has committed serious infringements while in the institution, for example rioting or harming other residents.

123. For Homes that admit juvenile offenders, the administration of corporal punishment and the use of solitary confinement are guided by regulations under the Children and Young Persons Act (CYPA). Corporal punishment is confined to caning only. Any other form of corporal punishment, such as striking, cuffing, shaking or punching a resident, or subjecting him or her to any other form of physical violence, is strictly not allowed. Juveniles with physical or mental disability may not be caned. Parents or guardians of the juvenile are informed of the disciplinary action taken and the punishment imposed. Actions taken are scrutinised by a Board of Visitors comprising prominent members of the public, who are appointed by the Minister for Community Development Youth and Sports under the CYPA.

124. Residents who have presented consistent unruly or challenging behaviour may be placed in segregation rooms to facilitate self-reflection during the period. Residents who have committed infringements such as abscondence, or causing hurt to others, may also be placed in segregation rooms as punishment. While residents are in the segregation rooms, their well-being is closely monitored by staff. Residents may also be visited by the psychologists or case-workers to review whatever issues they may have and to counsel them.

125. For prison institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Home Affairs, regulations also require that the superintendent and staff of the institution shall make every possible effort to enforce discipline without resorting to caning. A full inquiry is also conducted before the caning is administered. All offenders, including juveniles, are permitted to seek redress from the Board of Visiting Justices, whose members visit the prison institution on a monthly basis.

126. Solitary confinement is utilised as a form of punishment for breaches of discipline. If such a measure is imposed, there are proper checks to ensure adequate protection of the individual offender, including the limitation of solitary confinement durations of up to a maximum of 7 days, and medical checks prior to and after the confinement. Medical help is also available throughout the period of confinement. In the event of an emergency, cells are fitted with a call button to enable the offender to communicate with the officers on duty.

127. Severe disciplinary action is taken against any public servant, including teachers and supervision officers in any institution for juvenile offenders, who does not follow the stipulated safeguards and guidelines in meting out corporal punishment or who uses unauthorised physical force against a child.

## **Part II**

### **Reply to the issues raised in Part II, paragraph 1, of the list of issues**

128. To enhance protection for young persons from exploitation through commercial sex, legislative amendments were made to the Penal Code to combat child sex tourism, to

prevent sexual grooming of children, and to make an offence out of obtaining for consideration sexual services from a person below the age of 18. These amendments came into force on 1 February 2008.

129. As part of efforts to meet the obligations of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, Singapore had made amendments to our Singapore Armed Forces (Volunteers) Regulations and the Enlistment Regulations which had entered into force on 7 July 2008. The minimum age for compulsory recruitment for national service in the armed forces is 18 years as laid out in the Enlistment Regulations. The minimum age for voluntary enlistment in the armed forces is 16 years and 6 months as laid out in the Singapore Armed Forces (Volunteers) Regulations.

130. The Mental Capacity Act, which came into effect on 1 March 2010, provides for the court to appoint deputies for persons who lack mental capacity, where there is a need for ongoing decisions to be made on behalf of the person. Section 21 of the Act provides for the court to appoint deputies for minors who lack mental capacity. This provision is particularly useful for parents of children with intellectual disabilities. The parents can apply to the court to appoint a deputy for their child. In the case where the child is not yet 21 years of age, the court may appoint a deputy for the child if it considers that the child will continue to lack capacity when he reaches 21 years of age. The court may also appoint successor deputies in the event that the parents pass away. This provides for a succession plan for the care of the child with intellectual disabilities.

131. Amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code Bill were passed in Parliament in June 2010. With the passing of the Bill, community-based sentencing (CBS) options will be adopted which introduce greater flexibility in the current legislative framework to allow more graduated sentencing options for minor offences. Many of these options will be utilised within Community Courts that also deal with offenders between 16 to 21 years of age. The CBS options are: Community Service Order, Day Reporting Order, Mandatory Treatment Order, Short Detention Order and Community Work Order. The CBS options are expected to be implemented in January 2011.

132. As an indication of the Singapore Government's strong commitment to protecting the interests of children in situations of trans-border civil disputes amongst parents, the International Child Abduction Act was passed in September 2010 to operationalise the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. The Act is expected to come into force on 1 March 2011. Upon Singapore's accession to the Convention, there will be an avenue for expeditious and clear resolution of trans-border custodial disputes.

133. The Children and Young Persons (Amendment) Bill (2010) was read in Parliament for the first time in November 2010. When passed into law, all homes for children and young persons will have to be licensed and a Review Board will be established to review all cases in residential care, to ensure that proper care plans are in place for the child.

The Women's Charter (Amendment) Bill (2010) was read in Parliament for the first time in November 2010. The amendments aim to address the risk of divorce among specific marriage groups, mitigate the impact of divorces especially in proceedings involving children, and enhance the enforcement of court-ordered maintenance payments to (ex) wives and children.

## **Reply to the issues raised in Part II, paragraph 2, of the list of issues**

134. The Central Youth Guidance Office (CYGO) was set up in July 2010 to co-ordinate inter-agency efforts to tackle at risk youth issues such as juvenile delinquency and the cycle of offending and re-offending. (Please see reply to Question 2 for more details)

135. The Office of Public Guardian was set up in 2010 to support the administration of the Mental Capacity Act and the Public Guardian to carry out a range of functions, including the supervision of these court-appointed deputies. This framework serves to protect the person including children who lack mental capacity and ensures that deputies exercise their powers in the best interest of the person.

### **Primary Education Review & Implementation (PERI)**

136. The Primary Education Review & Implementation (PERI) Committee was formed in October 2008 to study ways to enhance primary education with the aim of equipping Singapore children not just with content knowledge, but also with the necessary skills and dispositions to thrive in a fast-changing and globalised world. Stemming from the recommendations of the PERI Committee, a range of enhancements will be implemented in primary schools over the next few years to make learning enjoyable and meaningful for students while developing the desired skills and values that will put them in good stead for the future. These include:

- using more engaging pedagogy to make learning meaningful;
- placing greater emphasis on non-academic programmes within the curriculum, such as Physical Education (PE), Art and Music;
- providing opportunities for lower primary students to try out activities in the areas of Sports and Games & Outdoor Education, as well as Performing Arts (Music and Dance) and Visual Arts;
- using more holistic modes of assessment to support learning and provide meaningful feedback on a child's progress, strengths and weaknesses in both academic and non-academic areas;
- continuing to recruit committed, quality educators and ensure that they remain well equipped through continuous training and professional development; and

enhancing school infrastructure to facilitate single-session schooling and to provide a better environment for the holistic development of our students.

### **Specialised Secondary Schools for Hands-on Learners**

137. In 2007 and 2009, the Ministry of Education (MOE) established Northlight School and Assumption Pathway School to provide a holistic programme for students who are unable to progress through the mainstream academic school system and are otherwise at risk of prematurely leaving school. The schools offer students who have failed the Primary School Leaving Examinations once or more, as well as students who leave secondary school prematurely, a more hands-on and practical curriculum. The curriculum is customised to the students' learning styles and seeks to address their socio-emotional needs. There is a stronger focus on character development, a greater emphasis on core foundational skills and an improved vocational programme.

138. Building on enhancements to the Normal (Technical) course and lessons drawn from the setting up of Northlight School and Assumption Pathway School, MOE has announced that two new specialised secondary schools would be set up as an additional option for the Normal (Technical) students. A whole-school approach will further enhance the quality of their learning experience. The new schools will admit students from 2013.

139. The specialised secondary schools will offer a four-year customised programme that will prepare students for subsequent studies in the Institute of Technical Education (ITE) or employment, and will work in close partnership with ITE and industry partners to develop the curriculum and programmes and to provide opportunities for attachments and internships for their upper secondary students.

### **ITE Reforms**

140. The ITE is a principal provider of technical and vocational education in Singapore, and the principal authority for developing national occupational skills certification and standards to enhance Singapore's long-term economic competitiveness. ITE offers a wide range of training courses in five clusters, *viz.* Engineering, Electronics & Info-Communications Technology, Applied & Health Sciences, Business & Services, Design and Media. While primarily a provider of technical and vocational training, ITE is building its capability in service-related courses such as Digital Animation and Security Technology.

141. ITE underwent a review and set up a 10-Year Transformation Programme in 1995 aimed at equipping Singapore's lowest quartile of school cohort with technical and social skill sets so they have viable opportunities for academic and career progression. The Programme is carried out in three successive waves of transformation through three strategic blueprints, namely: ITE 2000 (1995-1999), ITE Breakthrough (2000-2004), ITE Advantage (2005-2009) and ITE Innovate (2010-2014).

142. The ITE's Regional Colleges, which regrouped the original ten ITE colleges into three world-class campuses equipped with state-of-the-art equipment, represent a new benchmark in technical education under the "One ITE System, Three Colleges" Model. ITE's second regional campus, ITE College West, commenced operations in July 2010. ITE's third regional campus, College Central, will commence operations in January 2013. Besides optimising land and human resources, the regional campuses enable ITE to carry out greater multi-disciplinary, cross-level training and provide modern student facilities and amenities to enhance campus life. They also enable ITE to provide pre-employment training and continuing education and training programmes to more Singaporeans.

143. For students who have performed well in the secondary 'N'-level examinations and can benefit from a more hands-on and experiential preparation, MOE will be introducing a direct articulation ("through-train") programme to allow Normal Academic students to take up a Higher National (ITE) Certificate (NITEC) programme at the ITE and subsequently be assured of either a first- or second-year place in a related polytechnic course if they achieve the qualifying grade point average scores in their Higher NITEC programme. The new option will be available to students admitted from 2013.

### **Reply to the issues raised in Part II, paragraph 3, of the list of issues**

144. MCYS established the Vocational Rehabilitation Unit (VRU) in 2009 with the objective of supporting youths undergoing rehabilitation in the MCYS Juvenile Homes, by enabling them to be gainfully engaged in education training or employment. The VRU will support youths up to age 21 years. The Unit looks at strengthening academic and vocational training structures, increasing employment placements and employment assistance, and building career guidance expertise to allow for individual academic, career and vocational planning for each youth that is in residential care.

145. With the evolvement of child protection work resulting in greater knowledge application, specialisation and child-focused processes, additional chapters were added in the Manual on the Management of Child Abuse in 2008. The new chapters, which detailed the roles and responsibilities of the mental health care professionals and public prosecutors

in law enforcement, were contributed by the Institute of Mental Health and the Attorney-General's Chambers (AGC) respectively. A chapter on the inter-agency management of child sexual abuse was also developed in collaboration with the AGC, police, hospitals, schools and Child Protection Services, to ensure a more sensitive and coordinated approach in investigating child sexual abuse and supporting child victims.

146. In line with the Child Protection Services review undertaken 2010, the Manual on the Management of Child Abuse in Singapore will also incorporate the roles played by the Singapore Prisons Service and Immigration and Checkpoints Authority. The Manual acknowledges the continuum of child protection work and recognises that a more permanent care plan is required in cases where incarcerated parents and children are involved.

**Reply to the issues raised in Part II, paragraph 3, of the list of issues.**

147. The Singapore Government has ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, which came into effect in January 2009 for Singapore.

148. Singapore is currently studying the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of the child, child prostitution and child pornography, and its obligations.

149. Singapore is preparing to accede to the Hague Convention on Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction in December 2010. The International Child Abduction Bill to operationalise the Convention was passed on 16 September 2010. The Act is expected to be operational from 1 March 2011.

150. Singapore is also actively studying the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.



## Part III

### Reply to the issues raised in Part III, paragraph 1 (a), of the list of issues

Table 1:  
**Government Expenditure on Social Development<sup>3</sup>**

	<i>CY 20074</i> <i>(million)</i>	<i>CY 2008</i> <i>(million)</i>	<i>CY 2009</i> <i>(million)</i>
Total Government Operating Expenditure	S\$24,351.7 (US\$16,742.3)	S\$28,590.3 (US\$19,656.4)	S\$29,871.1 (US\$20,537.0)
Total Expenditure on Social Development	S\$10,995.9 (US\$7,560.0)	S\$12,568.3 (US\$8,641.0)	S\$13,464.9 (US\$9,257.4)
– Education	S\$6,566.8 (US\$4,514.8)	S\$7,298.1 (US\$5,017.6)	S\$7,418.6 (US\$5,100.4)
– Health	S\$2,015.6 (US\$1,385.8)	S\$2,295.1 (US\$1,578.0)	S\$2,763.9 (US\$1,900.2)
– Community Development, Youth and Sports	S\$832.9 (US\$572.6)	S\$1,172.6 (US\$806.2)	S\$1,403.8 (US\$965.1)
– Information, Communications and the Arts	S\$351.6 (US\$241.7)	S\$370.2 (US\$254.5)	S\$422.6 (US\$290.5)
– Environments and Water Resources	S\$436.3 (US\$300.0)	S\$560.1 (US\$385.1)	S\$661.5 (US\$454.8)
– National Development	S\$792.7 (US\$545.0)	S\$872.4 (US\$599.8)	S\$794.5 (US\$546.2)

<sup>3</sup> The average conversion rate used for 2007 – 2009 figures is S\$1.4545 = US\$1.00.

<sup>4</sup> Figures reflected in Table 1, 3, 8 to 15 are based on Calendar Year (CY), while figures reflected in Table 2, 4, to 7 are based on Financial Year (FY).

Table 2:  
**Expenditures for Health for School Children (in Primary and Secondary Schools)**

	<i>FY 2007</i>	<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2009</i>
	<i>(million)</i>	<i>(million)</i>	<i>(million)</i>
Youth Health Division Budget			\$26.8
Allocation for School Children	\$27.0 (US\$19.3)	\$28.3 (US\$19.5)	(US\$18.4)
School Dental Services Budget			\$19.4
Allocation for Children	\$23.8 (US\$17.0)	\$20.8 (US\$14.3)	(US\$13.3)

Table 3:  
Expenditures for Education

	<i>CY 2007</i>	<i>CY 2008</i>	<i>CY 2009</i>
	(million)	(million)	(million)
Primary	S\$1,496.7	S\$1,553.5	S\$1,589.2 (US\$1,092.6)
	(US\$1,069.1)	(US\$1,068.1)	
Secondary Schools & Junior Colleges <sup>5</sup>	S\$2,121.6	S\$2,175.8	S\$2,237.0
	(US\$1,515.4)	(US\$1,495.9)	(US\$1,538.0)
Institute of Technical Education	S\$253.5	S\$281.3	S\$262.3
	(US\$181.1)	(US\$193.4)	(US\$180.3)
Universities	S\$1,491.1	S\$1,808.9	S\$2,005.6
	(US\$1,065.1)	(US\$1,243.7)	(US\$1,378.9)
National Institute of Education	S\$102.2	S\$110.4	S\$118.4
	(US\$73.0)	(US\$75.9)	(US\$81.4)
Polytechnics	S\$816.9	S\$946.1	S\$947.2
	(US\$583.5)	(US\$650.5)	(US\$651.2)
Others <sup>6</sup>	S\$503.6	S\$600.5	S\$691.7
	(US\$359.7)	(US\$412.9)	(US\$475.6)
Total Recurrent Expenditure	S\$6,785.6	S\$7,476.5	S\$7,851.4
	(US\$4,846.9)	(US\$5,140.3)	(US\$5,398.0)

<sup>5</sup> Include Centralised Institutes.

<sup>6</sup> Include MOE Headquarters, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Science Centre Board and SIM-Open University Centre, Special Education, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and Lasalle College of Arts.

Table 4:  
**Expenditure on Social Services and Support for Children and Families**

	<i>FY 2007</i>	<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2009</i>
	<i>(million)</i>	<i>(million)</i>	<i>(million)</i>
Social Assistance Schemes	S\$47.2 (US\$32.5)	S\$51.1 (US\$35.1)	S\$66.0 (US\$45.4)
Programmes for families			
Baby Bonus	S\$220.5 (US\$151.6)	\$242.0 (US\$166.4)	\$279.8 (US\$192.4)
Child Care Subsidy	S\$70.1 (US\$48.2)	\$112.3 (US\$86.8)	\$154.6 (US\$119.5)
Infant Care Subsidy	S\$3.4 (US\$2.3)	\$5.5 (US\$4.3)	\$8.8 (US\$6.8)
Govt-Paid Maternity Leave (GPML)	S\$57.6 (US\$39.6)	\$65.02 (US\$44.7)	\$126.35 (US\$86.9)
Family Welfare Programmes	S\$3.6 (US\$2.5)	\$3.9 (US\$2.7)	\$3.8 (US\$2.6)
Family Service Centres (Government funding only. Does not include donated funds)	S\$13.0 (US\$8.9)	\$13.1 (US\$9.0)	\$18.4 (US\$12.7)
Public education on families / children	S\$6.3 (US\$4.3)	\$6.0 (US\$4.1)	\$6.5 (US\$4.5)
Total	S\$421.7 (US\$289.9)	S\$498.9 (US\$343.0)	S\$664.3 (US\$456.7)

Aside from the expenditure on social services and support to children and families in the above table, more than S\$10 million (US\$7 million) was also set aside for the implementation of the recommendations of the Inter-Ministry Committee on Dysfunctional Families (IMC-DF), over FY 2009 to FY 2011.

Table 5:  
**Expenditure on Disability Programmes for Children**

	<i>FY 2007</i>	<i>FY 2008</i>	<i>FY 2009</i>
Early Intervention Programmes for Infant and Children (EIPIC)	S\$3,611,919 (US\$2,483,272)	S\$4,786,794 (US\$3,291,024)	S\$5,126,790 (US\$3,524,778)
Integrated Child Care Centres	S\$824,247 (US\$566,688)	S\$845,492 (US\$581,294)	S\$820,386 (US\$564,033)
Disabled Children's Homes	S\$515,605 (US\$354,490)	S\$532,647 (US\$366,206)	S\$610,145 (US\$419,488)
Community Integration Support	S\$1,426,501 (US\$980,750)	S\$1,239,374 (US\$852,096)	S\$770,675 (US\$529,856)
Total	S\$6,378,272 (US\$4,385,199)	S\$7,404,307 (US\$5,090,620)	S\$7,327,996 (US\$5,038,155)

Table 6:  
**Funding from Community Chest for Children and Youth Services**

<i>FY 2007</i> (million)	<i>FY 2008</i> (million)	<i>FY 2009</i> (million)
S\$23.6 (US\$16.2)	S\$23.3 (US\$16.0)	S\$24.2 (US\$16.6)

Table 7:  
**Government Expenditure on Alternative and Institutional Care Measures**

	<i>FY 2007</i> (million)	<i>FY 2008</i> (million)	<i>FY 2009</i> (million)
Alternative and Institutional Care for Children			
Children's Homes	S\$9.5 (US\$6.5)	S\$10.4 (US\$7.2)	S\$10.0 (US\$6.9)
MCYS Homes	S\$15.6 (US\$10.7)	S\$16.8 (US\$11.6)	S\$18.1 (US\$12.4)
Foster Homes	S\$2.6 (US\$1.8)	S\$2.8 (US\$1.9)	S\$2.9 (US\$2.0)

**Reply to the issues raised in Part III, paragraph 1 (b), of the list of issues**

Table 8:  
**New Placements on FamCare Scheme**

<i>CY 2007</i>	<i>CY 2008</i>	<i>CY 2009</i>
19	12	14

Table 9:  
**Number of children in Foster Care**

<i>CY 2007</i>	<i>CY 2008</i>	<i>CY 2009</i>
289	183	198

Table 10:  
**New Admissions to Children and Young Persons Homes**

	<i>CY 2007</i>	<i>CY 2008</i>	<i>CY 2009</i>
Gender			
Male	281	294	300
Female	249	232	242
Age			
< 6 years	29	28	15
6 – 9 years	110	62	90
10 - 15 years	362	287	291
>15 years	29	149	146
Total	530	526	542

Table 11:  
**New Admissions to MCYS Juvenile Homes**

	<i>CY 2007</i>	<i>CY 2008</i>	<i>CY 2009</i>
Total	357	326	352
Home			
Singapore Boys' Home	244	242	261
Singapore Girls' Home	113	84	91
Age			
< 13 years	9	4	9
13 – 14 years	153	88	99
15 – 16 years	293	211	226
>16 years	20	23	18

### Reply to the issues raised in Part III, paragraph 1 (c), of the list of issues

Table 12:  
New cases for Beyond Parental Control

	<i>CY 2007</i>	<i>CY 2008</i>	<i>CY 2009</i>
Gender			
Male	69	54	28
Female	71	67	63
Age			
8 – 10 years	5	1	1
11 -12 years	11	14	10
13 – 14 years	68	58	40
15 – 16 years	56	48	40
Total	140	121	91

### Reply to the issues raised in Part III, paragraph 1 (d), of the list of issues

151. Suicide during childhood and early adolescence continues to be low, with year to year fluctuations in the statistics due to small numbers. Suicide rates among youths between the ages of 10 to 14 have risen from 0 in 2007, to 2.01 per 100,000 in 2009. For those between the ages of 15 to 19 the rate, per 100,000 has risen from 4.66 in 2007 to 5.33 in 2009. The table below shows the suicide rates among the 10 to 19-year-olds between 2003 and 2009 (Table 13).

Table 13:  
Adolescent Suicide Rates (per 100,000)

	<i>CY 2007</i>	<i>CY 2008</i>	<i>CY 2009</i>
10-14 years	0.0	0.39	2.01
15-19 years	4.6	3.42	5.33

Source: Ministry of Health based on data from Registry of Births and Deaths

152. When compared with international data on youth suicide, Singapore's suicide rate for the 15-19-year-olds is lower than that reported for USA (Singapore: 4.7 vs USA: 6.9 in 2007<sup>7</sup>) and Australia (Singapore: 3.4 vs Australia: 6.4 in 2010<sup>8</sup>). However, care should be exercised when interpreting such comparative data because definitions of suicide differ between countries.

<sup>7</sup> Deaths, Final Data for 2007

<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/deaths.htm> accessed on 6 Dec 2010

<sup>8</sup> Causes of Death, Australia 2008; Australian Bureau of Statistics

<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3303.02008?OpenDocument> accessed on 6 Dec 2010

### Reply to the issues raised in Part III, paragraph 1 (e), of the list of issues

Table 14:

#### Enrolment rates at primary and secondary school level for non-citizen children

<i>Enrolment Rate*</i>	<i>CY 2007</i>	<i>CY 2008</i>	<i>CY 2009</i>
Primary	93**	109	104
Secondary	112	98	100

\*The Enrolment Rates are derived using the combined number of non-citizen students of official age enrolled in national schools and all non-citizen students, regardless of age, enrolled in non-national schools. The rates are expressed as percentages and may exceed 100 because of early entry, repeats, etc.

\*\* Rates below 100% are also not indicative of non-enrolment of non-citizen children in schools, as non-citizen children who accompany their expatriate parents can move in and out of Singapore on a regular basis. They might become accounted for as non-citizen population in Singapore but may not show up in our enrollment data initially as the collection of the two sets of data are not synchronised.

### Reply to the issues raised in Part III, paragraph 1 (f), of the list of issues

153. As of Nov 2009, there are about 12,500 students with disabilities reported to schools. Out of this, about 7,600 (60%) are enrolled in regular (i.e. mainstream schools), while about 4,900 (40%) are enrolled in specialised settings, for example, special education (SPED) schools and satellite classes sited in mainstream schools.

### Reply to the issues raised in Part III, paragraph 1 (g), of the list of issues

154. In 2008 and 2009 each, there was 1 substantiated case of trafficking in persons involving a minor under the age of 18. Both cases were charged under the Women's Charter. The victims were foreign females aged 16 and 17 respectively. The accused persons in the former case were sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment, while the accused in the latter case was sentenced to 9 weeks' imprisonment and a total fine of S\$20,000.00. There were also two cases of sexual grooming in 2008 and 2009 each.

155. Between 2007 and 2009, there was a decrease in the number of victims of sexual abuse below the age of eighteen from 631 to 543. In comparison to the total number of sexual abuse victims, there was also a slight decrease in the proportion of victims below eighteen from 38.2% in 2007 to 34.7% in 2009. Further details are provided in the table below.

Table 15: Number of sexual abuse victims breakdown by age from 2007 to 2009

OFFENCE	VICTIM'S AGE	CY 2007	CY 2008	CY 2009
Rape	Below 14 years old	70	64	90
	Age 14 - 15 years old	7	11	11
	Age 16 - 17 years old	6	13	11
	Total Victims	83	88	112
Outrage of	Below 14 years old	255	244	187



Table 15: Number of sexual abuse victims breakdown by age from 2007 to 2009

Modesty	Age 14 - 15 years old	111	126	122
	Age 16 - 17 years old	107	104	97
	Total Victims	473	474	406
Unnatural Offence	Below 14 years old	35	7	3
	Age 14 - 15 years old	21	3	1
	Age 16 - 17 years old	4	2	0
	Total Victims	60	12	4
Gross Indecency	Below 14 years old	6	1	4
	Age 14 - 15 years old	3	2	1
	Age 16 - 17 years old	1	0	1
	Total Victims	10	3	6
Sexual Exploitation of Child (s.7 of the Children and Young Persons Act)	Below 14 years old	4	17	14
	Age 14 - 15 years old	1	3	1
	Age 16 - 17 years old	0	0	0
	Total Victims	5	20	15
Total no. of victims below 14 years old		370	333	298
Total no. of victims aged 14 - 15 years old		143	145	136
Total no. of victims aged 16 - 17 years old		118	119	109
Total no. of Victims		631	597	543

### Reply to the issues raised in Part III, paragraph 1 (h), of the list of issues

156. From 2007 to 2009, there were no cases of migrant workers below the age of 18.

### Reply to the issues raised in Part III, paragraph 1 (i), of the list of issues

157. For criminal cases which were tried in the High Court from 2005 to 2009, no juvenile offender was imposed with the sentence of judicial caning.

### Reply to the issues raised in Part III, paragraph 2, of the list of issues

158. In August 2010, Singapore hosted the inaugural Youth Olympic Games (YOG). The YOG, a new initiative introduced by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), sought to engage the youth of the world through the twin pillars of sport, and culture and education. Young athletes, aged between 14 and 18 years, competed in 26 sports and took part in cultural and educational activities.

159. The Olympic Education Programme was introduced to 430 schools to expose students to the Olympic history, Olympic values and Olympic sports. Singapore schools were paired with athletes from other countries so as to provide opportunities for the youth from different countries to learn more about global issues such as the environment, and to form friendships amongst diverse cultures. The YOG helped to create a lasting culture and education legacy for youths from around the world, as well as to enhance and elevate the sporting culture locally and regionally.

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