



Walking Towards a New Future

Annual Report 2022





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About Us

Established in 1902, Children's Aid Society (CAS) is amongst Singapore's oldest secular philanthropic organisations. Through our two services, Melrose Home and Melrose Care, we provide residential care and specialised therapies to support children and youths who have experienced adverse life circumstances such as abuse or neglect. Our services seek to mitigate the impact of these circumstances so that the children and youths have better outcomes in terms of mental health, educational attainment and can engage in healthy relationships with peers.

Our Vision

Successful Lives, Stable Families,
Strong Community.

Our Mission

To help children and young persons in need so that they can succeed and contribute to their families and society



Chairman's Message

2022 has been a year of re-engagement and settling into a new normal, as Singapore emerged from the lengthy period of pandemic-related constraints. We saw increased demand for our services and a rising complexity in cases. Despite that, I am happy to note that CAS has more than met these challenges.

Last December, we launched the start of our 120th anniversary commemoration, with various exciting events planned over the course of 2023 to achieve our vision of building Melrose Village. As one of the oldest organisations in the social service landscape, we have had to maintain our relevance to society, and we recognise this heavy responsibility to the community we serve.

When CAS was established in 1902, we took in children off the streets. We provided a roof over their heads, access to three meals and the basic care that they needed. Our work was no longer just about providing children a safe environment but ensuring quality education and healthcare.

Fast forward to the social media era today. Faced with various adverse influences, these have multiplied the challenges and complexity of care by several fold. Today when we intervene and help a child, we need to focus on healing and ultimately re-integration. This has to be done together with the extended family unit.

In navigating through this changing landscape, CAS' aim is to break the cycle of systemic neglect, abuse and associated poverty.

As an organisation, this can be achieved with the holistic approach of sustainability with all our stakeholders – our clients, government, donors and staff.

For our clients, sustainability is achieved through maintaining operational relevance. This means not only adopting best practices, but also being forward-looking and anticipatory in meeting the changing requirements and demands of the social services landscape.

With the various government agencies, we need to enhance communication and continue building strong working relationships, with the aim of rolling out the right services in a timely and effective manner.

We also strive to be a meaningful and proactive partner in our engagement with donors. We recognise that there are choices for donors within and outside of Singapore, but it rests on CAS to properly advocate for our cause and its deserving clients.

Finally, CAS understands that our people, more than anything else, is at the centre of achieving sustainability. As an organisation, we believe firmly in inculcating a professional work environment that values and respects the individual and we encourage upskilling via training and course work. We endeavour to be an employer of choice, in order to attract new people, with the energy, passion and new ideas to drive the organisation forward.

I'm grateful to the staff of CAS for their compassion and commitment through the years. A special thanks to our donors for their generosity and the continued support from our community partners.

Thank you to the members of the Executive Committee and Sub-Committees for their time and effort in steering Melrose Home, Melrose Care and other critical functions. A heartfelt thanks to our Patron, Minister Desmond Lee and the Ministry of Social and Family Development, as well as the National Council of Social Service (NCSS) for their tremendous support, guidance and encouragement towards CAS.

Thank you all for sharing our vision and being a part of our cause.

John Lim
Chairman
Children's Aid Society

Executive Director's Message



Alvin Goh
Executive Director
Children's Aid Society



2022 has been a significant and fruitful one for all of us at Children's Aid Society.

The lifting of pandemic measures and the easing of the spread of COVID-19 meant that we could return to our usual operations. Not only that, I am pleased to report that we stepped up services for our residents at Melrose Home and families in the community through Melrose Care.

We reached out to community partners to improve our service delivery and re-engaged community partners whose participation was hindered by the pandemic. On top of that, we also strengthened our administrative and support functions to ensure that CAS is in the best shape to deliver services to clients.

In total, we ran 1875 sessions and activities for 52 residents at Melrose Home and served 325 clients through Melrose Care.

In terms of financial support, we managed to grow our pool of donations. In 2021, we managed to raise \$1.28 million in donations. That trend continued, with CAS raising another \$1.8 million in 2022. We are grateful for the generous donations from our supporters who have enabled us to continue doing meaningful and impactful work.

In October 2022, we welcomed Mr Desmond Lee, Minister for National Development, and the Minister-in-Charge of Social Services Integration as our Patron. This was great encouragement for us as we kicked off our Beyond 120 commemoration in December.

As we mark the start of our 120th commemoration, it is a time to remember the commitment and contribution of people past and present, who have impacted the lives of thousands of children, youths and their families. It is also a time of reflection, of looking forward to the next several decades as we seek to build upon this foundation.

The future for CAS will continue to be about services that deliver deep impact to children, youths and their families severely affected by serious life challenges. To achieve this, we are building on over a century of experience to further integrate evidence-based professional practices into our organisation. To this end, our trauma-informed framework and practices have raised competencies of our teams to work with clients from complex family backgrounds.

For instance, Melrose Home has already reshaped the way new residents are supported from referral, to the provision of 24-hour care, to implementing programmes to support children and youths, to therapy services to treat trauma symptoms and how they are reunified with families or integrated into the community.

However, reunification and reintegration work requires not just highly competent staff but also purpose-built spaces. Melrose Village will give us dedicated spaces for small group care, family work, and conducive therapeutic work. Only then can we give our clients and their families the best possible shot at good outcomes. The work can only be done through forming strong collaborations with families, social service partners, volunteers, the government and the private sector.

I would like to thank the Ministry of Social and Family Development, in particular the Children in Care Service and NCSS for their continued confidence and the belief in us through funding, dialogues and consultation.

I would also like to thank our supporters in the community who have journeyed with us through their CSR activities, donations and fundraising activities.

Finally, I want to thank all of our staff who have worked tirelessly throughout the last year. Our staff deal with the symptoms of trauma daily, which are even more intense in Melrose Home. Their passion and desire to make a difference in the lives of children, youths and families are invaluable.



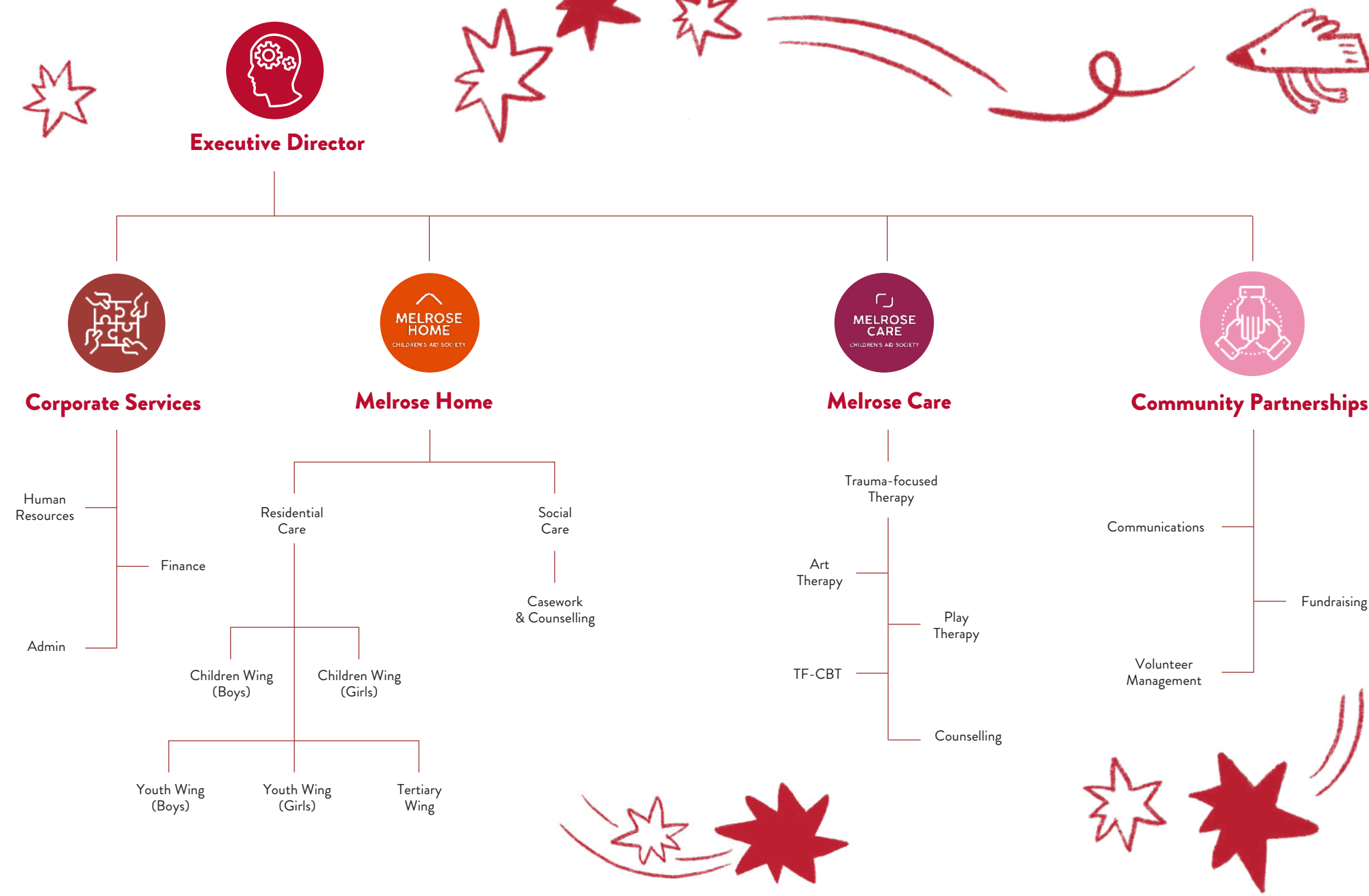
Executive Committee & Patron

Patron	Desmond Lee <i>Minister for National Development and Minister-in-charge of Social Services Integration</i>
Chairman	John Lim
Vice Chairman	Stephen Yeap
Honorary Secretary	Josephine Koh
Honorary Treasurer & Chairman, Finance Sub-Committee	Nick Lai
Chairman, Audit Sub-Committee	Johnny Quah
Chairman, Children & Programmes Sub-Committee	Dawn Ng
Chairman, Melrose Care	Dr Christine Tan
Chairman, Staff & Administration Sub-Committee	Lai Su Yim
Chairman, Fundraising Sub-Committee	Genevieve McCully-Tan

Sub Committees

Audit	Johnny Quah (Chairman) Stephen Yeap Chun Kwong Chee Yarman J. Vachha Lim Koon Chai	Staff & Administration	Lai Su Yim (Chairman) Peggy Ann Desker Stephen Yeap Mohd Norhelmy Bin Ja'afar Low Sha-Ron Low Siew Beng (since Apr 2022)
Children & Programmes	Dawn Ng (Chairman) Elaine Lim Nelly Kwa Peggy Ann Desker Ng Su Fen (since May 2022) Fajariah Binte Saban (since Oct 2022)	Melrose Care	Dr Christine Tan (Chairman) (since Jan 2022) Peggy Ann Desker Ng Siau Hwei Dr Mardiana Bte Abu Bakar Chen Lih Linda (since Oct 2022)
Finance	Nick Lai (Chairman) Bernard Yu David Chia Gurbinder Singh Mohan Singh (since Oct 2022)	Nominations	Stephen Yeap (Chairman) John Lim Josephine Koh
Fundraising	Genevieve McCully-Tan (Chairman) Josephine Koh Crystal Eileen Seah Faye Ong Lynette Ang Pang Yee Ean Kelvin Wang		

Organisation Chart



History



1880s Children's Aid Society was Established

With a long history dating back to the British colonial rule, CAS is among the oldest philanthropic organisations in Singapore. It was set up in the late 1800s as St Nicholas Home to care for needy children in Singapore. Later it was known as CAS, through the efforts of a group of civic-minded individuals from the British colonial government, major European companies, and religious organisations.



1970s The Shift to Clementi

In April 1970, the children and staff moved from Tomlinson Road to their beautiful new home at Clementi.

In the following year of 1971, First Lady Mrs Benjamin Sheares officially opened Melrose Home and in 1972, Mr T.S. Zain became the first Singaporean chairman of the CAS, heralding a new era.



1930s The Origins of Melrose Home

CAS rented a large two-storey colonial bungalow at 29 Tomlinson Road and named it Melrose Home. It was run by European matrons who tried to give the home as close as possible to a family environment, by providing warmth, care, and emotional support while seeking to instill good moral values in the children.



2000s Reaching the 100th-Year Mark

On 17 February 2000, First Lady Mrs S.R Nathan visited Melrose Home, which was decked with Chinese New Year lanterns and a huge cherry blossom tree.

In 2002, CAS celebrated 100 years of caring for children and launched our centenary book, which highlighted our dedicated service to the community from 1902 to 2002.



1960s The Need for a New Space

After Singapore's independence, CAS evolved and adapted to a more local environment, with local Singaporeans taking the place of European matrons who retired.

The high cost of maintaining the old Tomlinson bungalow and the need for a bigger boarding house led to the purchase of a property, set along a hillock along Clementi Road.



2013 Melrose Home Doubled its Capacity

To better meet the changing needs of the community, Melrose Home doubled its capacity to house more youths. On 26 July 2013, the Home's extended Youth Wing was officially opened by First Lady Mrs Mary Tan, wife of President Tony Tan, and included study and recreation spaces, as well as outdoor facilities to provide a conducive living environment.



1969 The First Lady's Visit

On 31 October 1969, First Lady Puan Noor Aishah, wife of Singapore's first President Yusof Ishak, officiated the Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony of the new Melrose Home which was to be built at 503 Clementi Road.



2019 Melrose Home Moved to Boon Lay

On 16 December 2019, Melrose Home relocated to 35 Boon Lay Avenue to facilitate the development of Melrose Village. Melrose Home continued its efforts to adopt a trauma-informed and small group care model, improving our staff-resident ratio and training our staff to deliver trauma-informed programmes and activities.

History



2019 Setting Up
of Melrose Care

In July 2019, we established our second service Melrose Care, a community-based agency that serves children, youths and their families in need through the provision of counselling and specialised therapies.

This initiative was in response to rising social concerns about child abuse and neglect, bullying and other emotional stresses.



2023 A New Chapter

As we commemorate CAS' 120th anniversary, this marks the start of a new chapter as we look ahead to the future. Above it all, our mission stays the same — to continue to help children and youths to succeed and contribute.



Check out our most exciting events that took place in 2022!

Our Year in Highlights



Charity Movie Screening

In June, we organised the long-awaited CAS Charity Movie Screening featuring the Jurassic World Dominion film! Held at Shaw Theatres Lido, guests who donated \$100 received a complimentary movie ticket and combo set. We're thankful for the overwhelming support shown by partners like Star Concord. In total, we managed to raise \$66,263! It was a truly epic and fun-filled night.

Introducing our Patron, Minister Desmond Lee

In October, we were honoured to welcome Mr Desmond Lee, Minister for National Development & Minister-in-charge of Social Services Integration, on board as the Patron of CAS! Minister Lee will bring a much-needed perspective to the work we do, and champion our cause of caring for children and youths both from CAS and the community who have faced challenging life circumstances. With this appointment, he will also be lending valuable insights into the social services landscape, and the overall government's strategy plans.



Charity Car Wash

In November, we got busy scrubbing down cars for charity at the Esso station at Ang Mo Kio Avenue 8. Held in partnership with NTUC FairPrice, Cheers, ExxonMobil and Auto Base car washing service company, we raised a total of \$17,500! We were also heartened when car-sharing provider GetGo stopped by to donate the equivalent of 200 car washes. The volunteers shared that it was a great morning making new friends and being a part of a community striving to make sustainable and meaningful impact in society.

**Our Core
Approach**

A stylized illustration of a woman with a bun, wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and plaid pants, holding a large, fluffy pink cloud. The cloud contains the text 'Our Core Approach'. Pink lines radiate from behind the woman and the cloud, suggesting a bright or glowing effect. The background of the entire page is a solid pink color with white line-art clouds and stars.

Our Core Principles

At CAS, we embody the following principles throughout our organisation, from our service delivery to internal operations and community partnerships.

1 Physical and emotional safety

Everyone we work with should experience a sense of physical safety and calm in our spaces.

2 Trustworthiness

Our clients are entitled to information about their lives and their care: what is to be done, by whom, when, why it is being done, and under what circumstances. Everything should be explained as clearly as possible. In addition, we keep boundaries respectful and professional. This encompasses everything from managing personal information to physical touch and contact outside of professional appointments.

3 Choice

Clients should have choice and control over the services they receive. Small choices are built into programmes and interventions. These include giving clients a say over the place and time of contact, and even the language used, to respect their sense of agency.

4 Collaboration

Our clients are partners and co-creators in their care, not passive recipients of our help. Our services emphasise a collaborative spirit where clients' voices are heard. Power does not reside in our staff or social workers but is shared by all parties involved.

5 Empowerment

As we develop and deliver programmes for clients, we must recognise that they are striving for ways to improve their lives and participate as valued members of society. Our work is thus to help them develop new skills or enhance existing ones. Whatever the challenges of their past, we want our clients to feel safe, to heal, and eventually, to thrive.

Helping our young clients resolve past trauma is key to not only their healing, but their long-term growth even after they leave our care. By breaking the intergenerational transmission of trauma, our work is part of a chain that supports their future contributions to their families, workplaces, and society.

We make room for hope.

Building a Trauma-Informed Care Approach

Q. What is trauma?

Trauma has its roots in the Greek word for “wound”. It is the lasting emotional and psychological response that results from being exposed to events that are emotionally disturbing or life-threatening. Trauma is not the life event, but what happens inside of you when the event overwhelms your inner capacity and resources to cope with the situation.

Trauma can fall into different categories.

Firstly, single incident trauma, such as a one-time incident like a car accident or natural disaster. Then there’s complex trauma, which often begins in childhood and occurs repeatedly within a relationship that is meant to be safe. Thirdly, there’s chronic trauma, where multiple stressful events take place within a short span of time, such as death of a loved one, an accident or illness.

Cindy Ng
Director of
Melrose Home

Q. What is the profile of children and youth at CAS that have had traumatic experiences?

At Melrose Home, our focus is on complex trauma as all the children have experienced traumatic childhood experiences in the first five years of their life. For our clients at Melrose Care, about 80 percent present with some form of trauma symptoms.

Q. What are the causes of trauma?

We have cases of kids who have been physically abused until they require hospitalisation, or who have gone through sexual abuse.

Another cause is emotional abuse where the child is made to feel like they’re not loved or worthy. For example, a parent may continuously dismiss a child’s emotions when he/she is crying. If the child does not have the resources to cope with the emotional disconnect, that can result in trauma.

There’s also neglect. We have been referred cases of children who do not have enough to eat, with little parental supervision and who hang out late in inappropriate company. The adults just don’t have the capacity to respond to the needs, for a variety of reasons. If neglect happens within the first five years of their life, these children tend to show the greatest symptoms.

Not everyone who experiences harm in childhood will develop a lasting trauma response. It depends on protective factors. These include a safe physical environment, consistent caregivers, and social and institutional support. In the absence of these, trauma is more likely to have lasting effects.



Q. How does the trauma manifest?

Often, these challenges – and the toxic stress they cause – are not adequately addressed. These are some signs:

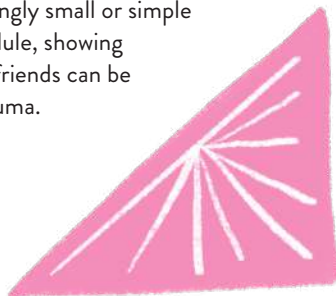
- Poor impulse control
- Emotional dysregulation
- Difficulty concentrating in class
- Disruptive or destructive conduct
- Falling behind in studies
- Poor sleep habits
- Appearing dreamy
- Constant rumination (repetitive or obsessive thoughts)

Rather than seeing it as mere ‘bad behaviour’ or ‘acting up’, these are trauma responses which arose as coping mechanisms in the face of prolonged adversity. At CAS, we see their effects not only in the counselling room, but in our clients’ families, schools, workplaces, community and society at large.



Q. What is the long-term impact of trauma?

In many instances, unresolved trauma can affect individuals and families for generations. It not only causes physical pain and emotional turmoil, but can have long-term medical, mental, social, and practical consequences, including difficulties with risk assessment and decision-making, poor emotional regulation skills, and challenges with maintaining healthy relationships. Even seemingly small or simple things, like committing to a schedule, showing up to appointments, and making friends can be complicated by the effects of trauma.



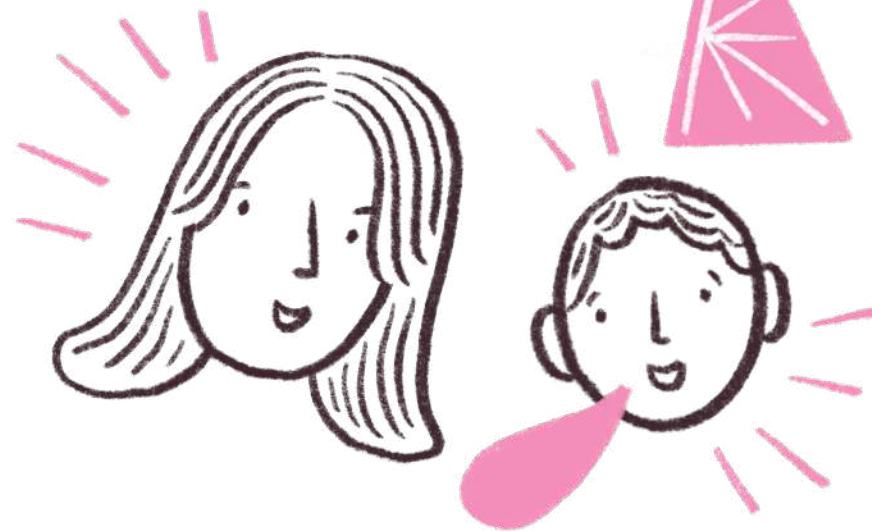
Q. What does it mean to have a trauma-informed approach?

As a social service organisation, we have a professional responsibility to respond to the lived experiences of the people we serve.

We acknowledge that most, if not all, our clients carry unresolved trauma that requires special care, compassion, and patience for healing to take place. To this end, we are intentional about adopting a trauma-informed approach in our work, underpinned by research and our team’s professional experience.

Our clients have the best shot at healing when they have services that address their trauma directly (trauma-focused therapies) and allow them to heal from their trauma in an environment that is sensitive to their recovery process (trauma-informed care).

We do not see clients as being challenging or difficult. Instead, we understand their behaviours as trauma responses which arose as coping mechanisms in the face of sustained adversity. Rather than asking “What is wrong with this person,” we ask, “What has happened to this person?”



Q. What are some examples of this approach?

- a. When a child displays difficult behaviour
We discourage punishing the child, such as hitting, yelling, and the use of psychological control to enforce compliance, as this can cause further adverse effects.
- b. Staff training
We equip staff with the knowledge of the short- and long-term effects of trauma and how to respond to clients with sensitivity and empathy. In a trauma-informed care environment, staff help children identify these triggers early on such as aggression of any form, family/peer rejection and how to manage their responses to them.
- c. Supporting our staff
We recognise that our staff can experience both direct and indirect trauma due to daily exposure to distressing details of clients' traumatic experiences. CAS is committed to finding ways to prevent, minimise the impact of, or treat the traumatic stress experienced by our staff.

"In a typical day at Melrose Home, the kids return from school in the evenings. It's this time when they're on edge, they get into fights, push each other around. It's easy to conclude that they are naughty and aggressive. But when you look at the child's history of trauma, he was hungry, tired and his needs were not met in the past. His body naturally goes into defensive mode."

"We're mindful of that, so we remind the child that it's not going to be the same anymore. We ensure we feed the child nutritious food and bring forward his bedtime so he can sleep earlier and rest. With time, the child recognises that it's going to be okay."

Q. Can the trauma lessen over time?

We do notice some improvements within six months, and successful cases where symptoms de-escalated within a year. With our trauma-informed environment and trauma-focused interventions, children can settle, feel safer and have a greater sense of trust.

Q: Why is going to Melrose Home useful?

We are the last stop for child protection cases referred by the Ministry of Social and Family Development.

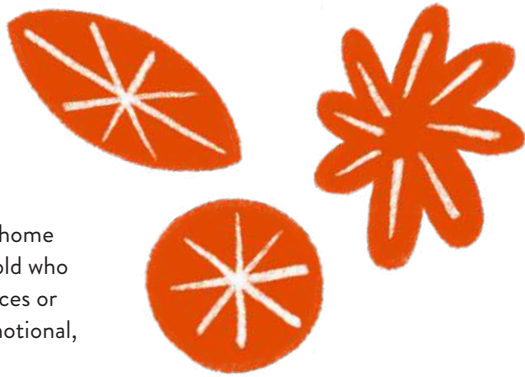
Children that come into a special care setting like ours need a lot more structured intervention and routine than what a foster family can give. Their symptoms are more severe, so care staff need to be trained on how to understand trauma symptoms and respond accordingly.

Q. How can the community be trauma-informed?

A community is trauma-informed when we can recognise and accept the impact of collective and individual trauma on the individuals and the families. It means we are sensitive to the vulnerabilities and needs of individuals in our midst who might be trauma survivors, and we are more open to giving the time and support trauma survivors would need in order to heal and achieve post-traumatic growth. This can result in a more respectful, supportive and compassionate society.



About Melrose Home



Melrose Home forms part of Singapore's out-of-home care sector. It is a residential home for children and youths aged 6 to 21 years old who are experiencing adverse family circumstances or child protection issues, such as physical, emotional, psychological and sexual abuse.

Out-of-home care is usually seen as a last-resort, temporary arrangement until it is safe for the children and youths to return home to their families.

As a result of the abuse they have experienced, residents struggle with trauma symptoms that have not been adequately addressed. We create a care environment that increases our residents' sense of safety, resilience and capacity to be empowered, independent and collaborative individuals.

Since 1902, Melrose Home has been home to over 6,000 young people. Beyond shelter and refuge, we care for each resident through carefully curated programmes focused on individual development and growth. We house between 45 to 60 children and youths at any one time. 50% of residents stay in Melrose Home for over three years.

Round-the-Clock Caregiving and Supervision

Our Guidance Officers:

- ensure that residents' nutritional, academic, social and emotional needs are met
- use trauma-informed strategies in their interactions with residents
- nurture and mentor residents

Casework and Counselling

Our caseworkers:

- conduct trauma screenings and assessments to understand residents' trauma history and symptoms
- develop care plans to support reunification of residents with their families
- address child safety concerns and develop a safety network of informal and formal support systems for residents

Resident-Centric Programmes and Support Activities

Our targeted programmes aim to help residents:

- build resources and resilience
- build relationships
- enhance structure in their lives



What does the future hold for the kids at Melrose Home's Children Wing? They share their hobbies, their strengths, new things they would like to try and areas they would like to grow in.



Our Hopes for 2023

"I like playing basketball with my friends at Melrose Home. I want to learn how to slam dunk. At school, my favourite subject is music. I like playing the flute. It makes nice songs, like Twinkle Twinkle Little Star."

Adee*, 8



"I enjoy playing soccer, in the mid-fielder position. I started training in Primary 5. I was very happy when Argentina won the FIFA World Cup 2022! Lionel Messi is my idol. He's good. Better than Ronaldo. Recently, the Melrose Home youths got to attend a three-day football camp with youths from other schools. The coach taught us how to dribble and shoot. But I still feel like it wasn't challenging enough. I want to play with more experienced players. In school, my favourite subject is PE. We play all kinds of sports: dodgeball, badminton, floorball. I'm looking forward to going out with my older sister on her birthday. I see her every weekend during home leave. She wants to go ice skating at JCube or watch a movie. I'm hoping she picks ice skating."

Joel*, 12



"Last year I went through PSLE. I had enough suffering for the last six years! Math was my most challenging subject. I cried when I got my results because I was so happy. I got my second choice for the secondary school posting. I have friends there, so I'm not that nervous about being in a new school. I want to try signing up for National Cadet Corps. I've always been in a sports CCA, so I want to try being in a uniformed group. This year, I want to learn to be more patient. When I get angry, I might punch my teddy bear. I'm trying to practice being calm. The staff at Melrose Home teach us techniques. I cool down by finding personal space, listening to music from this rapper called Juice WRLD, or talking to my friends."

Narissa*, 12



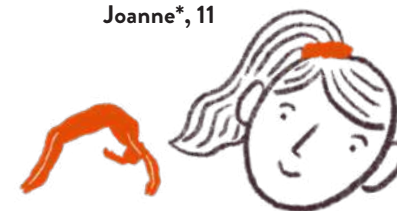
"My favourite hobby is swimming, and my auntie takes me to the swimming complex when she has free time. I like floating in the pool. One thing I want to improve is my drawing skills. I like to draw the characters Tanjiro and Nezuko from the anime Demon Slayer: Kimetsu no Yaiba. My friends at Melrose Home think I'm funny and energetic. We like to roleplay and watch the YouTuber JianHao Tan. This year I want to improve on my science, and my attitudes and reactions to everything."

Shahirah*, 10



"My goal is to learn to be more flexible! I can already do cartwheels and somersaults, but I want to do the backflip. I also like to disturb people, make them laugh. I feel nervous about taking the PSLE this year. My weak subject is math. I want to make sure I go to a good school."

Joanne*, 11



52
residents

were
cared for
in 2022

10
residents

were discharged
back to their
families (safety is
achieved at point
of discharge)

8
new
residents
joined CAS

52
families

were engaged
through casework
and counselling

*Names have been changed to maintain the residents' confidentiality

A New Home, A New Me

Angsty and rebellious — that’s how Samirah* describes how she used to be like a few years ago.

Today, Samirah couldn’t be more different. The soft-spoken and self-assured teenager displays a maturity beyond her years. She credits the transformation to her time at Melrose Home, where she has been living at since March 2021. Reflecting on her past, Samirah says, “Initially, I was very rude to the Melrose staff. But my behaviour changed because I realised, what was the point of being rude?”

Life at Melrose is “safe and fun”, says Samirah, citing the many programmes like baking, art and craft, dorm decoration, and outings, for instance. In addition, Melrose Home staff like Mdm Winnie has been a big positive influence on her.

“She’s always giving us advice because she has more life experience. I feel comfortable talking to her because she’s a kind and understanding person. She cares for us,” said Samirah, 12.

Samirah recalls how 2022 was a particularly challenging year, as she had to sit for the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE). At that time, she was struggling with her weaker subjects of mathematics and science and preferred to keep quiet in class. In addition, Samirah would often clam up in nervousness during the exams.

*Names have been changed to protect the confidentiality of the resident

All that changed after she enrolled into Melrose Home’s Academic Support Programme in November 2021. Thanks to the help of professional tuition teachers, Samirah was able to receive one-to-one, individualised coaching. During these sessions, she also readily asked questions.

“In the beginning, I was stuck at certain topics. I didn’t even understand some simple multiplication. But after their explanation and few practice tries, I finally understood it,” she said.

After putting in hours of hard work, Samirah’s efforts paid off and she did well enough to enrol at her second choice. “I was very proud of what I’d achieved,” said Samirah.

Though she was slightly disappointed at the school posting results, Mdm Winnie’s advice helped her.

“She told me that it’s okay if I didn’t get my first choice because I did my best. Sometimes in life you don’t get what you want. Some things are out of your control, so let it go,” said Samirah, adding that she plans to join student council or dance CCA.



Like with any normal teenager, it's not without moments of friendship drama as well.

Samirah's closest friend at Melrose Home is Isabella*, who she sees as her confidante and pillar of emotional support. But there is the danger of "being too dependent on each other," especially as she is more easily influenced by her friend's negativity, she said.

Samirah cites how Isabella had gone on a family trip to Malaysia, and she called to remind her friend to return to Melrose Home by curfew time. But Isabella was cranky and moody, and snapped back in response, leaving Samirah hurt.

Setting boundaries is important, something Samirah learnt during workshops at Melrose Home.



"I want to succeed in life, to have a good education and a good future."



"If we depend on each other too much, it's not always healthy. For instance, my friend copes with her anger by punching the wall, which was something I used to do in the beginning too," said Samirah.

These days, Samirah is trying to find healthier ways to work through her emotions. She does so by washing her hands and face, doing fitness workouts, and talking to a trusted adult.

On her goals for the future, she's thinking of a career as a counsellor. Says Samirah, "I like to give people advice on how to calm down and guide them on the right path. Life's too short to be angry!"



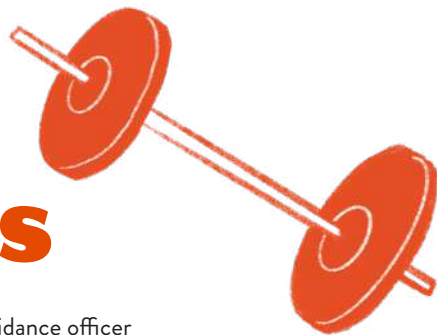
Academic Support Programme

- Aims to reduce social mobility and reduce inequality through the provision of personal professional tutoring conducted weekly or twice a week
- The programme engages full-time, committed, reliable and nurturing adult tutors who are able to read the child's mental status and adjust the lesson and their interactions accordingly

One of the significant impacts of child abuse established by international studies of children in residential care is a higher risk of failing and dropping out of the formal education system, and we witness this in our Home. Through the Academic Support Programme, we hope to give our children and youths a leg up in their studies by linking them up with professional tutors.

Find out more about our other programmes on pg 49.

Nurturing Young Minds



Meet Mervvyn, Melrose Home's senior guidance officer and fitness enthusiast.



A former regular with the Singapore Armed Forces, Mervvyn first got to know about CAS when he was tasked to spring clean the Melrose Home dorms during his National Service days. It opened his eyes to this segment of children and youths, who grow up in a different environment than most children.



Inspired to make a social impact, he took up a part-time degree in social work. He went on to work as a childcare teacher at a centre which serves at-risk children and youths, before joining CAS last August. Today, Mervvyn is part of the residential care team who is responsible for round-the-clock care of the children and youths at Melrose Home. With around 10 boys under his charge, the boys see Mervvyn as an older brother of sorts.

When the Melrose Home residents return home from school each day, Mervvyn oversees everything from their meals, showers, pocket money, medication to how they are faring emotionally. He spends the rest of the afternoon planning programmes for the residents and writing up the daily reports.

Nighttime gets a bit more "hectic", says the 28-year-old. The residents are busy with homework, tuition sessions, dorm cleaning duty and therapy sessions. After dinner, they have some free time to use their electronic devices, before going to bed by 10pm. Then the night shift team takes over from 10pm to 7am.

Mervvyn, Senior Guidance Officer, Melrose Home



To help the Melrose residents lead a more active lifestyle, Mervvyn floated the idea — why not introduce a workout session on the weekends? The first time he held the session, the residents were left with aching legs and sore bodies the entire week. Over time, their fitness levels improved, and they began to spur themselves to do more, eagerly participating in the HIIT workouts, games like dodgeball, and running.

Knowing that the residents come from different backgrounds and trauma profiles, Mervvyn is extra sensitive to the children's daily dynamics. He's conscious of the need to be patient, composed yet firm in times of pressure. Challenges can arise when there are cases of bullying or non-compliance with Melrose Home's rules, such as when the boys return late from school, or are reluctant to return their phones and laptops by bedtime.

It's about applying a trauma-informed lens as well, he says. When a child is shouting or screaming, it is easy to label them as defiant and angry. But it may also stem from a place of shame or sadness. "We try to understand the root cause of why the child is the way he is, and then the whole team comes together to mould his behaviour for the better," he says.

For instance, Mervvyn and the team worked with a boy who tended to get bullied by the others — not because he feared them — but because his coping mechanism was to comply, avoid conflict and to establish a sense of safety. Eventually, the boy was empowered to speak up for himself.

He says, "As a team, we're all trying to break the vicious cycle of trauma and make a difference in their life. We might not see a big change, but we still try."



Leading with Love

Meet Ain, unit leader at Melrose Home and resident mama bear.

A passionate educator, Ain has spent a large part of her career dedicated to guiding children and youths in a forest education setting. In 2021, she made the switch to a new environment at CAS, taking up the role of unit leader at Melrose Home.

"What attracted me the most when I first learned about CAS is the similarity in terms of pedagogical approach in providing holistic care and an inspirational inclusive environment for children and at-risk youths," she said.

Fiercely protective of the children and youths under her charge, Ain oversees the welfare and overall development of the Melrose Home residents, as well as the training and development of the guidance officers and guidance associates.

Under her watchful eye, nothing escapes her notice. She knows how the children are faring every single day, whether they are feeling happy, down, angry or upset, and she rides the highs and lows with them. Every child reacts to stress differently. Together, the team comes together to support them. Because of the trauma the children have experienced, they may also be of a delayed developmental age. Having a trauma-informed approach is key, she says.

To help the new guidance officers adjust, Ain put in place a shadowing system where the newcomers tag along with the senior guidance officers for a few months. She also does a daily check-in with her staff, who are tasked to write daily reports about the Melrose Home residents' well-being.

Ain, Unit Leader,
Melrose Home

No stranger to trying out unorthodox methods, Ain enjoys coming up with creative ways to problem-solve issues and better engage the children.

In the case of one boy who did not like to shower for personal reasons, she brought in an inflatable water slide and pool. The results were unexpected: the children gleefully splashed about in the water, and even brought in their soap and shampoo. Over time, the boy overcame his reluctance to shower and grew to love water.

For the Children Boys Wing that she oversees, the nightly bedtime routine means bringing in the diffuser, putting on some calming music, and letting the children gaze at the glow-in-the-dark stars and dinosaurs until they fall asleep.

Recently, Ain has been trying out something new. 40 minutes after the children have fallen asleep, she goes to every child's bed to whisper gentle words of affirmation, in hopes that it will seep into their subconscious. "We tell them things like 'Good job. Good boy. You're doing well.' The kids here need a lot more love and reassurance," she says.

"You always wonder, am I doing enough for the child, is the child okay, is my team at risk of burning out? With this job, you need the passion for it."

4 life lessons from Ain, an avid scuba diver

1

Stay calm in times of crisis

Stop, think and breathe. When you are underwater, you need to stay calm even when you are in crisis mode. It can save lives.

2

Know your limits

You have a limited amount of oxygen in the tank, so you need to be aware of your own limits and space yourself out. You can quickly get burnt out.

3

Practise self-care

As much as I encourage my team to practise self-care, I'm still a work-in-progress on that aspect! I like to have my me-time, hang out with friends, hike, and of course, scuba dive. When you're down in the ocean, it feels like you're in another world. That's how I recalibrate myself.

4

Remember it's a team effort

Just like how you have your dive buddy, I ensure I have the best team to dive alongside with me.

The Power of Connection

Meet Rachel, Melrose Home's case worker and community connector.

A psychology graduate, Rachel developed an interest in working with children and youths with mental health issues during her first job at a psychology clinic. Knowing that mental health struggles are especially pertinent for the children and youths at Melrose Home, she was inspired to join CAS in August 2021.

Rachel is part of a team of dedicated caseworkers who manage intervention and therapeutic support for both the residents and their families. This is done in partnership with schools, child protection officers, family service centres, doctors, therapists, counsellors, among others, to ensure holistic interventions for them.

As part of her job scope, Rachel oversees 10 cases, ranging from as young as 8 to 18 years old. Besides regular check-ins with the residents, her work also involves applying for financial assistance, referrals, liaising with the various partners and other administrative duties.

Rachel, Case Worker,
Melrose Home

Rachel describes the job as a “steep learning curve”, and one that involves plenty of multi-tasking.

“In advocating for the child, I link them up to resources and work with different systems and professionals. It's a lot of collaboration, teamwork, and getting everyone together on the same page,” she said.

In one incident, the Melrose staff noticed how a child steadily amassed a collection of pens, erasers, Beyblade toys and Pokémon cards which he had taken from schoolmates. After facing trauma in their early years, a child may steal to gain a sense of control over their surroundings and feel safe, explains Rachel.

His caseworkers and the school discussed a more empathetic approach to help the child manage his impulses. For instance, they created sticker charts to reward him for good behaviour, and the issue was managed over time.

Being in this job has exposed her to the larger systemic issues and how they can impact a child's development. Says Rachel, “I've seen first-hand how education, poverty, violence, gender and family dynamics have a trickle-down effect on children and that's when abuse happens. It's tragic but you also see a lot of strength in how so many different people come together to support the child... It really takes a village to raise a child.”

Living in the Community

Having grown up in Melrose Home since Lucas* was three, the residential facility has become the only home he's ever known. But this year, the 21-year-old will have to say goodbye to the space and embark on a new phase of life.

Lucas is among the first batch under the new CAS Independent Living Programme, to help older youths become productive adults who can be responsible for themselves, make independent decisions, become self-sufficient and contribute to the community meaningfully. As part of a housing programme, the youths will live in an apartment in the community and co-pay the rent.

Lucas



3 things I will miss

Friends and staff at Melrose Home

Free food

Active social life

2 things I've learnt

Treasure the time now

Life is made of checkpoints

Lucas says he is looking forward to the move. The polytechnic graduate just completed his diploma and is currently serving his National Service.

He observed that over the years, the Melrose Home residents get more opportunities to exercise their independence and choice, so that they have a taste of "what life is like outside."

For instance, the older youths are encouraged to take up part-time jobs or internships to gain more financial independence, are able to use their own money to purchase items, and are allowed to keep their phones overnight. Previously, the younger youths could only request items via a point system.

"There is more trust between us and the staff as they feel we are old enough to make our own decisions," explains Lucas.



Yusof



Over the last year, Melrose Home has ramped up its efforts to help support the transition.

Through workshops and weekly group discussion activities, Lucas learnt how to manage his finances through budgeting and saving (such as the 50-30-20 rule) and picked up skills on conflict resolution and cooking. For instance, they learnt how to cook simple meals like fried rice and to shop for groceries in bulk to save money.

Lucas lights up when he talks about being able to cook at the apartment. "I like it when you start to cook, and the kitchen smells great...It gets you excited about the food," he says. He plans to expand his cooking repertoire by searching up recipes on YouTube, taking up cooking classes and experimenting with creating his own dishes.

As for having to share the apartment with the three other boys, Lucas says that being at Melrose Home has already helped them get used to each other's daily living habits and to learn the art of compromise. While Lucas expressed worry about the rent, he said that he will strive to search for a full-time job in the electrical and engineering sector. He plans to get some industry experience, save up and pursue a degree at a later stage.

For his soon-to-be housemate Yusof*, 19, the thought of living on his own is a daunting but exciting prospect.

Yusof has been living at Melrose Home since he was seven years old. He jokes that he will be the "tidy one" in the future apartment as he likes to keep his area neat and clean.

3 things I will miss

Staff at Melrose Home

Doing activities with dorm mates

The food

2 things I've learnt

To share things as there are many other residents in Melrose Home

Save as much money as we can

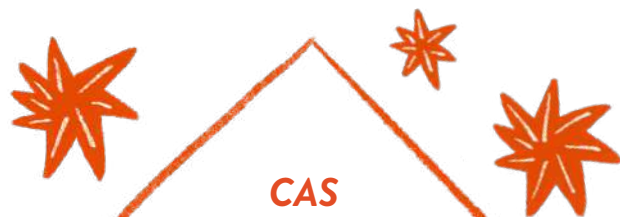
Yusof and the Melrose Home staff recently visited IKEA to check the prices for items needed for the house, such as a fridge, washing machine, dining table, study table, among others. They are also keeping a lookout for donated secondhand items.

Currently, Yusof works part-time at the cinema and saves half of what he earns, which will go to paying the rent and savings for his education. He plans to pursue a Higher Nitec course in events management.

For all their excitement, there's also an underlying sense of sadness at having to leave Melrose Home behind. Lucas recalls fond memories growing up, from outings at Turf City doing art and go-karting, to the friendships forged with staff and fellow residents.

"Most people in Singapore know what it's like to live in a HDB flat. For me, I treat Melrose Home like a type of HDB as well, it's just that there's a lot more people that you interact with every day and a little more restrictions. But I'm looking forward to experience living in a HDB flat for the first time."

*All names have been changed to protect the identity of clients



CAS Independent Living Programme

Who: Older youths aged 17 and above

Length: A 2-3-year programme

How it works: The Melrose Home residents will attend a series of intensive workshops that equip them with independent living skills. Approximately half of them with no family support will move into an apartment in the community, and co-pay the rent

Aims: Help youths become productive adults who can be responsible for themselves, make independent decisions, become self-sufficient, independent and contribute to the community in a meaningful manner

We support their growth and development in the following areas:

- Educational attainment: Provide support to achieve at least a tertiary education qualification
- Financial literacy: Provide avenues to encourage saving habits and develop money and debt management skills
- Income and work status: Encourage job-seeking skills through part-time jobs, internships, or full-time employment
- Develop other life skills: Develop food management, healthcare, housekeeping, emergency and safety skills, sexuality education, problem solving skills and interpersonal skills

Melrose Home Programmes



Programmes / Activities	Type / Impact	Number of workshops / Sessions
Melrose Heroes	Preparing for interviews, resume writing, job hunting	3 workshops for 7 residents
Academic Support Programme		1214 sessions for 17 residents
CAS Independent Living Programme	Career exploration, financial literacy, money management, home management	4 workshops / 12 sessions for 8 residents
Therapy Programme	In 2022, 65% of the residents receiving therapy showed a reduction in their trauma symptoms or maintained low level of trauma symptoms.	397 sessions for 20 residents
Mentoring Programme	Religious mentoring	52 sessions for 8 residents
Workshop on Consent and Healthy Relationship		6 sessions for 22 residents
Other resident-centric programmes and activities	Includes leisure and physical activities	199 activities for 52 residents





About Melrose Care

In 2019, Melrose Care was set up as a community-based agency to offer subsidised therapeutic services to more families in the community. Today, Melrose Care offers specialised therapies such as Art Therapy, Play Therapy, and Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, serving an average of 200 children, youths and their families in the community at any one time.

We provide:

Counselling

- Individual counselling
- Family counselling

Specialised therapies

- Trauma-focused Cognitive Behavioural therapy
- Individual art therapy
- Individual play therapy

Groupwork

- Parents' self-care and support group
- Therapeutic art-based groupwork for children
- Parent-child groupwork
- Outdoor groupwork for teens

One of the main approaches that our therapists, counsellors and psychologists are trained in:

Trauma-focused cognitive behavioural therapy (TF-CBT) is an intervention specifically tailored for children and adolescents experiencing emotional and psychological difficulties as a result of trauma. It helps to identify, understand and address the impacts of trauma on the child, which ranges from emotional symptoms to behavioural and learning challenges. TF-CBT is a short-term intervention that generally lasts anywhere from eight to 25 sessions. At the start, the child and safe caregiver may have separate therapy sessions before progressing to engaging in joint sessions.

Working Towards Healing

Q. What is Melrose Care about? Who do you serve?

We are a multidisciplinary team of trauma-informed art therapists, psychologists and counsellors.

We believe that this is a great holistic approach to support young persons and families to address and resolve emotional distress and overcome the negative effects of traumatic experiences. We provide counselling and therapy for young persons under 18, who have difficulty managing emotions, as well as to adult caregivers (of young persons 18 years and under) who have been impacted by adverse childhood experiences.

Q. What are adverse childhood experiences?

Adverse childhood experiences, or ACEs, are potentially traumatic events that occur in an individual's childhood that can undermine their sense of safety, stability, and bonding. Some examples include growing up in a household with:

- violence, abuse, or neglect
- family members with addiction or substance abuse problems
- mental health concerns in the family
- instability due to parental conflict or household members leaving abruptly due to death or imprisonment

Do note that this is not a complete list of adverse experiences. Many other traumatic experiences could impact health and wellbeing.

Soak Mun,
Principal Psychologist,
Melrose Care

Q. What are sessions at Melrose care like?

When children or youths are first referred to us, we often encourage a safe parent or caregiver to participate in the therapy journey. In our sessions, we work with parents to understand the underlying issues and collaborate in developing an intervention plan. We also work with parents to understand their perspective and interpretation of the young person's behaviours and emotional reactions, which may or may not be necessarily what the young person is trying to express.

Q. Who else do you work with?

Our intervention is not limited to working within the session, but we also work with the system around the youth. This involves working collaboratively with other formal and informal support in the community to support the child's or youth's life, such as their immediate and extended families, schools, family service centres, other community agencies, and hospitals.

Q. How do you work with the children, youths and their families?

We are mindful that each client may come with their unique needs in their life journeys and thus may have different therapeutic needs when they see us. Some may have limited resources and may like to focus on acquiring sufficient coping skills to get them through their challenging situations, whereas others may have sufficient mental and physical resources to work on deep-rooted issues such as their core beliefs about themselves, others and the world around them; or unresolved trauma of the past.

In the case of children and youths we see at our centre, we would approach their emotions and behaviours with curiosity. Their behaviours and emotional difficulties are essentially a reaction to something that is not going well in their lives. Instead of giving a quick fix to these issues, we seek to understand their underlying unmet emotional needs and support them and their families in meeting these needs.

It is thus important for us in our therapist role to keep pace with the client, to start from where they are at and work collaboratively to come up with their therapeutic goals. It is the journey of the client that the therapist seeks to walk with.

Q. What is the mindset you encourage clients to take?

We support clients to develop self-kindness and self-compassion in the way they manage life stressors, versus adopting a self-critical approach.

While we work at supporting the client in developing coping skills to address the issues they present with, a key goal in therapeutic work is to provide a safe and non-judgmental space for the client to express themselves, be understood and gain new insights about themselves or their struggles. Generally, we would also work together to come up with an approach that fits with the client's values system and their current emotional needs.

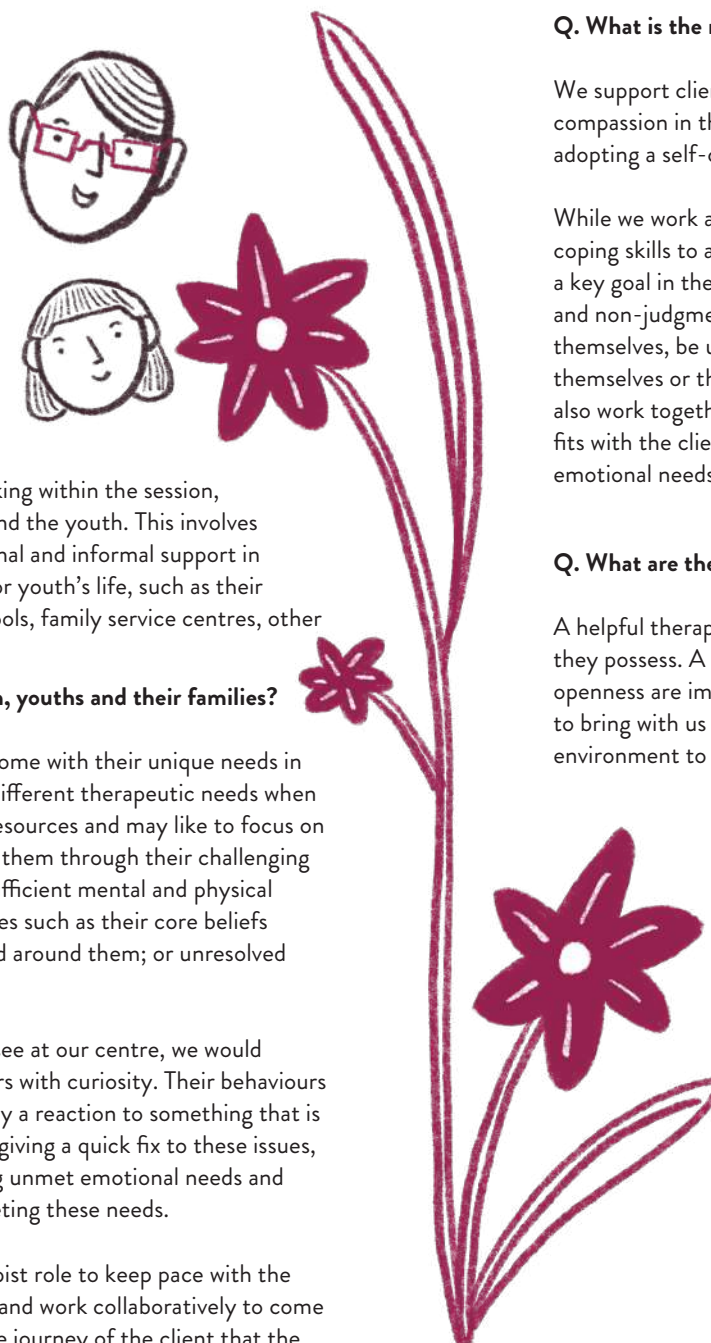
Q. What are the qualities of a helpful therapist?

A helpful therapist is more than the clinical skills they possess. A compassionate stance, curiosity and openness are important ingredients that we attempt to bring with us to foster a safe and therapeutic environment to facilitate healing for our clients.

Q. What is the team culture at Melrose Care?

We can support clients only as far as our work roles are being supported by our team members and management team. This meant a transparent, empowering and safe working environment where our team can remain our compassionate and authentic selves when we work with our clients.

As a team, we also support one another by taking part in regular peer and group supervision and ad-hoc consultations to discuss specific strategies that another team member may have expertise in. In this sense, we are committed to learn and develop our professional selves alongside with our client in hope to provide even better service to existing and future clients. At times, two or more clinicians may also work closely with different members of the same family, and we may hold joint sessions with the family members to facilitate communication or interpersonal healing.



Shaping our Philosophy of Care

Choice

- Families have choice in their healing journey

- Type of therapy / activities
- Pace of their therapy
- Supported referrals

Feedback

- Ongoing feedback from internal and external stakeholders

Inclusivity

- Sensitivity in honouring client's background, ethnicity, beliefs, and values

Acknowledgement

- Validate and honor experiences

Trauma-informed community

- Safe relationships are healed by a community and not just one individual

Impact

Total no. of clients served	325
New clients	133
Total no. of families	96
Total no. of sessions held	1927

Referral breakdown

Self-referrals	55%
Social service agencies	25%
School	6%
Healthcare	3%
Government / MSF	2%
Melrose Home	9%



Melrose Community



A Guiding Pillar of Support

From answering questions about Islam to giving advice how to cope with struggles in life, it's all in a day of volunteer's work for Hidayati Aznim, a staff at Assyakirin Mosque.

Since mid-2022, Hidayati has been making the trip to Melrose Home to conduct an hour of religious mentoring with three female youths, aged 16.

To break the ice, she incorporates fun activities within the session, such as exercises to explore their favourite hobbies, places and what they value. For instance, the youths expressed a wish to build stronger relationships with their families or to be closer to God, she said.

Beyond religious mentoring, the girls have sought her advice about challenges they face in their personal life, such as personal management or studies.

In one case, one mentee who missed a few sessions shared that she was "not in the best state of mind" mentally. Despite all this, she tries her best to join in every week and has been consistently attending the sessions now as she feels they have been helpful for her, recalled Hidayati, 27.

"For some, religion may be a coping mechanism and a form of guidance and light in their lives as they go through difficult things, knowing that ultimately there is an objective for living in this world," she explained.

This year, she hopes to reach out to more youths at Melrose Home. "For these youths, it's an important period of their lives when they are searching for a sense of purpose and identity. I'm grateful to be able to create that space for them," she said.

Hidayati, Volunteer,
Melrose Home

Befrienders Programme

Under the Befrienders Programme, committed individual befrienders from diverse backgrounds and expertise interact with our residents for a period of six to 12 months.

Key Objectives

Help our residents develop a greater degree of self-confidence, self-esteem, and emotional growth

Enable the young person to develop a greater capacity to make use of their own personal resources

Help the young person to develop a capacity to form and maintain positive relationships with others

Empower young person to develop a greater degree of feelings of achievement

Equip the young person to access mainstream activities and develop their current skills and abilities and experience new activities

Traits of A Befriender

Honest

Trustworthy

Committed

Friendly

Strong listening skills

Have mutual respect and ability to approach people without prejudice

Professional and people focused

Ability to offer caring and understanding presence

A Mission to Help Youths Make More Informed Decisions

Imagine if you could buy a successful career, good health or a special talent? What would you prioritise and how much would you be willing to fork out for it?

This was the question CAS volunteer Sarah Poh posed to the youths at Melrose Home during a financial literacy workshop. To get the youths engaged, she had come up with an “auction-style” game where they could envision building their dream life.

Navigating the financial world can be daunting for young adults, said Sarah, a financial consultant and former social worker.

Having come from the social sector, Sarah says she has a deeper level of understanding about the challenges that these youths face. That was why she decided to put her expertise to good use and volunteer with CAS.

Over three Saturday mornings in November, she covered a range of topics: everything from the basics of budgeting, investing, taxes, inflation, credit card debt, to even the potential pitfalls of buy-now-pay-later schemes.

The group of youths — aged between 17 to 19 years — opened up about their worries. Having stayed in Melrose Home for most of their childhood and teenage years, they fretted about learning to be independent, find a job and support themselves financially.

“As they shared their concerns, we acknowledged that yes, the outside world can be scary. These things are overwhelming, but we also need to tell them that they are not alone, that there are many adults out there with these same worries,” she said.

Many of these youths had taken up part-time jobs as delivery riders or worked at F&B outlets and the cinema.

Sarah took the opportunity to share that while such gig roles were potentially lucrative and offered flexibility, they should not limit themselves to these jobs.

“It’s a good starting point, but it doesn’t have to be your end point. You can also take the time to invest in yourself and explore what you’re interested in,” said Sarah. For instance, the youths could also consider furthering their education or working in full-time roles with CPF benefits as this would help with home ownership and stability in the long run.

So far, the reception has been positive. The group actively took part in the activities and could keep up with the content, said Sarah. She recalled how there was a boy who was late for the first session and appeared to be tired. “As time went by, I could tell that he got more engaged, and he was really thinking through the questions. In fact, he made sure to reach earlier in the third session and looked eager to be there!”

*Sarah, Volunteer,
Melrose Home*

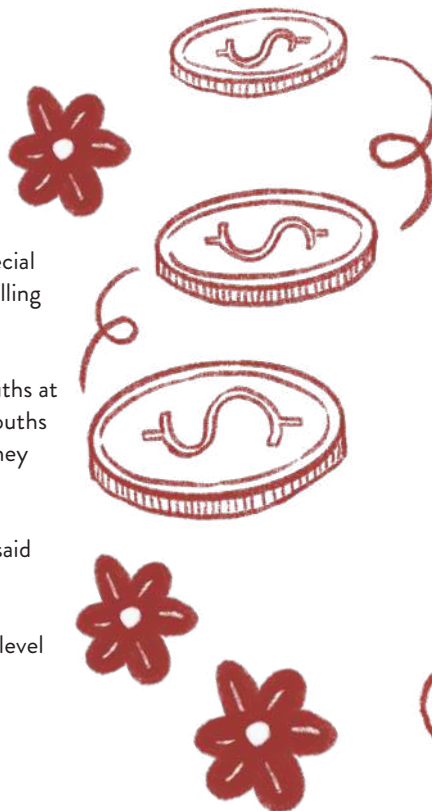
For now, Sarah hopes to conduct future sessions and rope in her colleagues to help.

One topic she would like to explore is the psychology behind the youths’ spending habits. During this period, teenagers are still exploring their sense of identity and may splurge on expensive branded goods and things that define them, she said.

And while there are many financial resources readily available on the Internet, having a trusted mentor share his/her life experiences in such sessions is valuable too.

To Sarah, it’s important to go beyond a “one-way” exchange of information, and to ensure the content is accessible and connects with them.

“By having more financial awareness early in life, they learn to make healthier and more informed choices. It’s also about helping them to understand that we all don’t share the same path and there are different ways to get to where we want to be,” she said.



A Culture of Doing Good

Supporting the community has always been a key part of Credit Suisse's culture.

Since 2015, its employees have consistently volunteered their time for the children of CAS by engaging them through various activities such as outings and baking sessions.

In 2022, Credit Suisse partnered with CAS on two staff-led fundraising initiatives.

One of them was the Credit Suisse Charity 3km Walk/Run, where participants could complete the distance at their own pace around Credit Suisse's office or MacRitchie Reservoir and make a minimum donation of \$5 to participate. Credit Suisse made an additional donation to CAS when over 100 staff participated in the walk, raising close to \$13,300 in total.

During the 2022 Singapore Grand Prix, the Credit Suisse Singapore Parents' Network organised a fun-filled event for staff and their family and raised over \$10,000 for CAS.

These initiatives in 2022 saw the participation of over 250 Credit Suisse employees, demonstrating its commitment to supporting local communities.

Helping corporates to recognise the value of corporate social responsibility is one way to encourage more of them to come onboard, said Laetitia Lienart, Head of Corporate Citizenship & Foundations APAC.

She added, "The CSR initiatives we have organised with CAS have not only been beneficial for the children but also our employees who feel a sense of purpose in contributing and giving back. This in turn creates a positive impact on our employees' level of engagement and motivation at work as well as retention."



Our Future



Melrose Village Rebuilding Project

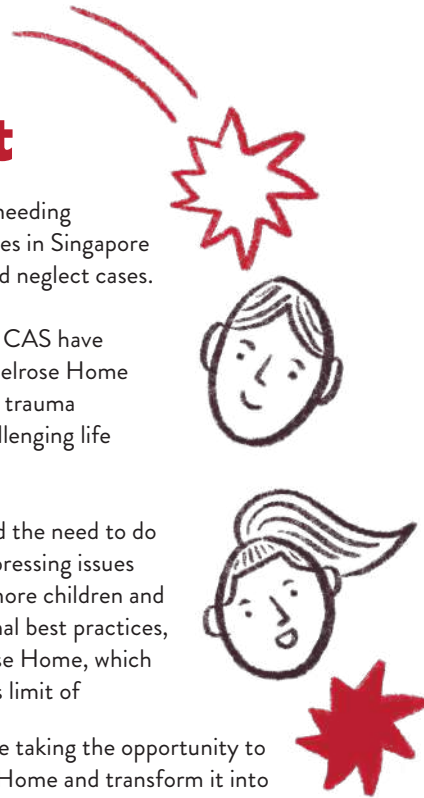
There is an increasing number of children and youths needing residential, psychological or specialised therapy services in Singapore with the rise in population coupled with child abuse and neglect cases.

In fact, most of the children and youths we support at CAS have had traumatic childhood experiences, with 100% of Melrose Home residents and 80% of Melrose Care clients presenting trauma symptoms due to abuse, neglect or other types of challenging life circumstances.

This growing social issue of child abuse and neglect and the need to do more for the affected children and youths have been pressing issues that we address at CAS. And while we want to serve more children and youths and provide quality care in line with international best practices, we are limited by the physical infrastructure of Melrose Home, which has served us for the past 50 years and has reached its limit of physical repurposing.

This is why we are taking the opportunity to rebuild Melrose Home and transform it into Melrose Village.

The new premises will offer more facilities for increased capacity and differentiated programmes, and a 60% space increase – from 2,200sqm within 50-year-old structures to 3,500sqm in a new building. Most importantly, the facilities will allow our staff to incorporate international best practices for working with traumatised children and youth.



When completed, Melrose Village will be equipped with:

- A A smaller group home-like setting for our residents as compared to the current large dormitory-like environment**
Practice-based evidence suggests a smaller group arrangement with a home-like setting (like small apartments) for delivering care is more appropriate and effective for children with severe trauma history.
- B Proper facilities for family visitations, counselling and specialised therapies**
Reintegration into the family and community requires continual support, and easier access to more advanced counselling and psychological services within the same compound will facilitate healing for our children and youths.
- C More advanced counselling and psychological services, and conducive facilities for study, music, sports and recreational activities**
The more complex nature of child welfare cases calls for more advanced counselling and psychological services such as art therapy, play therapy, personalised academic guidance and coaching for school curriculum, as well as conducive facilities for study, music, sports and recreational activities to enable holistic mental and physical development.
- D Hostel facilities for older youths to provide a longer runway for more assured independence**
While CAS strives to support older youths transitioning into adulthood to reintegrate into society, some youths are not fully ready to live independently in the community. Hostel facilities for these youths will allow them to experience having a space of their own while being in close proximity to the CAS staff for continuous support and guidance.

To achieve our vision of Melrose Village, CAS needs to raise \$22 million by 2024 and we are looking for your support.

Join us in our journey to make Melrose Village a reality!



We believe it takes a village to raise resilience. You can empower the children and youths in our community to rise above adversity with hope, courage and dignity by:

1. Giving a monetary donation
2. Fundraising for us
3. Sponsoring fundraising programmes & activities
4. Helping to share our story, our purpose and our appeal for donation

Special thanks to our Gold Partners:

Diana Koh Foundation

NTUC FairPrice Foundation

CAS staff share their vision for the future

Our Hopes for CAS



"My hope for the organisation is that we are constantly striving to improve ourselves and our systems to become a leading social service organisation."

Elfie, Human Resources



"We hope to build stronger networks with both corporates and individuals, and for them to come onboard as champions for our cause. With their kindness and generosity, we can help Melrose Village become a reality."

Kai Kit, Fundraising



"For the Melrose residents, I hope that they recognise the value of education, and have the resources to support them. With a strong foundation in their studies, they can shoot for the stars."

Faris, Accounts & Administration



"I hope that our Melrose residents will not feel defined by what has happened to them. It's our wish to see them grow in resilience and be empowered to be the captain of their lives!"

Ying Si, Social Care



"The word 'therapy' often gives the impression that something is broken and needs to be fixed. It may not always be the case. We hope that experiences at Melrose Care help reframe how therapy can be empowering and useful in unleashing one's potential as well. We believe that it will allow a person to cope with and accept different parts of himself/herself holistically."

Jeanette, Art Therapist

Donor Acknowledgements

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Corporate Information & Governance

Corporate Information

Date of Registration as a Society: 19 Dec 1962

Date of Registration as a Charity under Charities Act (Chapter 37): 14 Feb 1984

UEN Number: S62SS0031K

Institution of a Public Character No.: IPC000456
(Accorded till 31 March 2025)

Registered Address: 35 Boon Lay Avenue, Singapore 649962

Charity Trustees Bankers: HSBC Trustee (S) Ltd

Bankers: The Hongkong & Shanghai Banking Corporation Ltd, United Overseas Bank Ltd

Auditors: RSM Chio Lim LLP

Honorary Legal Advisors:
Allen & Gledhill LLP

Honorary Doctors:
Drs Bain & Partners, Chang Clinic

Honorary Advisors: Dr Chang Tou Liang
- Medical Practitioner

Corporate Governance

CAS is committed to a high standard of compliance with accounting, financial reporting, internal controls, corporate governance and auditing requirements and any legislation relating thereto. In line with this commitment, the following policies are in place:

Conflict of Interest Policy

All members of the EXCO, Sub-Committees and staff of CAS are required to read and understand the Conflict-of-Interest Policy in place and provide full disclosure annually of interests, relationships and holdings that could potentially result in a conflict of interest. The members and staff have fully complied with the Conflict-of-Interest Policy.

Whistle-blowing Policy

Our Whistle-blowing Policy is intended to provide an avenue for employees and other stakeholders to raise serious concerns and offer reassurance that they will be protected from reprisals or victimisation for whistle blowing in good faith. It also serves to deter malpractice and promote the best practice of corporate governance at the workplace. The Audit Sub-Committee is responsible for the maintenance and operation of this policy.

Succession Planning Policy

Succession planning is an ongoing consideration of the EXCO. When an existing EXCO member chooses to retire or the need for a new EXCO member arises, the EXCO reviews the range of expertise, skills and attributes of the EXCO and the composition of the EXCO. Once a suitable candidate has been identified, he/she will be co-opted as a sub-committee member for exposure to the work of the Home. After a period of observation of at least 6 months, the sub-committee member who demonstrates core competencies, skills, experience and commitment may be appointed as an EXCO member.

Our Financials

Statement of Financial Activities Year Ended 31 December 2022

	Notes	2022			2021		
		Unrestricted Funds \$	Restricted Funds \$	Total \$	Unrestricted Funds \$	Restricted Funds \$	Total \$
Income							
Donation	4	1,400,143	411,182	1,811,325	892,938	388,260	1,281,198
Fee income		–	88,428	88,428	–	83,780	83,780
Government grants	5	162,600	1,986,768	2,149,368	221,290	1,542,401	1,763,691
Gifts in kind		125,264	–	125,264	158,478	–	158,478
Total income		1,688,007	2,486,378	4,174,385	1,272,706	2,014,441	3,287,147
Expenditure							
Administrative expenses		(26,512)	(22,121)	(48,633)	(1,306)	(35,532)	(36,838)
Auditors remuneration		(25,500)	–	(25,500)	(23,500)	–	(23,500)
Bank charges		–	(1,931)	(1,931)	–	(1,487)	(1,487)
Food expenses		(13,852)	(178,822)	(192,674)	–	(156,257)	(156,257)
Central provident fund		(86,233)	(285,589)	(371,822)	(63,271)	(267,336)	(330,607)
Residents expenditure		(113,475)	(240,054)	(353,529)	(50,772)	(180,982)	(231,754)
Depreciation of property, plant and equipment		–	(161,259)	(161,259)	–	(158,504)	(158,504)
Depreciation of right-of-use asset		–	(209,801)	(209,801)	–	(209,801)	(209,801)
Fee waiver programme		(37,360)	(8,435)	(45,795)	–	(49,865)	(49,865)
Foreign workers levy		–	(53,066)	(53,066)	–	(49,877)	(49,877)
Housekeeping supplies		–	(33,645)	(33,645)	–	(16,483)	(16,483)
Insurance		(10,777)	(16,799)	(27,576)	(11,495)	(20,807)	(32,302)
Loss on disposal of financial assets at fair value through profit or loss ("FVTPL")		(123,785)	–	(123,785)	(65,327)	–	(65,327)
Medical		–	(9,721)	(9,721)	(67)	(6,463)	(6,530)
Miscellaneous		–	(21,203)	(21,203)	–	(34,366)	(34,366)
Interest expense	6	–	(19,777)	(19,777)	–	(24,874)	(24,874)
Professional fees		(59,061)	–	(59,061)	(60,021)	(840)	(60,861)
Provision for unutilised leave		3,781	(3,588)	193	5,682	31,366	37,048
Repairs and maintenance		–	(105,290)	(105,290)	–	(68,023)	(68,023)
Telephone		–	(10,174)	(10,174)	–	(9,416)	(9,416)
Salaries		(577,763)	(1,913,181)	(2,490,944)	(437,673)	(1,804,692)	(2,242,365)
Staff training		–	(14,665)	(14,665)	(251)	(11,693)	(11,944)
Staff welfare		–	(1,769)	(1,769)	–	(4,329)	(4,329)
Government service tax expenses		(1,707)	–	(1,707)	(1,645)	(6,522)	(8,167)
Transportation		–	(29,007)	(29,007)	–	(21,244)	(21,244)
Rental of equipment		–	(2,324)	(2,324)	–	(2,324)	(2,324)
Utilities		–	(72,675)	(72,675)	–	(67,078)	(67,078)
Changes in fair value of financial assets at FVTPL		(183,960)	–	(183,960)	–	–	–
Total expenditure		(1,256,204)	(3,414,896)	(4,671,100)	(709,646)	(3,177,429)	(3,887,075)

Statement of Financial Activities Year Ended 31 December 2022

	2022			2021		
	Unrestricted Funds \$	Restricted Funds \$	Total \$	Unrestricted Funds \$	Restricted Funds \$	Total \$
Other income:						
Interest income from deposits at amortised cost	12,067	–	12,067	–	–	–
Dividend income from investments	72,305	–	72,305	59,764	–	59,764
Interest income from deposits and financial assets at FVTPL	136,352	–	136,352	179,095	–	179,095
Members' subscriptions 650 – 650				1,275	–	1,275
Special employment credit and wage credit scheme from government	–	–	–	5,423	–	5,423
Other income 188,548 – 188,548				562,195	–	562,195
Gain in fair value of financial assets at FVTPL	–	–	–	130,035	–	130,035
Total other income	409,922	–	409,922	937,787	–	937,787
Total surplus/(deficit) for the year	841,725	(928,518)	(86,793)	1,500,847	(1,162,988)	337,859

Statement of Financial Position Year Ended 31 December 2022

	Notes	2022 \$	2021 \$
ASSETS			
<u>Non-current assets</u>			
Property, plant and equipment	8	1,020,773	1,134,035
Right-of-use assets	9	489,872	699,673
Total non-current assets		<u>1,510,645</u>	<u>1,833,708</u>
<u>Current assets</u>			
Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	10	8,599,434	8,723,791
Trade and other receivables	11	63,230	52,009
Other non-financial assets	12	149,357	125,579
Cash and cash equivalents	13	3,496,953	3,294,095
Total current assets		<u>12,308,974</u>	<u>12,195,474</u>
Total assets		<u>13,819,619</u>	<u>14,029,182</u>
FUNDS AND LIABILITIES			
<u>Funds</u>			
<u>Unrestricted fund</u>			
General funds	14A	7,514,099	7,912,034
<u>Restricted funds</u>			
BNP Fund	14B	24,401	39,386
Clementi Melrose Village Fund	14C	4,989,243	4,642,834
ST Telemedia Fund	14F	–	50,135
Asset Capitalisation Reserve	14G	72,307	42,454
		<u>5,085,951</u>	<u>4,774,809</u>
Total funds		<u>12,600,050</u>	<u>12,686,843</u>
<u>Non-current liabilities</u>			
Lease liabilities	18	309,237	532,038
Provisions	16	187,087	182,610
Total non-current liabilities		<u>496,324</u>	<u>714,648</u>
<u>Current liabilities</u>			
Other payables	17	500,444	410,223
Lease liabilities	18	222,801	217,468
Total current liabilities		<u>723,245</u>	<u>627,691</u>
Total liabilities		<u>1,219,569</u>	<u>1,342,339</u>
Total funds and liabilities		<u>13,819,619</u>	<u>14,029,182</u>

Reserve Policy

The reserves ratio (general fund / total resources expended) of CAS's General Fund is 1.61 (2021:2.06). The reserve of CAS provides financial stability and the means for the development of its activities. CAS intends to maintain the reserves at a level sufficient for its operating needs. The EXCO review the level of reserves regularly for CAS's continuing obligations.

Statement of Cash Flows Year Ended 31 December 2022

	2022 \$	2021 \$
<u>Cash flows from operating activities</u>		
Net (deficit)/surplus resources for the year	(86,793)	337,859
Adjustments for:		
Interest income	(148,419)	(179,095)
Dividend income	(72,305)	(59,764)
Depreciation of property, plant and equipment	161,259	158,504
Depreciation of right-of-use asset	209,801	209,801
Interest expenses on lease liabilities	15,300	20,504
Change in fair value of financial assets at fair value through profit and loss ("FVTPL")	183,960	(130,035)
Loss on disposal of financial assets at FVTPL	123,785	65,327
Operating cash flows before changes in working capital	386,588	423,101
Trade and other receivables	(11,221)	621,936
Other non-financial assets	(23,778)	(53,577)
Other payables	90,221	(73,024)
Provisions	4,477	4,371
Net cash flows from operating activities	<u>446,287</u>	<u>922,807</u>
<u>Cash flows used in investing activities</u>		
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(47,997)	(46,121)
Purchase of financial assets at FVTPL	(23,377,133)	(8,050,291)
Proceeds from sale of financial assets at FVTPL	23,193,745	7,835,808
Dividend received	72,305	59,764
Interest received	148,419	179,095
Net cash flows used in investing activities	<u>(10,661)</u>	<u>(21,745)</u>
<u>Cash flows used in financing activities</u>		
Repayment of lease liabilities	(232,768)	(232,767)
Net cash flows used in financing activities	<u>(232,768)</u>	<u>(232,767)</u>
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	202,858	668,295
Cash and cash equivalents, statement of cash flows, beginning balance	3,294,095	2,625,800
Cash and cash equivalents, statement of cash flows, ending balance (Note 13)	<u>3,496,953</u>	<u>3,294,095</u>

Disclosure of Remuneration Staff

The annual remuneration of the top key executive of CAS exceeds \$100,000 but did not individually exceed \$200,000.

Board

The members of the Executive Committee and Sub-Committees of the Society do not receive any remuneration or benefits for their services.

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