



MEDIA RELEASE

TOUCH CYBER WELLNESS SYMPOSIUM: EMPOWERING THE COMMUNITY IN THE DIGITAL AGE – CONVERSATIONS ON ONLINE HARMS, e-GAMING AND CYBERBULLYING

SINGAPORE, 25 SEPTEMBER 2021 – TOUCH Cyber Wellness' ("TCW" or "触爱网络健全服务") and the Media Literacy Council organised an inaugural symposium to celebrate TCW's 20 years of championing cyber wellness education in Singapore, reaching out to 360 schools and more than 1.6 million children, youths, parents, educators and counsellors. The symposium, which is free for members of the public, aims to impart insights on digital trends, and equip families and educators with knowledge and skills to play a proactive role in cyber wellness education. It includes a panel discussion and breakout workshops. The virtual symposium saw some 1,000 registrants comprising educators, parents, children, youths, and community partners. Dr Janil Puthuchery, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Communications and Information, officiated the launch, in support of the Digital for Life movement.

Research has shown that early exposure to porn at impressionable ages may adversely shape the sexual practices and attitudes of young teens that may stay with them throughout adolescence. According to the Ministry of Social and Family Development, it may also potentially strengthen attitudes supportive of sexual aggression against women and be a risk factor for sexual offences.¹

To address this issue, TOUCH Community Services ("TOUCH" or "触爱社会服务") today launched a new programme, *e-Conversations for the Family (Pornography)*. Through the programme, parents will learn to engage their children in conversations on pornography and shape their children's online habits, with the help of a specially designed conversation toolkit developed in partnership with Matthew Soon (孙明照), an Industrial Design graduate from the National University of Singapore's School of Design and Environment, and his supervisor, Associate Professor Patrick Chia (谢肖龙). The toolkit comprises a deck of cards which guide parents on how to have fruitful conversations with their children by asking the right questions and using effective communication techniques. Apart from the module on pornography, TOUCH will also be developing and introducing other modules on online harm, cyberbullying and excessive gaming, in the coming months.

During the event, SMS Janil Puthuchery expressed his appreciation for TOUCH stepping up to join the Digital for Life movement to champion and galvanise the community by helping parents and youths navigate the online space safely and responsibly. **SMS Janil** said "Community partners like TOUCH play an important role in our Digital for Life (DfL) movement by inculcating cyber wellness and digital literacy in our youths who are digital natives and may be exposed to online harms. I

¹ <https://www.todayonline.com/singapore/watching-porn-getting-addicted-experts-tell-cases-theyve-seen-and-risks-linked-sexual>

welcome more partners joining the DfL movement to build a safer, more responsible, and more respectful digital space for all.”

Mr James Tan (陈锦耀), CEO of TOUCH said, “We cannot emphasise enough the important role that parents play in keeping our children safe online. As children navigate cyberspace, parents need to make this journey with them, building a strong parent-child relationship along the way while nurturing a positive digital culture at home.”

He added, “Learning to speak with, not just speak to, our children is the first step a parent/guardian must take to release our children’s potential and hedge protection over them against a multitude of online risks.”

Mr Lock Wai Han, Chairman of Media Literacy Council said, “We are excited to partner with TOUCH Cyber Wellness for this symposium, in support of the Digital for Life movement. With the increased digital use permeating all areas of our lives, it is essential for parents to be aware of both the benefits and pitfalls of digital use. With the knowledge gained from the symposium, parents will be well-equipped with the tools and knowledge for their digital parenting journey.”

– End –

ABOUT TOUCH COMMUNITY SERVICES

Since 1992, TOUCH Community Services has served people of all backgrounds to see sustainable change and transformation in their lives. It believes in the worth and potential of every child, youth at-risk, family in need, senior and person with special or healthcare needs to grow, participate and contribute in the community. The heartbeat of TOUCH is to **activate potential, build independence, connect people, and deliver impact** by developing sustainable solutions in society. For more information on TOUCH, please visit www.touch.org.sg

ABOUT TOUCH CYBER WELLNESS

TOUCH Cyber Wellness (TCW) is a service of TOUCH Integrated Family Group by TOUCH Community Services. An award-winning and leading pioneer in the field of cyber wellness and new media literacy, TCW has spearheaded efforts to reach out to 360 schools and more than 1.6 million children, youths, parents, educators and counsellors. Through mentoring and advocacy, TCW has engaged Singapore youths to address social and behavioural issues of excessive cyber usage. It delivers a range of pre and post intervention programmes that instil the principles of good digital citizenship in the community.

ABOUT THE MEDIA LITERACY COUNCIL

The Media Literacy Council (MLC) is a group of members from the people, private, and public sectors. The MLC spearheads public education on media literacy and cyber wellness, and advises the government on appropriate policy responses to the evolving world of media, technology, and consumer participation.

In today's digital and social media landscape, the MLC seeks to address problems such as cyber security and safety, privacy, uncivil online behaviour, and disinformation. Its role in the nation is to encourage people's critical abilities and refine their understanding of the online world so as to enable Singaporeans to be safe, smart, and kind digital users.

For more information, visit: www.betterinternet.sg

ABOUT THE DIGITAL FOR LIFE MOVEMENT

To help build a digital inclusive society, the Digital for Life movement was launched by President Halimah Yacob on 8 Feb 2021 to support projects and activities that promote Digital Technology & Inclusion and Digital Literacy & Wellness. The movement aims to galvanise the community to help Singaporeans embrace digital as a lifelong pursuit, and to enrich their lives through digital.

For more information, visit: www.imda.gov.sg/digitalforlife

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EMPOWERING THE COMMUNITY IN THE DIGITAL AGE – CONVERSATIONS ON
ONLINE HARMS, e-GAMING AND CYBERBULLYING**

Time	Programme
10.30am – 1100am	Welcome
11.00am – 11.05am	Speech by CEO of TOUCH
11.05am - 11.10am	Speech by SMS Janil Puthuchery, Ministry of Communications and Information
11.10am – 11.20am	Anniversary Celebration & Launch of <i>e-Conversations for the Family (Pornography)</i> .
11.20am - 12.05pm	Panel Discussion: Having e-Conversations with Digital Natives Moderated by: Mr Shem Yao, Head of TOUCH Parenting <u>Panellists</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr Janil Puthuchery, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Communications & Information (Guest-of-Honour & Panellist) 2. Ms Charmaine Jalleh, Counsellor at TOUCH Youth Intervention (Panellist) 3. Ms Anderea Ang, TCW Youth Volunteer (Panellist)
12.05pm - 1.15pm	Lunch Break
1.15pm – 2.00pm	Workshop1 (parent-child): Building a Positive Digital Family Culture Together <i>by TOUCH Parenting</i> Workshop 2 (for Educators): The Digital Landscape & Youth Engagement <i>by TOUCH Cyber Wellness</i> Workshop 3 (For Youths): Ask Me Anything <i>by Instagram</i>
2.00pm – 2.15pm	Break
2.15pm – 3.00pm	Workshop 4 (for parents): e-Conversation for the Family Series (Pornography) <i>by TOUCH Parenting</i> Workshop 5 (for youths): Content Creation and Safety <i>by TikTok</i>
3.00pm – 3.15pm	Break
3.15pm – 4.00pm	Workshop 6 (for parents): Online Harms & Cyberbullying <i>by TOUCH Parenting</i>
4.00pm – 4.15pm	Closing