

# DONOR REPORT

## MUSIM MAS BLUESTAR\* FUND

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REPORT **2**

APR—OCT 2021





We would like to thank Musim Mas for their generous donation of \$1,000,000 to the BlueStar\* Fund.  
We would also like to thank our anonymous Angel donor for their \$50,000 donation to the Fund.

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# Executive Summary

\* In partnership with Musim Mas, the Musim Mas BlueStar\* Fund raised **\$1,050,000** in 2020. **95%** of funds raised have been committed to Outreach and Awareness, Early Intervention, and other Intervention projects. As of 31 October 2021 the Fund was working with **8** grantee partners that have reached **30,948** beneficiaries.

The Covid-19 pandemic has contributed to a decline in youth mental health. In a National Youth Council study conducted between February to October 2020, 1 in 5 youth said that their mental health was 'poor' or 'very poor'. Youths in the survey indicated that they were stressed about the Covid-19 situation and were feeling uncertain about their future.<sup>1</sup>

The government has been responding. In 2020 it launched the Youth Mental Well-Being Network, jointly supported by MOE, MSF and MOH, to develop ground-up initiatives to address youth mental wellbeing. MOE also improved resources and support for youth mental health in schools, including teaching youths to recognise signs of distress in peers.

Despite these efforts, 2021 continued to be a challenging year for youths as concerns about their studies and feelings of uncertainty about their future did not subside. For example, school closures and the suspension of co-curricular activities greatly reduced opportunities for students to forge healthy and meaningful interactions with their peers, seriously impacting their socio-emotional and mental wellbeing.

These were in addition to the existing stressors youth face, such as the rigour of Singapore's education system, family and peer relationships, self- and parent-imposed needs to excel and be successful, and incessant comparisons with peers across social media.



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<sup>1</sup> Lim, J. (2022, January 12). TODAY Online. Retrieved from "Challenges arising from Covid-19 have affected mental health of youths: Edwin Tong": <https://www.todayonline.com/singapore/challenges-arising-covid-19-have-affected-mental-health-youths-edwin-tong-1788536>

On 19 July 2021, news of a murder at River Valley High School shocked the nation. In the wake of this tragedy, Minister for Education Chan Chun Sing announced a suite of new measures in schools to support youth mental health in schools.<sup>2</sup> These include more mental health literacy for teachers, and recruiting and deploying more counsellors and teacher-counsellors.

However, there are concerns over whether these would worsen the workload of teachers — already stretched and stressed by the pandemic. Training and recruitment will take even more time, as counsellors outside the school system are themselves facing burnout.<sup>3</sup>

Against this backdrop, the BlueStar\* Fund funded three categories of promising youth mental health programmes: outreach and awareness, early intervention, and intervention. The first two categories work *upstream*: helping youths manage their mental health so they do not need professional intervention later. By nurturing healthier and more resilient youths, The BlueStar\* Fund aims to reduce the incidence of youth depression while complementing national efforts.

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<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Education Singapore. (2021, July 27). Ministry of Education Singapore. Retrieved from Ministerial Statement by Mr Chan Chun Sing, Minister for Education, for the Parliament Sitting on 27 July 2021: <https://www.moe.gov.sg/news/speeches/20210727-ministerial-statement-by-mr-chan-chun-sing-minister-for-education-for-the-parliament-sitting>

<sup>3</sup> Menon, M. (2021, September 20). The Straits Times. Retrieved from "S'pore counsellors face burnout as more people seek therapy amid Covid-19 pandemic": <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/spore-counsellors-face-burnout-as-more-people-seek-therapy-amid-covid-19-pandemic>

# BlueStar\* Highlights

Funds Raised

**\$1.05M\***

Funds Committed (FY2020)

**95%**

Total No. of Beneficiaries

**30,948**

Total No. of Volunteers

**173**

\*This includes the additional \$50,000 from an anonymous donor

As of 31 October 2021

## Funds have been allocated across 3 strategic pillars

For Non-Profits

**\$850k**

To support non-profit organisations delivering effective and innovative mental health programmes and services

For Youth-Led Projects

**\$100k**

To support youth-led projects that seek to help their peers facing mental health difficulties

For Research

**\$100k**

To support applied research on youth experiences of mental health support, so as to improve future grant calls

### LEGEND

#### Funds Committed

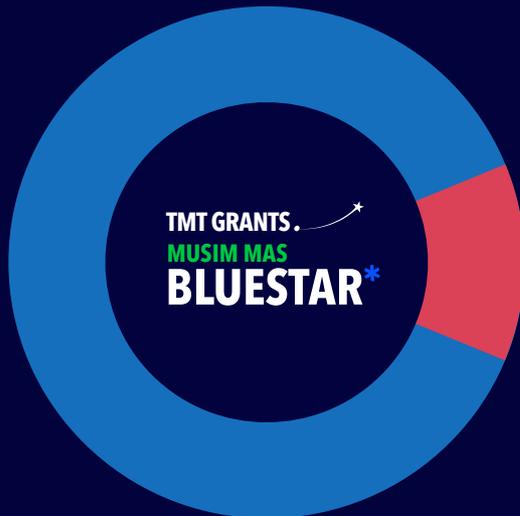
Total amount of grants approved by the respective grant panels

**Early Intervention Programmes  
Intervention Programmes  
Outreach and Awareness**

e.g. equipping youth with mental health techniques  
e.g. counselling, training  
e.g. events, seminars

**Children & Youth  
Families**

School going children and youth  
Inclusive of parents



### Beneficiaries by target groups

● Children & Youth	28,622
● Families	2,326

### Grantee Partners by Programme Type



### Beneficiaries by Programme Type



## The Fund supports programmes in 3 domains:

- 1 Outreach and Awareness:** working with youth and families to remove the stigma of depression, and give more confidence in discussing mental health.
- 2 Early Intervention:** helping youth who are in the very early stages of depression, or are starting to go through mental health pressures. These youth may not need professional help yet, and these programmes aim at preventing their mental health from worsening.
- 3 Intervention:** professional help for youth and their families who are grappling with depression and other mental health issues. These youth have more severe symptoms, and may have been referred by a trained counsellor or medical professional.

Part of the fund has also been allocated towards catalysing youth-led mental wellness and awareness projects for their peers; and towards research on how to improve “upstream” interventions.

In addition to our grants, the Fund also brings grantee partners together to share practical insights and working knowledge through Town Halls. These meetings also help nurture a sense of community among grantee partners.

In this report we include key output metrics, as well as in-depth stories that show how grantee partners are creating long-term impacts for people across different ages and stages in life.

### Early Intervention

## SAFEHOUSE

by Limitless

Limitless is a non-profit organisation founded on the desire of seeing every youth given the opportunity to live out their potential by offering mental health support to youth who would otherwise not receive help at all. Leveraging technology, Limitless provides counselling support on the instant messaging platform, Discord. Young people may message counsellors on the platform at any hour of the day, and the counsellors will attend to their concerns as soon as possible. Limitless has also partnered with video-sharing platform TikTok to disseminate mental health resources in the form of short videos to users.



Scan to watch an interview with Limitless

### Early Intervention

## Re:Story Programme

by The Tapestry Project SG

The Tapestry Project SG is an independent, not-for-profit online publication that empowers mental health recovery through firsthand, personal stories. The Re:Story programme is a 4 session non-judgemental expressive writing programme guided by the foundational principles of narrative therapy. The programme works with both schools and the general public and targets youths between 13-17 years old. Participants are invited to explore and “re-story” old narratives in new ways, providing youths with an avenue to build emotional literacy and heal within a safe space.



Scan to listen to a podcast episode with the Tapestry Project SG