



Health Promotion Board  
3 Second Hospital Avenue Singapore 168937  
Tel. 6435 3500  
Fax. 6438 3848  
[www.hpb.gov.sg](http://www.hpb.gov.sg)

**10 June 2012**

**NEW HEALTH PROGRAMME TAPS ENERGY AND PASSION OF YOUTHS INVOLVED IN ACTIVITIES THAT AFFECT THEIR SURROUNDING COMMUNITY**

*To tap on youths' natural desire to create positive change in their surrounding environment, the Health Promotion Board's Youth Health Ambassador Programme is partnering the community to move beyond health programmes that encourage youth-to-youth advocacy, and create more opportunities for youth-to-community participation.*

**Singapore, 10 June 2012:** To build a healthier Singapore, the Health Promotion Board (HPB) is introducing a programme that taps on the tremendous energy and passion of young people when pursuing activities that make a difference to their surrounding community.

2. Called 'What Youths Can Do', the programme officially kick-starts today, in collaboration with the four secondary schools located in the Marsiling constituency; namely, Fuchun Secondary School, Marsiling Secondary School, Siling Secondary School and Woodlands Secondary School.

3. It aims to encourage youths to develop their personal abilities as well as commitment to altruistic service and community work despite their young age.

4. From working in health clinics to cleaning up the environment and formulating strategies for neighbourhood revitalisation, youths around the world are already creating change. In Singapore, there are also many committed and inspired youths who are full of passion, energy and ideas in their pursuit of social good.

5. Said Mr Hawazi Daipi, Adviser to Marsiling Grassroots Organisations: “In Marsiling, we believe that healthy living is important. My vision is for our residents to live healthily and well in Marsiling. To achieve this, we need to ensure healthy lifestyle practices are easy to adopt. This is why we are working with partners like HPB to create a health promoting ecosystem within the Marsiling constituency, including through the formation of the Marsiling Health Champions Network two years ago. From now on, residents will be able to enjoy convenient and affordable access to healthier choices at Rasa Rasa Food Fiesta Restaurant, a health promoting Marsiling Community Club and customised health programmes, including nutrition workshops and healthier food trails. In addition, HPB has also expanded its pool of health ambassadors in Marsiling, from eight to 65, to include youths and all ethnic groups. One of the goals is to tap the energy and passion of youths, as well as senior citizens, living in Marsiling to inspire the Marsiling community to live healthily.”

6. Said Mr Ang Hak Seng, Chief Executive Officer, HPB: “When young people are involved in health promotion within their community, it is good for both the young and the community. It makes them more confident, hones their leadership qualities and gives them opportunities to excel in areas that are not solely academic. But these young people cannot work in isolation. Government agencies, self-help groups, community organisations and private businesses should do their part to bring youths together, work with them and mentor them. This is why HPB is stepping in to create more opportunities for youths to serve their communities in the area of health promotion, moving beyond just youth-to-youth advocacy programmes to focus also on youth-to-community participation.”

7. There are currently about 600 youth health ambassadors under HPB’s Health Ambassador Network, from pre-schoolers to twentysomethings. Trained by HPB, they plan and run mainly youth-to-youth advocacy projects that seek to help and encourage their peers to lead healthy lifestyles. *(Please refer to Annex A for more information on HPB’s Youth Health Ambassador Programme)*

8. However, HPB aims to create more opportunities for youth-to-community participation, following research indicating that youths feel most empowered when involved in activities and decisions that affect their immediate environment and community, which can lead to tremendous energy and focus in pursuing social causes.

9. With the launch of the What Youths Can Do programme, students from these four secondary schools in Marsiling, guided and mentored by adult health ambassadors, have the opportunity to be involved in health outreach efforts in the community around their schools.

10. In addition to assisting the adult health ambassadors to conduct simple health checks for residents visiting the CC, they will also co-lead healthy activities such as exercise classes and brisk walking as well as reach out to residents in the community to advocate for a smoke-free environment under the Blue Ribbon initiative.

11. What Youths Can Do is part of HPB's broader blueprint to develop the Marsiling constituency as a health promoting ecosystem. Other initiatives include:

- Developing food outlets which offer healthier choices
- Transforming Marsiling CC into a health promoting CC
- Offering customised health programmes which include nutrition workshops and healthier food trails at the CC

12. To create more opportunities for youth-to-community participation, HPB aims to train 1,000 student youth ambassadors in secondary schools across Singapore and facilitate their involvement in their communities under the What Youths Can Do programme by the end of 2015.

**Issued by Health Promotion Board**

**Youth Health Ambassador Programme**

- Peer education is a widely used behaviour change strategy in public health education.
- Recognising this, HPB's youth health ambassador programme seeks to encourage youth to be good health role models and to support youth in their health advocacy work in their school and community.
- To start them young, various health ambassador programmes were rolled out in schools by HPB. Training programmes are currently being run in secondary schools, primary schools as well as pre-schools. The objective is to equip them with the necessary information and skills to spearhead health programme programmes in their school. Secondary school students who are trained will also be involved in related community health activities outreaching to a wider population.
- By providing them with training, guidance and suitable intervention platforms, HPB aims to raise a generation of young health advocates within the community.