

# DEEPENING PARTNERSHIPS WITH GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

## Specialised Work with the Singapore Prison Service

In 2020, the State Courts and the Singapore Prison Service (SPS) piloted a cross-learning programme to share knowledge and updates in the psychology and criminology fields, as well as on matters related to the professional practice of forensic psychologists. This collaboration remained active in 2021.

Staff in the State Courts Centre for Specialist Services (CSS), who are trained in specialised fields such as social work, counselling and psychology, held monthly discussions with officers in the SPS' Psychological and Correctional Rehabilitation Division to learn more from one another. The sessions covered topics such as Vicarious Trauma, Tech-facilitated Sexual Offending and the Psychological Resilience Framework. Notable cases were discussed, with a focus on the interventions provided to offenders once they are in the court system as well as when they are incarcerated.

Besides advancing the assessment skills of CSS staff, the cross-learning platform also equipped them with additional knowledge to serve court users better, including family members of the offenders. For example, the staff learned what kind of information is relevant to provide to the families, and how to assure them that their loved ones are receiving help in prison. Short cross-attachment stints at the State Courts and SPS were introduced as well.

This initiative has facilitated the exchange of insights and best practices, and allowed participants to gain a deeper understanding of their respective roles and the impact they have on offenders and their families. In the coming year, the State Courts are planning more collaborative efforts with other SPS units that manage aftercare for offenders.

Monthly discussions between State Courts and SPS staff facilitated the exchange of insights and best practices in the fields of psychology and criminology.

## Family Violence Taskforce and Working Group

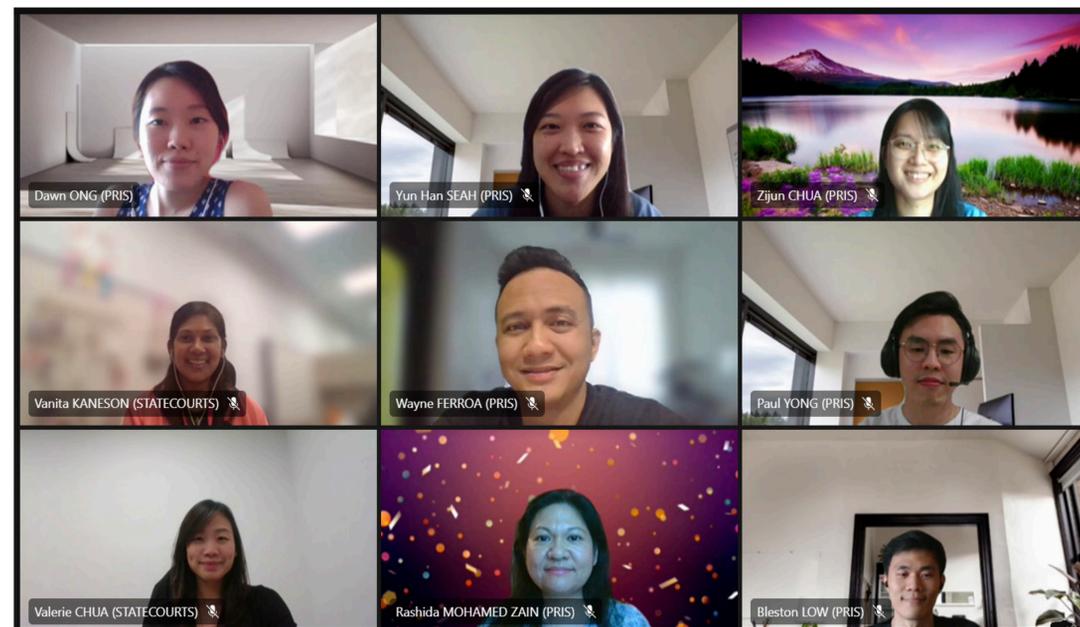
The multi-stakeholder Taskforce on Family Violence was set up in February 2020 to better understand the family violence landscape in Singapore, identify areas for improvement and make recommendations to tackle the issue. Co-chaired by Minister of State for Social and Family Development & Home Affairs, Ms Sun Xueling, and Minister of State for Home Affairs & National Development, Associate Professor Dr Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim, the Taskforce comprises 21 members from social service agencies, non-governmental organisations, the Courts, hospitals and government agencies. Ms Sophia Ang, Senior Director, Counselling and Psychological Services, Family Justice Courts (FJC), represents the FJC on the Taskforce.

Over the span of one-and-a-half years, the Taskforce analysed family violence-related data and engaged a range of stakeholders who work directly with family violence survivors and perpetrators. Based on findings from the data and the feedback provided by community partners, the Taskforce released a report in September 2021 containing 16 recommendations to improve immediate support for victims,

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enhance protection for them, prevent violence from recurring, and raise awareness of early warning signs. Among the recommendations were empowering the FJC to make additional types of orders; and strengthening the rehabilitation regime for perpetrators, including through mandatory counselling.

The FJC is also represented in the multi-stakeholder Family Violence Working Group, which will be looking to operationalise some of the Taskforce's recommendations.



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**Multi-Agency Cooperation  
in Maritime Matters**

What should happen if a crew member (or members) on board an arrested ship tested positive for COVID-19? This was one of many potential problems that the pandemic threw up regarding ship arrests.

To effectively deal with such a possibility, the Supreme Court Registry, working under the guidance of specialist shipping Judges, approached and consulted the relevant government agencies in charge of port and COVID-19 matters, namely the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore, the Ministry of Health and the National Environment Agency's Port Health Section. A working Protocol was established to set out how the Sheriff's Office would deal with this scenario. Included in the Protocol are detailed steps and the specific agency responsible for each necessary action, from the point the Sheriff's Office is informed of a suspected COVID-19 case on board an arrested vessel until the crew member(s) is cleared.

The working Protocol is a testament to the good working relationship between the agencies working on maritime matters, and to the Supreme Court's ability to meet challenges brought about by the pandemic.

**Vetting of Content on Lasting Power of Attorney**

In collaboration with the Office of Public Guardian, the FJC Language Services team vetted vernacular content on the making and registering of a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) to ensure a true reflection of source text. The LPA is a legal document that allows a person to voluntarily appoint another person to make decisions and act on his or her behalf if the former loses mental capacity one day. Against the backdrop of Singapore's greying population, where many are literate or fluent only in their mother tongue, having an accurate translation of the vernacular content is important to ensure a full understanding of the information online as well as the details required for form filling.

**HACKATHON FOR A  
BETTER WORLD 2021**

Following the success of the inaugural Hackathon for a Better World in 2020, DBS Bank, the Judiciary and the Ministry of Communications and Information jointly organised a second instalment in 2021. It drew participation from 40 teams with diverse compositions, such as practising lawyers, law students, public officers and DBS employees.

Themed "Designing a Safer, Kinder & Responsible Internet for All", the 2021 competition tackled the issue of online harms, particularly against women and girls, and sought to generate innovative solutions for safer and kinder online spaces in today's digital age. Participants were challenged to "hack" one of three problem statements and adopted a "learn-as-you-hack" format, where they worked on the problem statements over two months through an iterative process.

Four teams, namely Go Women (Singapore Management University), All Shook Up (Shook Lin & Bok LLP), Voicehackers (State Courts) and Pin It Down! (National Arts Council & Others), emerged as overall winners for their innovative solutions.

**WINNERS OF HACKATHON FOR A BETTER WORLD 2021**

**Go Women**  
(Singapore Management University)

**MOST INNOVATIVE IDEA**

Equipping female Telegram users with safety and privacy functions whilst deterring non-consensual circulation of their explicit photographs

**All Shook Up**  
(Shook Lin & Bok LLP)

**MOST FEASIBLE IDEA**

Utilising existing infrastructure to counter the rise of image-based sexual abuse

**Voicehackers**  
(State Courts)

**MOST LIFE-CHANGING IDEA**

A CyberTogether Hub that fortifies legal and non-legal support to victims through public-private partnerships and spearheads the whole-of-nation fight against cyberbullying through a one-stop platform

**Pin It Down!**  
(National Arts Council & Others)

**MOST HUMAN-CENTRED IDEA**

A three-pronged approach that empowers loved ones of sexual offenders to share their personal journeys through social media, and a one-stop website with resources from key stakeholders and support groups

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