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**Mental Health Projects**  
DIVISION OF PUBLIC POLICY

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The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust

**Jockey Club Shining Together  
with Cross-Cultural Youth Project**

# **Strengthening Minds, Shaping Futures.**

**2024 – 2025  
Year 1 Newsletter**





# Contents

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Welcome Message from the Project Team	1
Mission & Vision	2
Project Background & Model	3
Services Offering	4
Year in Review: Key Milestones and Achievements	6
Research and Impact Assessment	8
Looking Ahead: Plans for Next Year	10
Call to Action & Contact	11





# Welcome Message from the Project Lead

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Dear Readers,

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the newsletter for our project, proudly funded by the Jockey Club Charity Trust and executed by the Mental Health Project Team at The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. We are thrilled to share the highlights of our first years work with you.

This initiative is dedicated to serving non-Chinese youth aged 15 – 24 in Hong Kong, fostering a sense of community, resilience, and empowerment. By prioritizing accessible, culturally sensitive support, our project aims to bridge gaps and provide meaningful resources such as mental health awareness or knowledge and skills training to those who need them most.

From the start, this project has been driven by a vision of creating real, lasting change. Our team has worked tirelessly to design programs that not only meet the immediate needs of non-Chinese youth but also contribute to a larger dialogue about mental health in Hong Kong.

As we look back on our first year, I am proud to report that we have achieved several milestones. From impactful workshops and training sessions to insightful research and positive participant feedback, each step has been a testament to the commitment of our team, stakeholders, and, most importantly, the youth we serve.

This newsletter offers you a glimpse into our journey so far. As you read, we hope you will sense the energy, passion, and dedication that fuel our mission. We invite you to join us in the year ahead as we continue to innovate, collaborate, and make a difference in the lives of Hong Kong's youth.



**Prof. Naubahar SHARIF**  
Professor and Project Lead

# Mission & Vision

At the heart of our project lies a simple yet powerful vision: to empower non-Chinese youth in Hong Kong with the **knowledge, skills, and support** they need to thrive — mentally, socially, and professionally.

Our mission is to enhance the **mental well-being of non-Chinese youth aged 15-24** through **evidence-based, culturally tailored programs** designed to meet their unique needs.

Over the course of three years, we are committed to delivering scientifically and empirically proven initiatives that have successfully supported ethnic minority youth in other developed countries.

Beyond improving mental health, our project also aims to **foster social integration and upward mobility** for these young individuals. By equipping them with the right resources, we aspire to help them build knowledge and skills, access greater opportunities within Hong Kong society, as well as navigate challenges.

## Why This Matters

Non-Chinese youth represent the growing segment of Hong Kong's youth population, making their well-being a priority for the city's future. However, current youth mental health policies do not always reflect the diverse needs of all communities. Our project is here to bridge that gap.

Through a strategic, targeted approach, we focus on three key groups:



### 1 School-aged Youth (15-18)

- Increasing mental health awareness
- Developing skills in relationship building and communication
- Beginning to set life goals



### 2 Higher Education Students (18-24)

- Supporting continued mental wellbeing
- Social skills training that enables them to become community advocates
- CV building workplace skills, increasing motivation to enter the workforce



### 3 Working Youth (18-24)

- Career growth enabled through life planning and goal setting
- Active listening and communication training encouraging career upward mobility
- Mindfulness supports work life balance

By **tailoring interventions** to each group to be age appropriate and relevant, we ensure a meaningful and lasting impact — because every young person is an asset to Hong Kong, and their mental well-being deserves the upmost attention.

# Project Background & Model

Our project adopts a three-tiered model, recognizing that non-Chinese youth exist within interconnected **social circles**—as **individuals**, **within families**, and **in peer/work networks**.

By strengthening six key values:

Responsibility

Resilience

Perseverance

Positive Mindset

Purpose-in-life

Self-actualization

We aim to enhance mental health outcomes across these contexts, creating **short-, medium-, and long-term impact**.

This structured approach ensures youth receive tailored support at every stage of their journey, empowering them to build awareness, develop coping skills, and become community leaders in mental health advocacy.



# Service Offerings

As part of our commitment to enhancing mental health knowledge and skills, we offer a range of initiatives specifically designed to support non-Chinese youth in Hong Kong.

These offerings cover a broad spectrum of personal development, addressing the intersections of **mental well-being, personal growth, social interaction, and workplace skills**. All of these initiatives are designed to empower participants to lead healthy, balanced lives.

Each of these programs creates a supportive and empowering environment where non-Chinese youth can grow, learn, and thrive. Through our comprehensive offerings, we equip participants with the tools they need to navigate life's challenges and pursue a healthy, successful future.

## Three-Tiered Approach

### Intense Participation: Peer Leadership & Community Engagement

#### Key Outcomes

- ✓ Peer leadership and advocacy support within their communities
- ✓ Enhanced resilience, perseverance, and responsibility
- ✓ Advanced coping skills and improved communication

### Moderate Participation: Capacity Building

#### Key Outcomes

- ✓ Conceptual: Understanding mental health importance, perseverance, and self-actualization
- ✓ Practical: Culturally adaptive coping skills, improved help-seeking behavior, and better social interactions

### Minimal Participation: Awareness & Outreach

#### Key Outcomes

- ✓ Basic mental health knowledge
- ✓ Increased awareness of mental health issues
- ✓ Promotion of self-actualization and a positive mindset

Tier

Tier

Tier





Our project follows a three-tiered model to support project participants at different stages of mental health awareness and engagement. It enables a progressive journey, moving youth from awareness to self-development, and ultimately, to leadership in mental health advocacy.

3

By nurturing young leaders through mentorship and experiential learning, we create a sustainable impact — ensuring that mental health awareness and support extend beyond individual participants to benefit the entire non-Chinese community.

2

Through interactive workshops, small-group training, and guided self-reflection, participants develop resilience and actively engage in mental health management.

1

Through outreach activities, campaigns, and self-guided videos and online resources, we help non-Chinese youth take the first step in recognizing the importance of mental well-being in their daily lives.

# Empowering Non-Chinese Youth: Our Year

## Reach & Engagement



In Year 1, we reached a broad and diverse audience, establishing strong connections with youth and community partners. Our partnerships played a vital role in engaging hard-to-reach groups and ensuring that our initiatives were accessible to non-Chinese youth across Hong Kong.

## Awareness & Knowledge Building



Through our workshops and activities, participants gained valuable insights into mental health, enabling them to better understand their emotions, challenges, and well-being. This foundation empowers youth to take charge of their mental health journey.

## Acceptance & Capacity

We focused on building essential communications and life skills such as resilience building, social skills development, Life and career goal-setting. Our workshops helped youth develop tools to navigate challenges, fostering self-confidence and personal growth. By setting and achieving goals, they are better equipped to face future challenges.

# 1 Impact

## Strengthening Connections

**80%+**

strengthened  
interpersonal  
connections



**80%+**

improved family &  
peer relationships

Our programs not only focused on mental health but also on enhancing social skills. Participants reported stronger relationships with their peers and families, highlighting the broader social impact of our efforts.

## Positive Workshop Outcomes

**80%**

of participants improved  
knowledge of the workshop topic

**90%**

average satisfaction  
rating for workshops



**3-week Follow-up**



Participants reported strong confidence in applying the skills they learned

The workshops have had a significant and lasting impact on participants, with a high level of satisfaction and an increased willingness to seek help and use skills when needed. After just three weeks, participants were confident in applying what they learned, which reflects the effectiveness of the skills-building components of our program.

# Research Insights

Understanding the mental health landscape of non-Chinese youth in Hong Kong

## Youth Mental Health in Hong Kong – The Reality



**1 in 4 youth** experience mental health challenges



Suicide rates among youth have **doubled** in the last decade



non-Chinese youth make up only **1%** of the population but have grown **75%** over the past 10 years\*

These statistics highlight the urgency of addressing mental health issues within youth, especially ethnic minority groups who face unique barriers. Our project focuses on reaching these communities with tailored mental health activities.

## What We Are Investigating

To ensure our programs effectively address the specific needs of non-Chinese youth, we are investigating:

### Key Mental Health Challenges

➤ Issues such as stress, anxiety, and depression that disproportionately affect ethnic minority youth.

### Barriers to Mental Well-Being

➤ These include challenges like language differences, cultural stigma surrounding mental health, and a lack of accessible mental health services.

### Effective Solutions

➤ How targeted strategies can improve mental health and foster social development among these youth.

## How We Are Researching – A Mixed-Methods Approach

Our research plays a critical role in shaping both policy advocacy and the design and delivery of our programs. Through a deep understanding of the needs and challenges faced by ethnic minority youth, we ensure that our approach is evidence-based, culturally sensitive, and impactful. Here is how we are conducting our research:

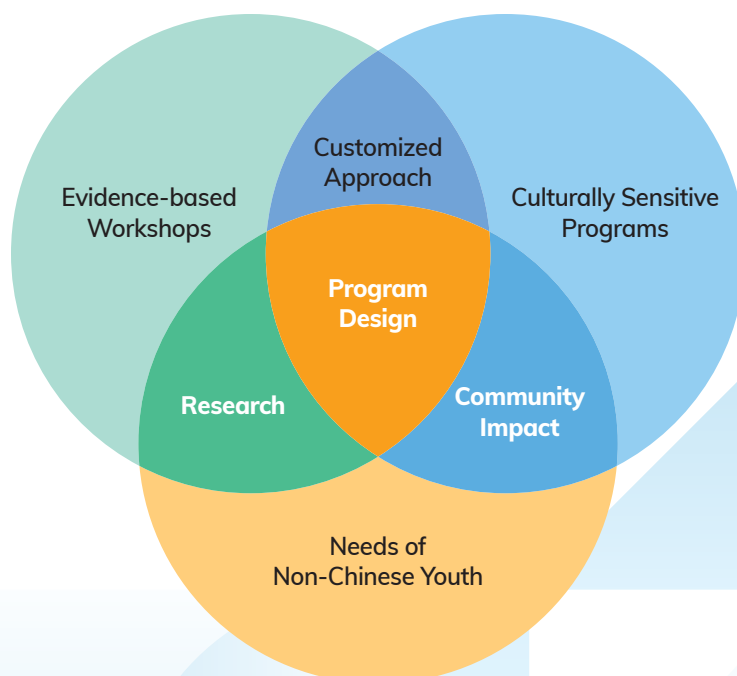
- **Quantitative Surveys:** Conducted before and after workshops to measure changes in mental health awareness and skills. This data is crucial for understanding the effectiveness of our programs and adjusting them where necessary.
- **In-Depth Qualitative Interviews:** We engage with youth, parents, and NGO officers to capture lived experiences and gather insights into community needs. These interviews provide a deeper understanding of the barriers and mental health challenges ethnic minority youth face.
- **Focus Group Discussions:** Real-time feedback from participants allows us to assess how well our workshops and activities meet their needs. This gives us the flexibility to refine our approach on an ongoing basis.
- **University-Based Fieldwork Observations:** Our team conducts fieldwork to ensure that the activities we offer are engaging and culturally relevant to the youth we serve. These observations allow us to adjust the content and delivery methods for maximum impact.

# Turning Insights into Action

The research gathered in Year 1 is instrumental in driving the success of our project. Through conducting surveys with 257 non-Chinese participants, we identified the top factor contributing towards risk to mental health is 'Dissatisfaction with education/occupation', followed by 'Difficulties with social relationship', 'Difficulties with employment', 'Financial restriction', and 'Health problems'.



These insights have directly informed the design of **our evidence-based and culturally sensitive workshops**. We have tailored our programs to address these challenges in meaningful ways, ensuring they align with the unique needs of our participants.



Our ongoing research creates a **valuable feedback loop**, allowing us to refine and enhance our programs for greater impact. By continually adapting to the evolving needs of the community, we are improving mental health literacy and empowering youth to lead healthier, more fulfilling lives.

This close connection between **research** and **outreach** ensures that our approach remains dynamic and responsive, enabling us to better serve the community now and in the future.

# Looking Ahead: Plans for Next Year

As we reflect on the achievements of the first year of our project, we are excited to build momentum for the future.

Our commitment to improving the mental health knowledge and skills of non-Chinese youth in Hong Kong remains stronger than ever.

## **New Initiatives in Mental Health and Youth Engagement**

In the coming year, we will kick off intense level activities tailored to the evolving needs of youth. These initiatives will focus on deeper engagement, empowering young people with the tools they need to cope with mental health challenges and lead healthier lives.

## **Enhanced Collaboration with Project Partners**

We will continue to expand and strengthen our partnerships with various project partners. By joining forces, we can broaden our reach, share expertise, and ensure that mental health resources are more accessible to youth across Hong Kong. We are committed to fostering a collaborative environment that encourages shared learning and support.

## **Focus on Sustainability and Long-Term Impact**

As we move forward, our focus will be on creating sustainable practices and ensuring the long-term success of our initiatives. We are working to integrate mental health support into everyday youth services and programs, building capacity within the community to ensure that this work continues long after the project concludes.

# Together, we can make mental health support more accessible for all!

## Get Involved and Make a Difference!

We invite schools, NGOs, and interested partners to collaborate with us in delivering impactful mental health workshops to non-Chinese youth across Hong Kong. Your support can help empower young people with the knowledge and skills they need to thrive.

### How to Get Involved:

- **Collaborate with Us:** If you are an organization or school looking to join forces and host mental health workshops, we would love to partner with you.
- **Join as a Participant:** If you are a young person (aged 15-24) looking to enhance your knowledge and skills, register as a member to access free workshops, resources, and support.

### Join Our Community on WhatsApp:



**Stay updated** – Scan the QR code below to join our WhatsApp channel and be part of the movement!

### For More Information or To Get Involved:

Contact us today to learn more about how you can participate or collaborate with our project:

Email : [jcst@ust.hk](mailto:jcst@ust.hk)

Phone : (852) 3469 3066

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## Contact:

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