

MEDIA RELEASE
For immediate release

The Race to Make a Difference is on!
Special themed MRT train launched to spread awareness of mental health issues

SINGAPORE, 23 June 2016 – TOUCH Community Services (TOUCH) today launched a specially commissioned themed train on Singapore's newest MRT Line – Downtown Line – as part of the campaign for *The Make A Difference Race 2016*, a mental health awareness run taking place on 8 October 2016 at Gardens by the Bay East.



An artist's impression of The Make A Difference Race-themed train cabin.

Decked out in vibrant colours and accompanied by community messages for the mental health community, the design concept of the 70-metre train reflects the theme of *The Make A Difference Race 2016* – “**Light of Hope**”. The train is scheduled to run for 18 hours daily for four weeks, reaching out to some eight million commuters travelling between the Northwestern regions of Singapore and the central business district, on the 18-station Downtown Line. (Please refer to **Annex 1** for design impressions of the themed train)

The train launch held at Chinatown MRT station today was witnessed by Minister of State for Health, Dr Lam Pin Min, as well as community partners involved in *The Make A Difference Race 2016*. The specially commissioned themed train features information on three key mental health conditions – Anxiety Disorder, Depression and Schizophrenia, including myths and facts associated with these conditions. Colourful icons adorning the ceiling of the train will also highlight seven positive messages for the mental health community.

Mr James Tan, Executive Director of TOUCH Community Services, said, “With mental health issues becoming more prevalent¹, TOUCH believes that the best form of support for people living with mental health conditions must be found in the community. *The Make A Difference Race* hopes to encourage people living with these conditions to step out and seek support and to rally the community to break down social stigma associated with mental health conditions.”

¹Institute of Mental Health Singapore Mental Health Study 2010:
https://www.imh.com.sg/uploadedFiles/Newsroom/News_Releases/SMHS%20news%20release.pdf

Community partners came together to support this cause in different ways. The special themed train public awareness campaign has been made possible through the support of Land Transport Authority (LTA) and Moove Media.

As part of efforts to create a people-centred transport network that commuters can enjoy, LTA collaborates with the community to support social causes such as *The Make A Difference Race*. Besides providing bite-sized information on mental health to commuters, the decorative features in the train cabins incorporate social 'nudges' to encourage gracious behaviour among commuters. For example, to encourage commuters to move away from the train doors, the cabins' connectors are decorated with *The Make A Difference Race*-themed decals for commuters to take selfies.

Mrs Jayne Kwek, CEO of Moove Media, said, "Moove Media is proud to be able to play its part in raising awareness about mental health. Key messages such as the ones promoted by TOUCH can effectively reach target audiences through concept trains, which include displaying stickers on train windows, panels, connectors as well as the floor and ceiling of the trains."

An online campaign titled *Give Them A Chance@Work* has been launched to encourage employers to provide work opportunities for people living with mental health conditions. Seven organisations have signed up to be part of this movement, including D' Cuisines Restaurant, Giant Singapore, Horsburgh Engineering (F.E.) Pte Ltd, Kaplan Learning Institute, Life Builders & Landscapes, National Council of Social Service and National Kidney Foundation.

The Make A Difference Race 2016 is also supported by community partners, including Agency for Integrated Care, Community Health Assessment Team, Institute of Mental Health, National Council of Social Service, Singapore Anglican Community Services and Silver Ribbon (Singapore).

Last but not least, volunteers will distribute more than 15,000 colourful wristbands consisting of seven positive messages for the mental health community, at train stations and tertiary institutions, in the lead up to race-day. To find out more about *The Make A Difference Race* community initiatives, please visit www.madrace.sg/initiatives.

Light of Hope for Mental Health

The Make A Difference Race 2016 will take place in the evening and will incorporate various lighting elements to accentuate the race theme "**Light of Hope**". For example, participants will be given special LED lights to be strapped to their shoes, as a symbol of the community's support for people facing mental health issues.

Participants can sign-up for a 7km competitive run or a non-competitive 3.5km Buddy Run where friends and family can pair up to overcome a fun obstacle course. Registration for *The Make A Difference Race 2016* has commenced and will close on 11 September 2016. Early Bird registration is available now till 17 July 2016. The public can register or find out more about the race at www.madrace.sg.

For media enquiries, please contact:

Samantha Wong, Senior Communications Executive
6317 9270 (DID) 8128 7511 (HP)
samantha.wong@touch.org.sg

ABOUT THE MAKE A DIFFERENCE RACE

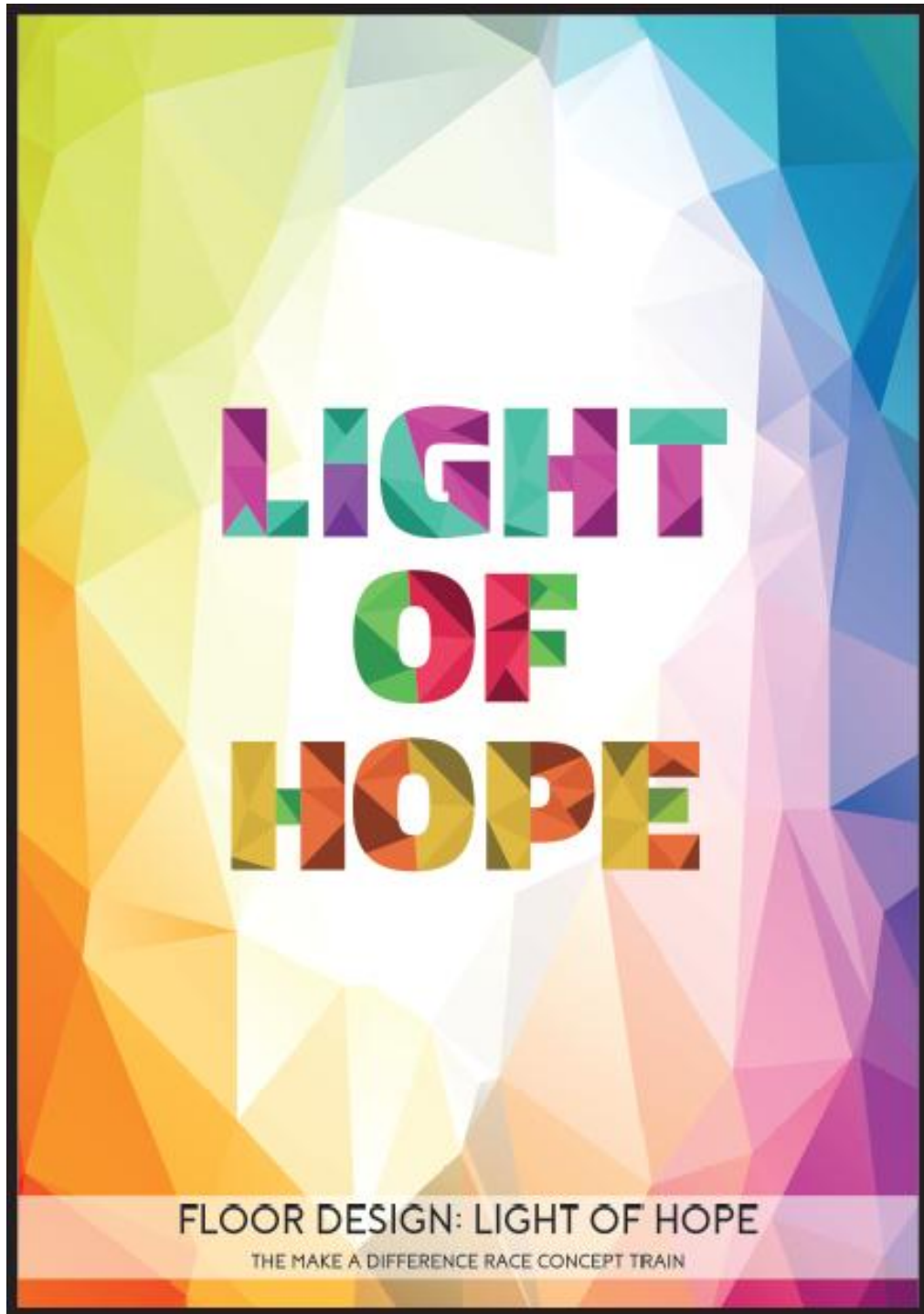
Inaugurated in 2015, *The Make A Difference Race* is organised by TOUCH Community Services and spearheaded by a group of volunteers. The race aims to raise public awareness and fight social stigma related to depression and mental health. This year, the theme for the race is “Light of Hope” to encourage all mental health patients to step out of darkness into the light. The event features a 7km competitive run and a 3.5km buddy fun run/walk. For more information, please visit www.madrace.sg.

About TOUCH Community Services

TOUCH Community Services is a not-for-profit charitable organisation, dedicated to meeting the needs of children from low-income or single-parent families, youths at-risk, needy families, people with special and healthcare needs, and the frail elderly. Through its integrated network of 17 services, TOUCH is committed to serving people of all ages, races, religions and backgrounds. TOUCH was officially registered as a charitable organisation in 1992. It currently serves 30,000 clients annually.

Floor Design

Light of Hope – The Make A Difference Race 2016 theme



Ceiling Design

Seven positive messages for mental health community



Window Design

With race theme and event details



Top Panel Design

Myths and facts of three key mental health conditions – Anxiety Disorder, Depression and Schizophrenia

Depression is..

Depression is one of the most common mental health problems worldwide and can happen to anyone. It is a persistent feeling of sadness which does not just 'go away'. It may affect our work, interest in activities and quality of life. It is not a sign of weakness and recovery is possible.

This is a community message from The Make A Difference Race, organised by TOSCH Community Services.

Myth #1

Depression cannot be treated.



Fact #1

Depression is one of the most treatable mental health conditions. Up to 80% respond positively to treatments.



Myth #2

Depression is rare and will not happen to me.



Fact #2

Depression can happen to anyone, anytime. About 20% carry the risk of developing depression at some point in their lives.



Myth #3

Depression is all about feeling sad.



Fact #3

Depression may involve other symptoms, e.g. appetite changes, sleep loss, lethargy.



Anxiety Disorder

Anxiety Disorder is a severe and prolonged state of anxiety that affects one's ability to cope with day-to-day activities. It is the most common of all mental disorders. Treatments such as therapy, stress management, exercise and medication (if prescribed) can help reduce the symptoms.

This is a community message from The Make A Difference Race, organised by TOSCH Community Services.

Myth #1

Anxiety disorder is incurable.



Fact #1

Anxiety disorder can be treated by several ways e.g. stress management, seeking professional counselling and taking medication (if prescribed), anxiety disorder can be treated.



Myth #2

Anxiety disorder is caused solely by a chemical imbalance in the brain.



Fact #2

Anxiety disorder can also be caused by one's physiological, psychological and emotional state.



Myth #3

Anxiety disorder is genetic.



Fact #3

Genetic predisposition alone does not cause anxiety disorder. Other factors, e.g. upbringing, stressful life events, personality, contribute to it as well.



Schizophrenia

Schizophrenia is a group of psychotic disorders which may be caused by genetic, psychological and social factors. Symptoms include disturbances in thought and perception, which affects behaviour and/or communication for six months or more. Social and family support is important in the recovery process.

This is a community message from The Make A Difference Race, organised by TOSCH Community Services.

Myth #1

Friends with schizophrenia have multiple personalities.



Fact #1

Schizophrenia is different from multiple personality disorder. Friends with schizophrenia merely feel disconnected with reality.



Myth #2

Friends with schizophrenia are violent & dangerous.



Fact #2

Friends with schizophrenia may behave unpredictably, but are not usually violent, especially if they are undergoing treatments.



Myth #3

Friends with schizophrenia belong in a mental hospital.



Fact #3

Friends with schizophrenia stay in mental hospital only if they need mental health facilities. Most of them can stay with their families or in community supportive housing.



INTERIOR PANELS: MYTHS VS FACTS

THE MAKE A DIFFERENCE RACE CONCEPT TRAIN

Perched Wall Design

Located at cabin connectors to encourage commuters to move away from train doors

