

STRENGTHENING RACIAL HARMONY IN SINGAPORE

NE Engagement Package 2023

Racism still exists in Singapore and is among us

Sources: The Straits Times, AsiaOne, Yahoo News

March 2023

'Racist' Singapore woman throws big fuss at family she says is taking too much space on train



April 2023

Fairprice Staff at One Tampines Hub tells Indian-Muslim couple free Iftar packs not for them



December 2022

"You shouldn't be with a Chinese girl!" Man allegedly spits on interracial couple at Orchard Road mall

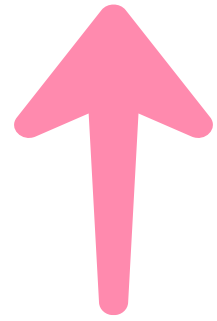


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Key Findings from CNA–Institute of Policy Studies (CNA–IPS) Survey on Race Relations 2021 revealed that race issues remain salient in Singapore

2,007 Singapore citizens and PRs took part in a survey to examine people’s attitudes on various race-related issues.



56.2% of respondents felt that racism is an important problem, an increase from the previous CNA–IPS survey conducted in 2016 (46.3%).



8 in 10 respondents felt that Racial Harmony Day preserves racial harmony.



Less than 9% of respondents experienced discrimination at work. Minorities were more affected by such discrimination than Chinese.



About 62.9% welcomed greater intercultural understanding.



...We must recognise that in any multi-racial society, it is harder to be a minority than a majority ... (so) it is important for the majority community in Singapore to do its part, and be sensitive to and conscious of the needs of minorities.

This cuts across all aspects of daily life. It matters to someone who faces discrimination when looking for a job. It matters when someone feels left out when everyone else in a group speaks in a language that not all can understand. It matters to potential tenants who learn that landlords do not prefer their race. It matters to our students, neighbours, co-workers and friends who have to deal with stereotypes about their race, or insensitive comments.



- DPM Lawrence Wong, at IPS-RSIS Forum on Race and Racism in Singapore, on 25 Jun 2021

To Stamp Out Racism, Treat it as anything but casual



- Casual racism or everyday racism can be defined as conduct involving negative stereotypes or prejudices about people based on race, colour, or ethnicity.
- It includes jokes, off-handed comments and exclusion of people from social situations based on race.
- While often unintentional, casual racism can still cause offence or harm.
- Everyone can play a part. We can be more mindful and sensitive to how our words and actions affect others.

June 2020



10 former RI students behind blackface group photo issue apology; school condemns their actions

Sep 2020



Real estate agent couple dance & wear ethnic Indian clothing to sell HDB flat to minorities

The couple has since apologised and said that it was 'insensitive' of them to allow the 'inappropriate event' to occur.



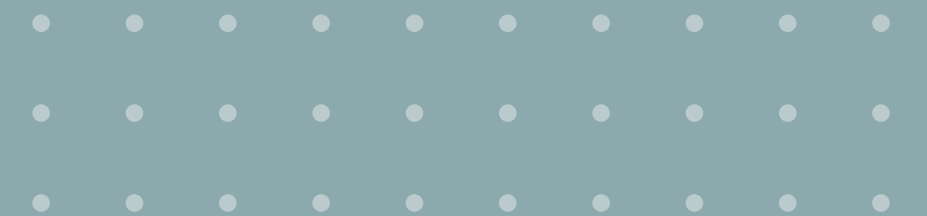
REFLECTION

Have you encountered casual racism in your daily lives?

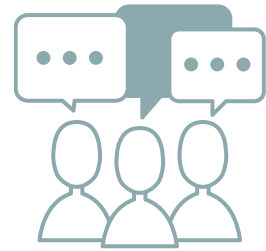
How do you feel when you read about (or encounter) acts of racism?

How can we, as a society, be more aware of racial insensitivity?

If we witness racist acts or comments, what are some ways in which we can respond?



How Do We Strengthen Racial and Religious Harmony in Singapore?



Build stronger bonds and common ground with one another

Let's spend time mixing with different communities and sharing common interests



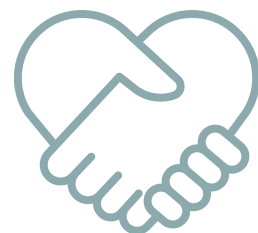
Speak out against racism and discrimination, in a civil and respectful way.

Let's stand up for what is right, and contribute to a more harmonious society.



Have constructive conversations on race and religion

Let's be curious and empathetic towards the lived experience of others.

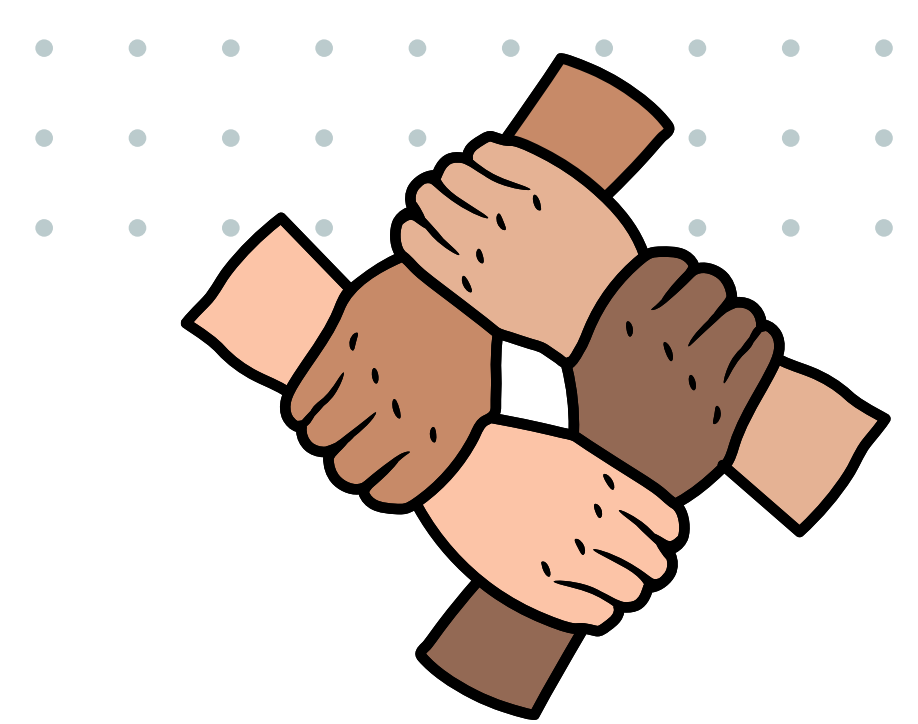


Treat each other with mutual trust, accommodation and respect.

Let's be gracious and kind, even when disagreements arise.



Racial Harmony Did Not Come Easily and Naturally



Not by Chance

Singapore is a rare and precious example of a multi-racial, multi-lingual and multi-religious society where people live harmoniously together. Our harmonious balance today is achieved through many decades of hard work and relationship-building.

Whole of Society Effort

Everyone plays a part in upholding a culture of understanding, respecting and trust for our fellow citizens of different races and religions in order to protect the common space that we have.

Constant Work in Progress

People of all races must make efforts to learn, appreciate and respect other cultures, and we must continue to have constructive conversations on racial and religious harmony.



Together, we are greater than the sum of our parts.

Ground-up Initiatives

Ground-up efforts led by communities complement the national initiatives to help reach out to more Singaporeans and encourage more interactions and conversations about race and religion.

Chinese granny surprises Malay neighbours with thoughtful Hari Raya gifts



Centre of InterFaith Understanding

- Mohamed Imran Mohamed Taib founded an inclusive interfaith organisation to help promote an engaged community with a deep understanding of interfaith ideas and practices.

Fluent Mandarin and Hokkien-speaking Indian salesman

- Mr Ng had picked up Mandarin, Hokkien and Teochew from his grandparents while growing up.
- For him, picking up new languages was a way for him to communicate with people.



Minority Voices

Mr Sharvesh Leatchmanan co-founded this online platform to collate and publish stories of everyday racism faced by minority groups in Singapore as well as instances of more structural forms of prejudice, such as workplace discrimination and xenophobia.

MINORITY VOICES

Ground-up Initiatives

Hash Peace

- A youth-led advocacy group conducting programmes for sustainable social harmony.
- Organised events where people from all races and religions can have conversations on inter-racial relations with one another, and with our leaders.

Multi-racial Lion Dance troupe in Singapore

- The volunteer lion dance troupe is largely made up of non-Chinese teenagers from the People's Association Teens Network Club @ Bukit Merah.



Harmony Champions

- Roses of Peace and Temasek Foundation appointed close to 80 Harmony Champions under a new programme to equip young people with deeper interracial and inter-religious understanding.
- It will train young people from institutes of higher learning to facilitate dialogues on race and religious cohesion and champion peace-building initiatives.



HarmonyWorks! Conference by OnePeople.sg

- Annual youth conference for youths to speak and share their thoughts concerning race and religious relations

National Initiatives

Beyond community and individual initiatives, we also have certain government policies in place to help achieve greater racial harmony in society.

Maintenance of Racial Harmony Act

- New law will include “softer” measures for an offender to make amends by learning more about other races and mending ties with them.



Harmony Fund by MCCY

- Supports ground-up initiatives that promote racial and religious harmony



Refreshing our Inter-Racial and Religious Confidence Circles (IRCCs)



- Renamed as Racial & Religious Harmony Circles, or Harmony Circles for short to reflect broader mission to promote racial and religious harmony in Singapore in both peacetime and crisis
- There are 93 Harmony Circles with more than 1,700 members from religious organisations, civic groups and grassroots organisations.



What are some ways we can enhance racial and religious harmony in our own circles



Strength in Diversity

Through building mutual trust and understanding, our diversity can become a source of strength for the common good. Here are some different aspects of our society where we can see diversity in harmony among different races and religions.

Our People



Our Food



Our Beliefs



Our Way of Life

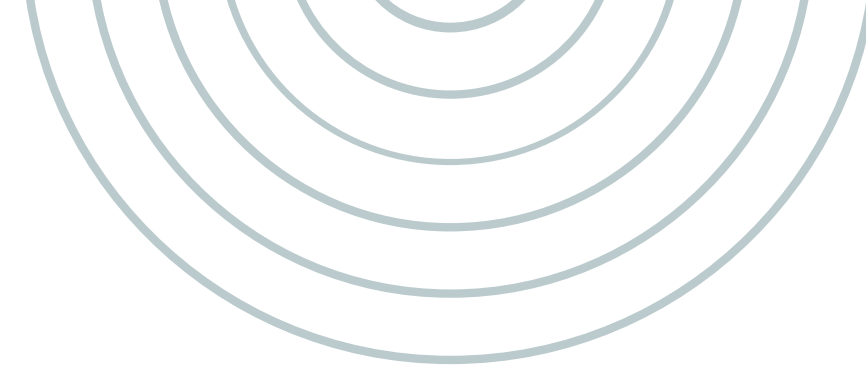


Together, We are Better!

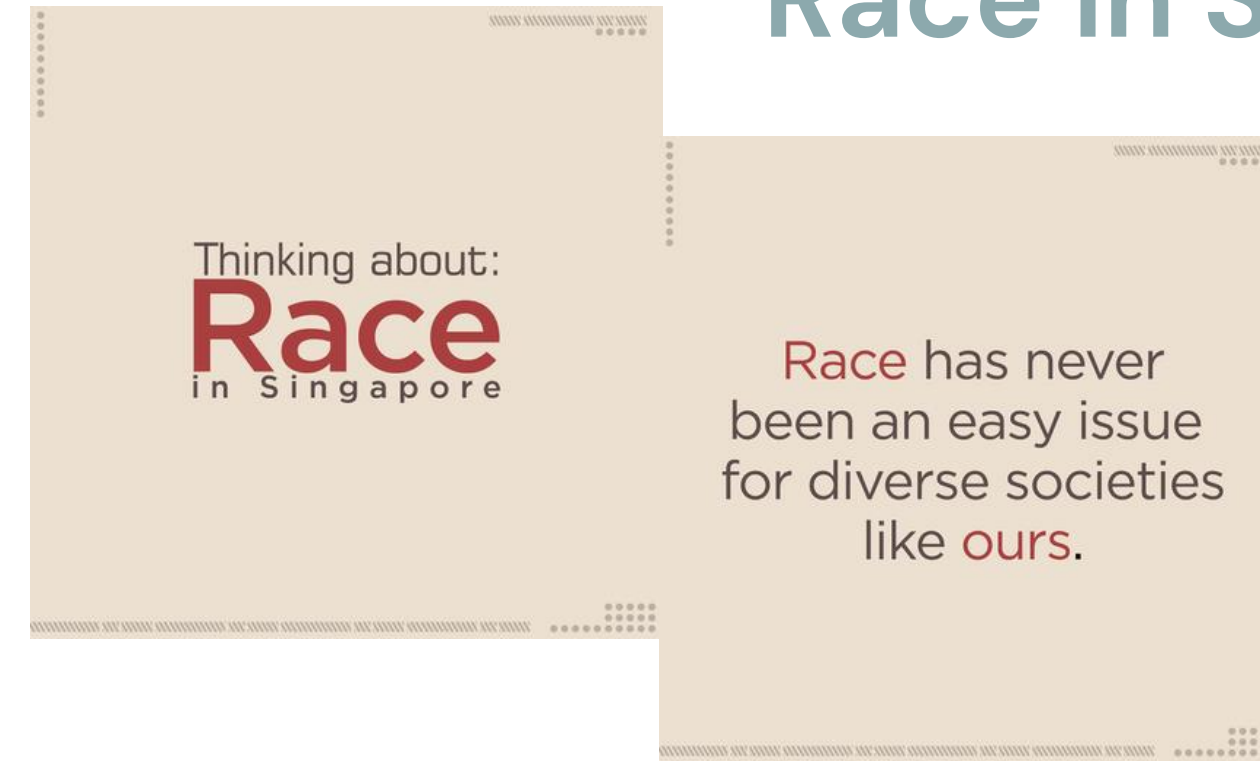


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Additional Resources



FB Post: Thinking about Race in Singapore



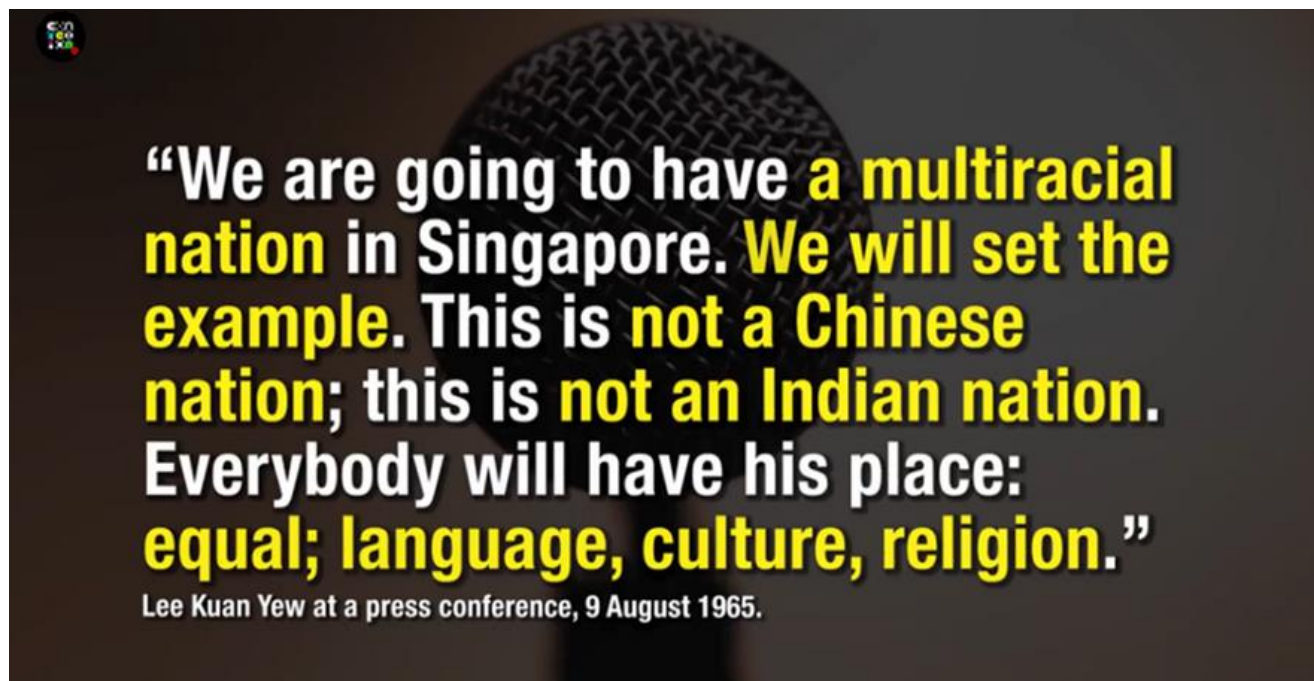
<https://go.gov.sg/thinkingaboutrace>

Case Study: Learning from Recent Racial Incidents



<https://go.gov.sg/sg101casestudies>

Video: The Fight for Multiracialism



<https://go.gov.sg/fightformulti>

CNA Insider Series Video: Regardless of Race



<https://go.gov.sg/regardlessrace>





<https://go.gov.sg/racialharmony2023>

YOUR FEEDBACK MATTERS