

RECESS NEWS

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September 2026

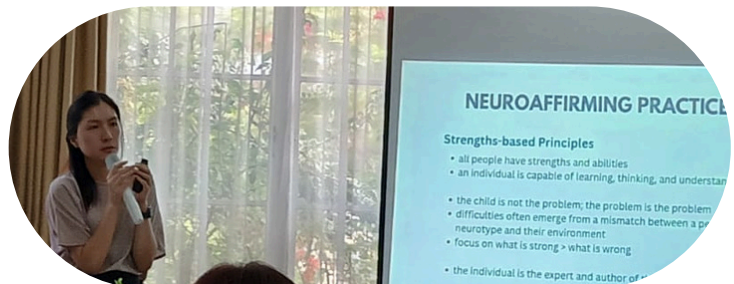
CERTIFICATE IN NEURODIVERSE COACHING

Dr. Penny and Michelle went to Jakarta to deliver our 2nd intake for our certification course. They instructed the attendees in bio-psycho-social needs of neurodiverse children and how to deliver effective collaborative care. It was an engaging and reflective session focused on developing knowledge and building skills in supporting this population.

Contact training@recesspsychsg.com for more information or to find out how to bring these talks to your school/ organisation



Dr. Penny Tok (Second from the left)



Michelle Choo

Next in Jakarta:

Certification in Neurodiverse Coaching - *Advanced* (November 2026)
Certification in Neurodiverse Coaching - *Specialist* (Early 2027)

IN THIS NEWSLETTER...

Authenticity and identity events @ RECESS

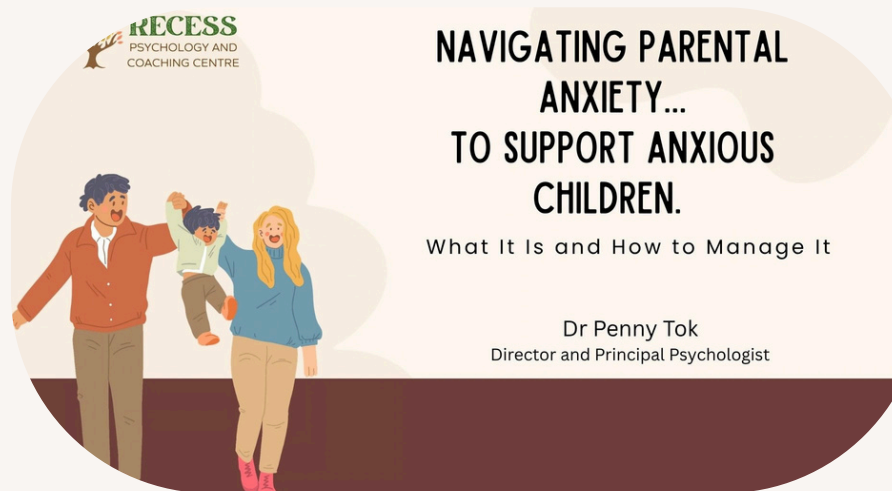
Counselling best practices for LGBTQ+ by Ryan Chua

Parental Anxiety, & Questions around Assessments

Fireside with Dr Bee Lim on When Culture Looks Like Pathology

...AND MORE

Event Highlight: RECESS talks on Managing Parental Anxiety & Assessments



Dr. Penny spoke to some of our parents on parental anxiety and how it may manifest in our daily interactions with our children. She shared that due to **social referencing** and **emotional contagion**, children may pick up on adult anxiety and how managing our own anxieties first can have downstream improvements on their children's anxiety. So if you are an anxious parent, here are some things to reflect on:

- Are you responding to your child's or **your own** feelings?
- Monitor if you are trying to **rescue** or **support** your child (there is a difference!)
- Ensure adequate support for yourself and take a break if you need it



Michelle then took the group through the process of psychological assessments for children. She highlighted that the goal of an assessment is not to get a positive diagnosis, but rather to have an

"... objective report on areas your child may need help in..."

So consider an assessment in terms of how it can help you and their school determine the best ways to support them by having a better understanding of their needs.

Event Highlight: Counselling LGBTQ+

To kick off September, Ryan Chua delivered an engaging talk to the team on the nuances of counselling those in the LGBTQ+ community.

He emphasised the importance of...

"seeing the client as a person beyond their gender and sexual identity".

Approaching their concerns with **curiosity** and not intrusiveness or presumption, can help foster a healthier communication.

Ryan also highlighted the importance of **self-examination** while working with the LGBTQ+ community. Understanding our own biases, stereotypes and thought processes, can help prevent those from encroaching in on our interactions.

Just as crucially - **know your limits**. If managing LGBTQ+ clients is not suitable for you, please refer them to a trustworthy resource. However, there is generally not much difference as people between LGBTQ+ clients and clients outside of the community.



Mr. Ryan Chua

Counsellor
(Bottom Right)

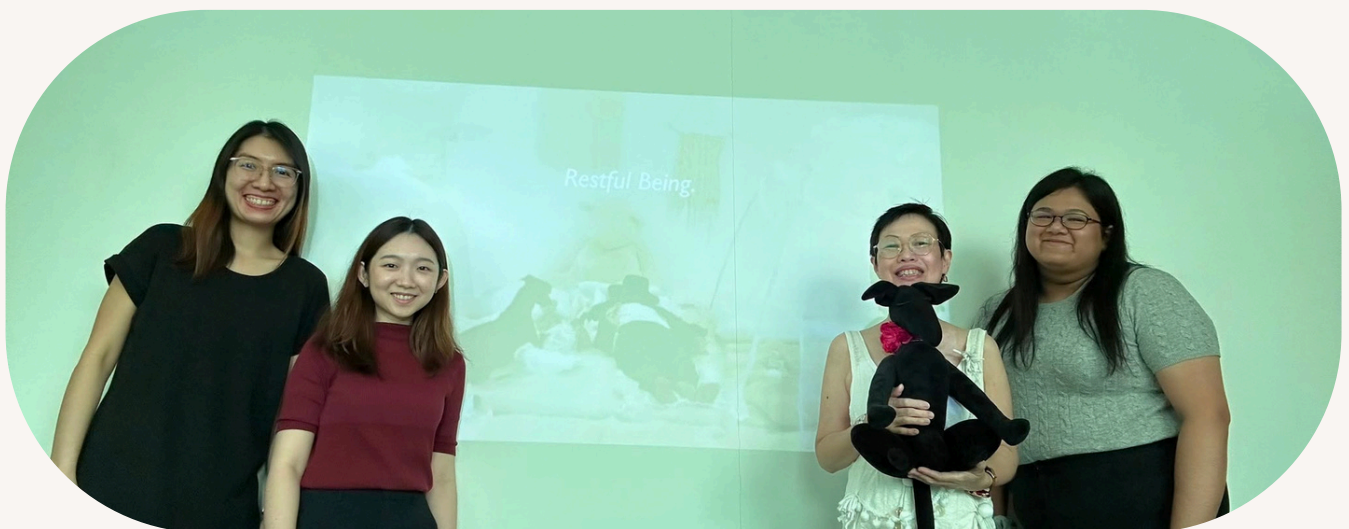
Team present that day (T-B; L-R): Rishabh, Jaral, Dr. Penny, Dwi, Nora, Michelle, Lynn, Austin, Kelly, Marina

Event Highlight:

Clement Space for Women with Autism by Dr Dawn-joy Leong

“Lucy presided over Saturday’s first Autistic Ladies’ support session at RECESS Psychology. We had an awesome time, establishing safe Clement Space, making squeeze jellyfish stim things, sharing stories from lived-experience, being believed, validated, honest, without need for masking up. No silly ice breakers or typical introductions. We left without even knowing each other’s names, but connected on a deeper level that needed no superficial labels.”

.... Dr Dawn-joy Leong



Team present that day 15 August,
(L-R), Michelle, Kelly, Dr Leong (holding Lucy), and Jaral

Note: No participants are pictured.

RECESS note:

If you think you would like to join in our next session, please contact RECESS to register your interest. Look out for our October 17th session for neurodivergent teens.

Event Highlight:

Healing Trauma and Reclaiming Wholeness by Dr Bee Lim

In her talk to the team on the 29 September, Dr. Bee Lim drew on a composite of client stories to show that in recovering from trauma, **healing rarely follows a straight line**. She stressed that trauma can only be understood within its cultural context, so Western-centric frameworks can miss how trauma and recovery may look in East and Southeast Asian communities. For Dr. Lim, **wholeness means integration rather than being unbroken**. A whole person is like an orchestra's conductor, able to call on each part as the situation requires. She said there is little value in trying to prevent fragmentation. Meaningful work lies in learning to mend and in finding value in what has been put back together.



"I write Welcome Home to those who've carried too much for too long. The high-functioning. The ones who feel everything but rarely feel safe. The ones who learned to translate emotions into silence. The ones who were never allowed to fall apart."

.... Dr Bee Lim

Available at Book Bar Singapore, Kinokuniya, and Amazon



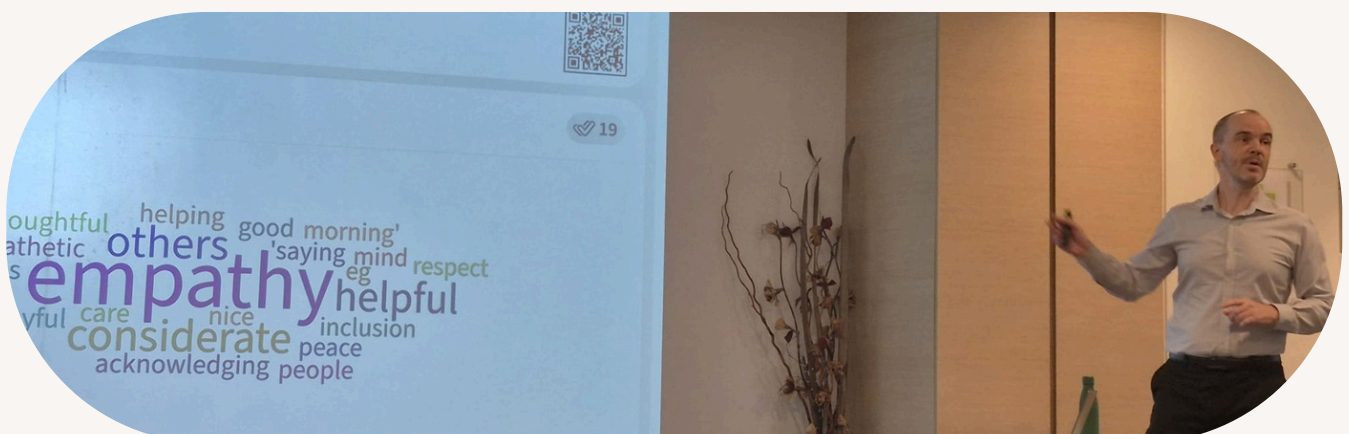
Event Highlight:

Cultivating Gratitude and Kindness in Children

On 30 September at Nexus International School, RECESS Director Dr. Paul Reddish conducted a parent workshop on cultivating kindness and gratitude. He explained to parents that when children do not act kindly or grateful, it may reflect a **“gap in skills or knowledge rather than a character defect”**. Kindness draws on a complex set of psychological capacities: awareness of others' needs, motivations to want to benefit others, knowledge of how to appropriately act, and wisdom to balance different, potentially conflicting, needs and wants. For parents, he suggested approach is a four-step cycle:

model, instruct, practise, and praise.

Adults can show kind behaviour, explain it explicitly, give children chances to try it, and reinforce it when it happens. Children also often experience kindness as a cost (giving something up, putting effort in). Part of cultivation is helping them shift towards seeing its benefits, including to their own wellbeing, without making kindness transactional. Relatedly, kindness needs to be balanced with one's own needs rather than being self-sacrificing.



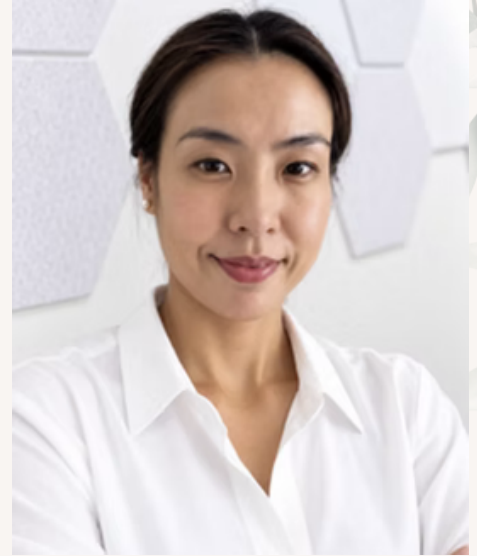
RECESS Psychologists Highlights

Jean Longden

Senior Psychologist

- Therapy (CBT, ABT, DBT, Trauma-informed, Special Education)
- Psychological assessments

Jean has over 15 years of experience in Psychology and Special Education, supporting clients with diverse needs, including Autism, ADHD, and trauma, across Singapore, Hong Kong, and Australia. She has worked with all age groups, from children to the elderly.



Yasmeen Kassim

Senior Education & Developmental Psychologist

Services available:

- Psychoeducational assessments
- Consultation

Yasmeen is an Educational and Developmental Psychologist with experience in both private practice and international school settings. She supports children and adolescents with a range of social, emotional, behavioural, and learning needs, and works closely with families and schools to develop practical, meaningful strategies tailored to each child. She provides both psychoeducational assessments and therapy, with a focus on emotional and behavioural regulation, and uses developmental and trauma-informed approaches in her work.





Counsellor Highlights

Jaral Shriyah Prakash

Counsellor and Coach

Services available:

- Therapy
- Coaching

Jaral is a counsellor who works with children and adolescents, and strongly believes in creating a safe, trusting, and meaningful connection with each client. With a strong commitment to holistic care and a strengths-based approach, Jaral continues to explore and integrate a multitude of counselling approaches to better understand and cater to the individual needs of her clients. She believes that every child has the capacity to grow and aims to empower them with the skills and confidence to navigate their experiences.



Daphne Toh

Counsellor

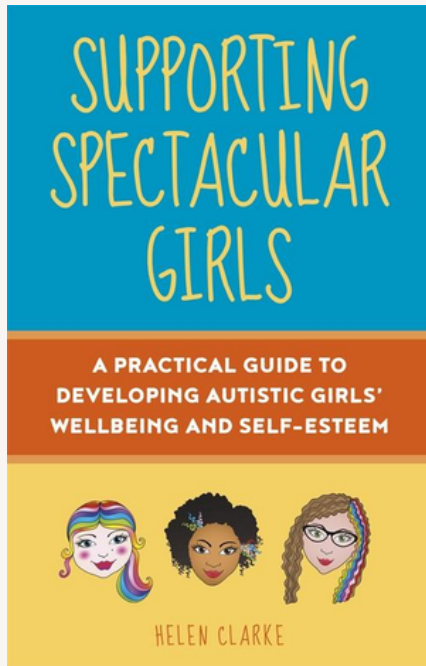
Services available:

- Therapy (IFS, DBT, Trauma-informed, Mindfulness)

Daphne is dedicated to helping individuals of all ages navigate life's challenges with warmth and compassion. She believes healing starts when people feel safe to explore their experiences and reconnect with their strengths. Daphne has a focus on supporting children and families. She values the opportunity to guide clients toward meaningful change in their relationships with themselves and others.



Clarke's Supporting Spectacular Girls



Clarke's Supporting Spectacular Girls is a practical, compassionate guide designed to strengthen the wellbeing and self-esteem of autistic girls aged 11–15. Through an adapted life-skills curriculum, it helps parents and educators address communication, identity, emotional regulation, safety, and health while recognising each girl's individuality and capabilities.

Clarke's Supporting Spectacular Girls

Author: Helen Clarke

The theme of "Being Unique," for example, explores individuality without reducing autistic girls' experiences to a single model. Throughout, the book favours practical guidance over lengthy theory, draws on public resources and research, and honestly presents both benefits and drawbacks. It emphasises choice and explains how non-autistic people can offer constructive support.

The chapter on safety may initially be difficult to read, but it is especially important in identifying the additional vulnerabilities autistic girls may experience or be perceived to have. Crucially, it moves beyond describing risks by offering a step-by-step approach to support. The book's balanced, open language invites discussion rather than pretending to provide every answer.

Review by Lynn Tan



New RECESS Interns

Lynn Tan

Bachelor of Psychological
Science (Honours)

Associate Certified Coach
(ACC), ICF



Lynn is currently completing her Bachelor of Psychological Science (Honours) at James Cook University, with a strong interest in clinical psychology. Before moving into psychology, she worked in marketing and later in organisational and business coaching, where she supported individuals and teams through change, reflection, and personal growth. Her main areas of interest include grief and loss, trauma, relationships and attachment, and cultural psychology. She hopes to continue building practical, ethical, culturally sensitive, and evidence-based skills to support people meaningfully across different stages of life.



Ethan Marsh

Bachelor of Business

Ethan is a Year 1 student at Singapore Management University, studying Business. His interests centre around marketing, human resource management, business strategy, and finance. He is particularly interested in how businesses can better understand their customers, make informed decisions, and create value, and how these principles can be applied within different organisational settings. He is interested in applying his business interests within a psychology-focused organisation.



New RECESS Interns

Lucius Tan

Bachelor of Psychology
and Business

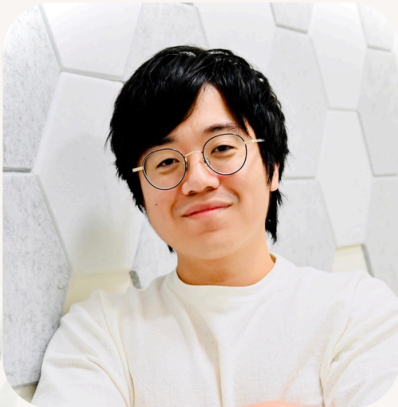


Lucius is a Year 3 student at Singapore Management University, majoring in Human Resources with a second major in Psychology. His interests in psychology centre around individual differences, developmental psychology, and educational psychology. He is particularly interested in how differences in personality and cognition shape the way people think and behave, and how psychological principles can be applied to learning, motivation, and education, especially across childhood and adolescence.

Opening Events at Outram

Welcome to our new space

Neurodivergent Teens: A safe space



**17th Oct
(Sat)**



1.30pm-3pm



**2 College Road, 169850
Medical Alumni Building
(2nd floor)**



Many neurodivergent individuals navigate a world that is not always designed with their needs in mind.

This group recognises and celebrates neurodiversity, while providing a safe space for them to meet other neurodivergent teens.

The counsellors will facilitate this session to emphasise peer connection, allowing members to learn from one another's experiences in a non-judgmental environment.

**Sign up
here!**



Opening Events at Outram

Welcome to our new space

**ADHD Kids:
A safe space for ages 9 to 12**



**14th Nov
(Sat)**



3pm-4.30pm



**2 College Road, 169850
Medical Alumni Building
(2nd floor)**



The sharing session for **9-12 year olds** aims to provide a safe space for young kids with ADHD to learn more about how they experience and live through neurodiversity.

Jaral (Counsellor) and Yasmeeen (Psychologist) will facilitate discussions on how to empower one another using strengths, navigating challenges, and implementing practical strategies they can use for their diverse needs.

**Sign up
here!**



2026 GROUP PROGRAMMES

(OCT TO DEC)

EAST COAST

D&D: AFTER SCHOOL ADVENTURES

Weekly Wednesday **Age 14 - 17**
4.30 - 6pm

Learn and practice social problem solving, teamwork and perspective taking skills through a table top role playing game.

SOCIAL COMMUNICATORS (SC)

Alt Saturday **Age 9 - 11**
9 - 10am

Learn concepts and skills that focus on perspective taking, emotional regulation, and joint attention through engaging activities.

RESILIENCE BUILDERS (RB)

Alt Saturday 2pm - 3pm **Age 10 - 13**

A social group for girls to build and develop resilience and manage anxiety in the face of tough times with a focus on self-advocacy.

OUR SOCIAL CLUB (OSC)

Alt Saturday 1 - 2pm **Age 10 - 13**

Support social and emotional development through building self- and social awareness in a small group setting.

BRILLIANT BOYS (BB)

Alt Saturday 10 - 11am **Age 13 - 16**

Explore topics on peer communication and peer relationships for teen boys guided by our counsellor.

CENTRAL

GLOW GIRLS (GG)

Alt Saturday 9 - 10am **Age 13 - 15**

Come build the strength and capacity to live a life aligned with our values together with the resilience to deal with social change and unpredictability.

THE VERY SOCIAL CLUB (VSC)

Alt Saturday **Age 10 - 12**
1pm to 2pm

Explore Social Awareness and Relationship Skills in a safe and respectful environment.