

# Life storeys

Life in the Heartlands

ISSUE 40  
APR/MAY 2024

**BUDGET MEAL,  
GO WHERE?**



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## DEAR READERS,

Welcome to Life Storeys April/May 2024. Are you loving our new look?

Among this issue's highlights is food. Singaporeans love to eat, and we especially love value-for-money fare.

Flip to **Talk of the Town** for our 1-2-3 guide to BudgetMealGoWhere, and check out wallet-friendly food and drink options across the island.

In **Around the Block**, we spotlight prominent landmarks in Kallang/Whampoa, and also round up popular bites – good old-fashioned classics and new names-to-watch.

If you have faulty appliances, find out how to give them a new lease of life from Repair Kopitiam's coaches in **Our Life Stories**.

Ever spotted items placed haphazardly in your neighbourhood? Learn how to mitigate the dangers of falling objects in **Livin' It Up**. Other must-reads in the same section: Healthy 365's fun features, and ways to support persons affected by autism or dementia.

Have an awesome month.

*The Editorial Team*

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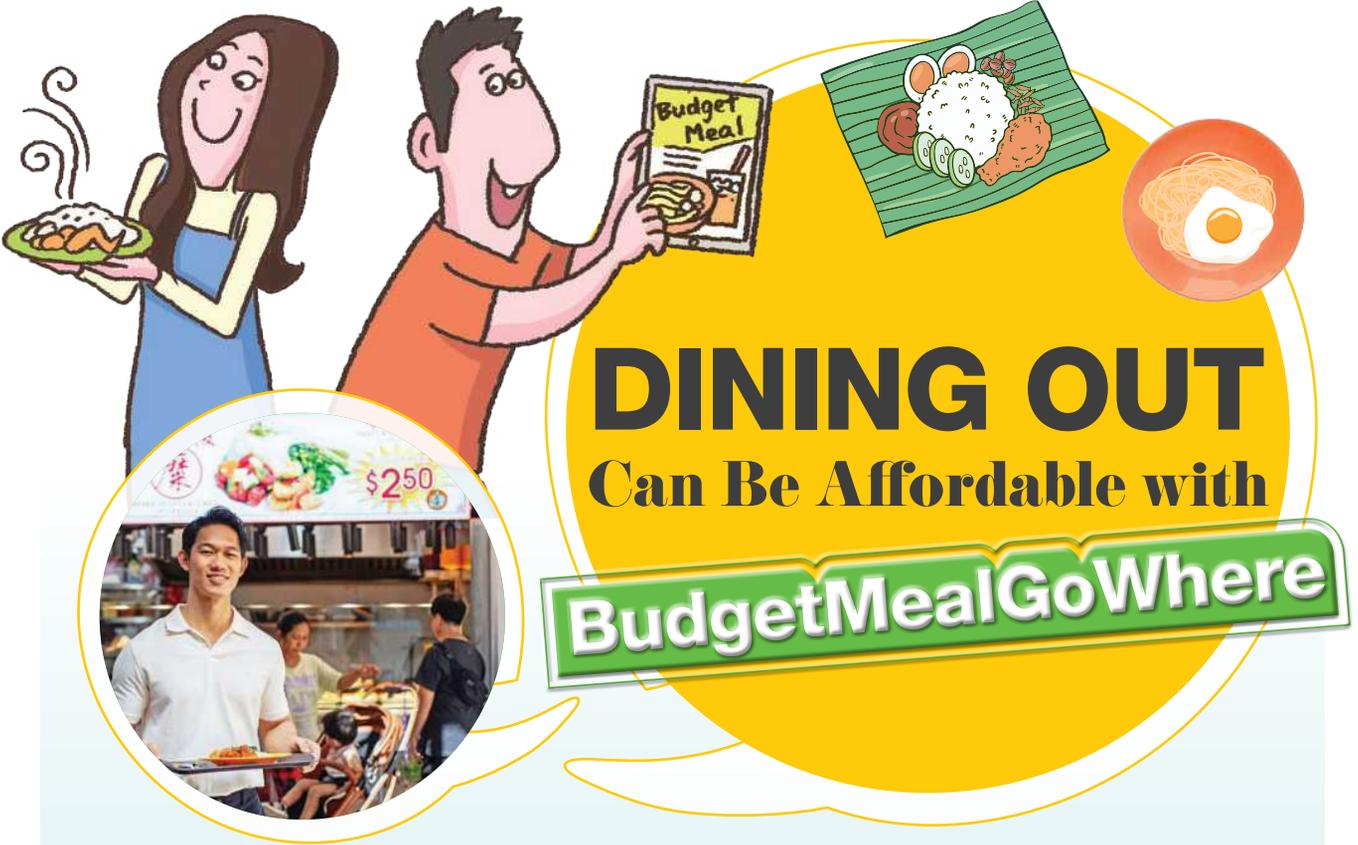
Life Storeys is a quarterly community publication by the Housing & Development Board, bringing you stories and happenings from your neighbourhood. Join us in creating a gracious and harmonious living environment for all! You can also access the electronic version at <https://go.gov.sg/hdb-lifestoreys> or scan the QR code below.



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有了BudgetMealGoWhere  
网站，出外用餐也可以经济实惠

Dengan BudgetMealGoWhere,  
makan di luar boleh dimampui

“பட்ஜெட் மீல் கோ வேர்” மூலம்  
வெளியே உணவு உண்பதைக்  
கட்டுப்படியானதாகச் செய்யலாம்

**Rising food prices may have made us more prudent with our dining options, especially when eating out. But don't be in a hurry to hole yourself up at home, especially with wallet-friendly food and drink options available on the BudgetMealGoWhere portal.**

A collaboration between HDB and Government Technology Agency (or GovTech), the portal features HDB coffee shops in your neighbourhood that offer budget meals and drinks. Budget meals refer to meal options that are typically priced at \$3.50 or below, and drinks at \$1.20 or below.

Since the portal launched in May 2023, BudgetMealGoWhere has garnered more than 375,000 visitors. To help residents find budget meals in housing estates more easily, HDB has also worked with GovTech to create a “Great Budget Meal Hunt” on CrowdTaskSG to crowdsource recommendations of budget meals in HDB coffee shops.

These budget meals are located across more than 280 coffee shops throughout Singapore. If you plan to visit, look out for the budget meal decal sticker at the stall.



By **2026**, budget meals will be offered  
at all **374** HDB rental coffee shops.

# YOUR 1-2-3 GUIDE TO GETTING A BUDGET MEAL

## 跟着简易步骤，享受经济餐饮

### Panduan 1-2-3 Anda untuk Mendapatkan Sajian Bajet

மலிவான உணவை வாங்குவதற்கான உங்கள் “1-2-3” வழிகாட்டி

### VALUE-FOR-MONEY FOOD OPTIONS IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD – AT YOUR FINGERTIPS!

弹指间，便可享受物超所值的美食！

Pilihan makanan yang berbaloi di  
kejiranan anda – di hujung jari!

உங்கள் அக்கம்பக்கத்தில் விலைக்கு ஏற்ற  
தரமான உணவு கிடைக்கக்கூடிய இடங்கள்  
பற்றிய விவரங்கள் உடனடியாக கிடைக்கும்!



# 1

**Go to**  
<https://go.gov.sg/budgetmeal>.

- 登入 <https://go.gov.sg/budgetmeal>.
- Pergi ke <https://go.gov.sg/budgetmeal>.
- <https://go.gov.sg/budgetmeal> இணையதளத்திற்கு செல்லுங்கள்.

# 2

**Enter your postal code  
and tap “search”.**

- 输入邮政编码，再点击“搜索”。
- Masukkan poskod anda dan ketik “cari”.
- உங்கள் அஞ்சல் குறியீட்டு எண்ணை டைப் செய்து சர்ச் பொத்தானை தட்டவும்.

# 3

**Scroll through the list  
of options available at  
nearby HDB coffee shops.**

- 浏览附近的HDB咖啡店。
- Tatal senarai pilihan yang tersedia di kedai kopi HDB berdekatan.
- அருகிலுள்ள வீவக காப்பிக் கடைகளில் உள்ள விருப்பத்தேர்வுப் பட்டியலைப் பார்க்கவும்.



## HOW YOU CAN CHIP IN

**F**inding budget meals is so easy with **BudgetMealGoWhere**. Are you aware of any affordable meal in your neighbourhood that has yet to make the list? Participate in the Great Budget Meal Hunt! Get yourself registered with the **CrowdTaskSG** portal – Singapore citizens or permanent residents 18 years and older with a Singpass account can do so – to share affordable food options at HDB coffee shops, and/or help verify existing recommendations. Complete a task to earn stars, and level up to unlock more complex challenges.

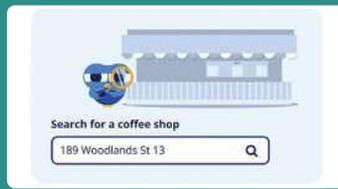
1

Go to <https://go.gov.sg/gbmh>.



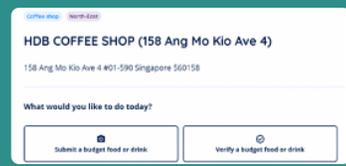
2

Enter the name of the coffee shop you're at and click "search".



3

Choose the task – submit or verify a budget meal or drink – you want to complete.



## DIG INTO THESE YUMMY QUICK BITES



**T**he Great Budget Meal Hunt also provides hourly updates on number of submissions per region, region with the highest number of contributions, the newest submissions, and other interesting facts and figures.



The Central Sikh Temple at Queen Street in 1958.

Source: Ministry of Information and the Arts Collection, courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

## Central Sikh Temple

2 Towner Road, Singapore 327804

The Central Sikh Temple serves as a place of worship for Sikhs in Singapore and offers programmes to promote awareness about the community.

It was initially earmarked for Queen Street but the land became acquired for urban redevelopment in 1977. So Towner Road was picked as its new site. Completed in 1986, it was designated a historical site by the National Heritage Board in 1999.

# PAST & PRESENT Perfect

One of Singapore's oldest housing estates, Kallang/Whampoa is filled with well-loved landmarks that have evolved through the years. Check out our favourites now.

**K**allang is derived from the Malay word "kilang" – for "mill", of which there were plenty in the area. Its name also harks back to the estate's earliest residents; in 1819, there were less than 1,000 of the Orang Kallang community, who were boat-dwellers and lived by the river.

## Kallang River

Stadium Road, Singapore 397774

Kallang River is Singapore's longest river. It flows southeast for 10km from Lower Peirce Reservoir to the coast at Nicoll Highway and towards the open sea through Marina Channel.

When Sir Stamford Raffles arrived in 1819, Kallang River, specifically at its mouth, was where the aboriginal Orang Kallang tribe, who were skilful boat-dwellers, made their home.

From the 1930s through to the 1960s, swamps on each riverbank would be filled up to accommodate Kallang Airport and the Kallang Basin industrial estate.

In 2008, with the completion of Marina Barrage, Kallang River, together with Singapore River, Rochor River and Geylang River, became a water catchment area for Marina Reservoir. It is now a favourite destination for water sports.



Kallang River in 1987.

Source: Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore



## Merdeka Bridge

### Nicoll Highway

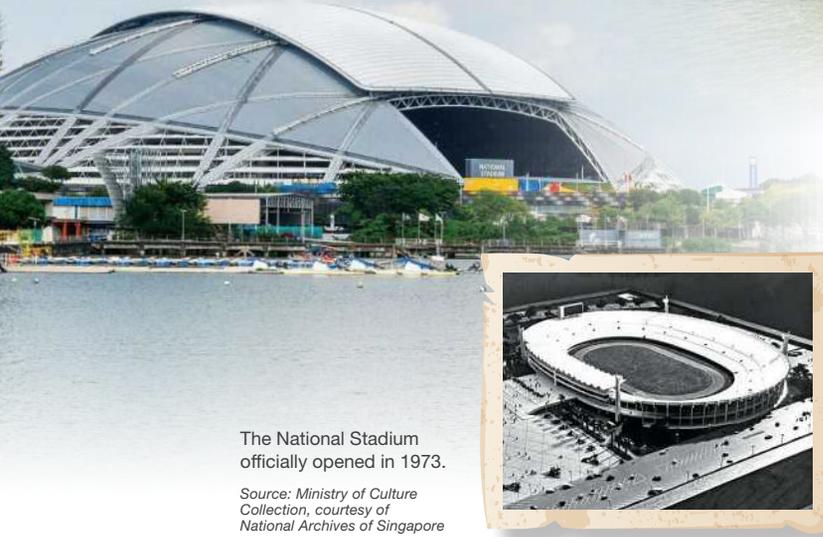
Merdeka Bridge was the first bridge constructed in Singapore after the end of the Japanese Occupation. It was named to reflect our people's aspirations.

Spanning across Kallang Basin, near the mouths of Kallang and Rochor Rivers, the bridge would become integrated into Nicoll Highway. In 2002, Merdeka Bridge was marked as a historic site.



Merdeka Bridge in 1956.

Source: Ministry of Information and the Arts Collection, courtesy of National Archives of Singapore



The National Stadium officially opened in 1973.

Source: Ministry of Culture Collection, courtesy of National Archives of Singapore



## National Stadium

1 Stadium Drive, Singapore 397629

The world's only stadium configured for different events, ranging from sports tournaments and music concerts to national celebrations, the National Stadium is also among the world's largest domed structures.

National Stadium seats up to 55,000, and is part of a 35-hectare Singapore Sports Hub that also includes an indoor aquatics centre, the Singapore Indoor Stadium, sports museum and other facilities.

Open since 2014, it is Singapore's second National Stadium – the first had been used for nearly four decades, from 1973 to 2010.

## Old Kallang Airport

9 Kallang Airport Way, Singapore 397750

"An aviation miracle of the East". That was how Amelia Earhart, the first female pilot to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean, described Kallang Airport when she arrived here after it opened in June 1937.

Kallang Airport took six years to construct at a cost of \$8 million. It was built on Kallang Basin – with nearly 6.2 million cubic metres of clay subsoil to fill the land that was originally a mangrove swamp!

By 1955, however, operations ceased here with the opening of a new civil airport at Paya Lebar. The Terminal Building has been under conservation since 2009.



Old Kallang Airport in 1958.

Source: Ministry of Information and the Arts Collection, courtesy of National Archives of Singapore



# Make Haste for These GREAT TASTES in Kallang/Whampoa

Whether your palate veers towards hearty, spicy or zesty, there's something to tickle your fancy here.



## Singapore Fried Hokkien Mee

Whampoa Makan Place,  
Blk 90, Whampoa Drive, #01-32  
Open 4.00pm to 11.00pm;  
Closed on Thu

If you're dropping by for the first time, look out for an aunty on a stepladder by the side of the stall. Named to the Michelin Bib Gourmand list in 2023, Singapore Fried Hokkien Mee has been serving up this delicious concoction of rice vermicelli and yellow egg noodles, prawns and squid since 1974. Jimmy Yong ran a pushcart near Ruby Cinema along Ava Road – on the opposite side of Balestier Road – and moved here in 1978. He still visits the stall frequently but hardly cooks – his son Jack and wife Shao Zhen helm the kitchen now. So what's their secret? Patience. "Most will cook all ingredients together, but I fry the vermicelli first, followed by the noodles, then add the other ingredients. Tastes and smells better, don't you think?"



This legendary name in Singapore's sup kambing (that would be mutton soup) scene began as a humble pushcart in 1955, in a back lane in Geylang Lorong 3 near Gay World Amusement Park. Owner Hajamaideen is the youngest of three sons of its late founder – whom the stall is named after – who, after trying out many jobs, found work at a sup kambing stall during the 50s. In 1975, the stall was relocated here. One customer we met said she had travelled all the way from Tampines to buy her "childhood favourite" of sup kambing with meat. The broth is rich with hints of spices and herbs – Hajamaideen says it is a secret recipe. But here's the real surprise: fresh lamb meat from New Zealand and Australia is used, not mutton, as it has no gamey aftertaste.



## Haji M. Abdul Rajak Soup Kambing Stall

Upper Boon Keng Market & Food Centre,  
Blk 17, Upper Boon Keng Road, #01-03  
Open 11.00am to 11.30pm;  
Closed on Tue



### Hoover Fish Porridge

Whampoa Makan Place,  
Blk 90, Whampoa Drive, #01-56  
Open 11.30am to 8.30pm;  
Closed on Wed & Thu

**H**oover Fish Porridge took its name from the cinema at 360 Balestier Road during the 1960s, where it began as a streetside stall that sold fish porridge and fish soup. It moved to the Whampoa Makan Place in 1975, and has garnered a loyal multigenerational following with its scrumptious fish slices and yummy fishbone broth. Order yours with handmade meatballs – go early because these sell out fast! Third-generation owner Yeo Kim Yeow took over the stall from his father Yeo Cheng Huat – he passed on in 2023 – in 2022. His own son Xavier is already learning the ropes with plans to join the business.



**S**tarted by Jason Koh (right) and Jeffrey Ang in June 2023, \$5 Western wants to offer Western food at wallet-friendly prices. Setting up shop in Upper Boon Keng was “by chance; we happened to see a unit available here”, shares Jason. Among the menu of classic fare, chicken chop is by far the bestseller; it is served with: a) fries, coleslaw and bun; b) baked beans, coleslaw and rice, or c) just pasta. \$5 Western attracts a steady stream of regulars – “for some of them, we already know what they will order”. It has another outlet in Woodlands.



### \$5 Western

Blk 5, Upper Boon Keng Road, #01-01  
Open daily 11.00am to 9.00pm



### Delcie's Desserts and Cakes

Blk 34, Whampoa West, #01-83  
Open 11.00am to 8.00pm;  
Closed on Mon

**T**his year marks Delcie's Desserts and Cakes' 16th in the Whampoa estate. Its owner, Delcie, passed by one day and decided to explore the neighbourhood. She felt that her customers would appreciate its accessibility to public transport and ample parking. Her bakery offers “healthier” sweets that are free of egg, dairy, alcohol and animal products. A favourite with fans is Blue Forest Cake – it's low GI and nut-free too! – with its scrumptious combo of fluffy vanilla sponge cake, juicy blueberries imported straight from Japan, and flavourful vanilla beam. Trained as an art director, Delcie's creations have drawn an international coterie of cake lovers hailing from as far as Dubai and Korea.



# HERE'S THE FIX

If it's broken, well, don't hurry to dispose of it. Pop over to Repair Kopitiam and you could learn to get it fixed.



“It”, for more than 1,200 people who visited Repair Kopitiam’s meet-ups in 2023, was most likely a fan, kettle or vacuum cleaner.

Repair Kopitiam was founded in 2014 by Veerappan Swaminathan, CEO of Sustainable Living Lab, a homegrown sustainability consultancy and innovation lab. It aims to help fight Singapore’s trash problem by steering us away from the buy-and-throw-away culture.

Repair Kopitiam's repair coaching sessions take place every last Sunday of the month and can be found in HDB estates such as Ang Mo Kio, Choa Chu Kang and Pek Kio. Each session can accommodate up to 40 participants, who can sign up at its website.

Participants do not need to pay to attend these repair coaching sessions – while the use of tools and generic parts are free, you need to pay for specific parts. But what many appreciate about these sessions is learning how to rescue and/or rejuvenate their items.



The team at Repair Kopitiam wants to teach others to repair for themselves.

**Danny Lim**, Community Lead at Sustainable Living Lab, has led Repair Kopitiam's coaching sessions since 2019.

He shares more here.



With guidance from the coach, this resident learnt how to fix his fan.

### WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT YOUR WORK?

Knowing that many items can be restored – it can grow on people! By making our sessions more accessible to others, they learn to repair their own stuff; it saves money, reduces waste, and contributes to a greener environment. Participants also become more aware of their consumption habits – proper maintenance can help to keep items such as home appliances, furniture and even toddler walkers, in good condition for a longer time.

Residents are guided by coaches to repair electrical appliances here.

### MOST COMMON ITEMS RESIDENTS WANT TO "SAVE"?

Electrical and electronics – fans take up 25 per cent of our repair requests.

### HOW DO YOUR MEET-UPS STRENGTHEN THE SENSE OF NEIGHBOURLINESS AMONG RESIDENTS?

At Repair Kopitiam sessions, participants fix their items themselves – our coaches serve as guides, sharing information on what went wrong, how to fix faults, how to maintain performance, and what we can do to achieve sustainability, etc. Such interactions help to build rapport between us and the community. By sharing our solutions, we hope others can adopt them too.



### EVER PICKED UP ITEMS DISCARDED INDISCRIMINATELY AT PUBLIC SPACES THAT YOU MANAGED TO RESTORE?

During the pandemic, people were throwing away their fans. We picked up 70 fans from HDB void decks – and repaired 65 of them. For five, we simply replaced broken wires and/or fuses. The others required some cleaning and oiling or replacing parts like thermal fuses and capacitors – which cost only \$3 to \$4.

### DIY IS INTEGRAL TO THE EXPERIENCE REPAIR KOPITIAM OFFERS. WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

We want to teach others how to repair for themselves – we have trained more than 4,500 coaches since we began. We also offer handyman courses that teach practical DIY skills such as plumbing and home electrical repairs. As more people learn to repair, our community will become more empowered to adopt a lifestyle of “throw less”.

### APRIL 22 IS EARTH DAY. WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO TO SAVE OUR PLANET?

For us at Repair Kopitiam, every day is Earth Day. Sustainability is not a good-to-have – it is and should be a way of life. We should start to educate the younger generation. We are running out of time; make today the day.

# FALLING DANGERS

## from Above

物品从高空坠落的危险性

Bahaya yang Jatuh dari Atas

மேலிருந்து பொருள்கள் கீழே விழும் ஆபத்து

A safe living environment begins with you. Learn how to prevent everyday items and fixtures from falling and injuring passers-by.

**F**rying pans, potted plants and bird cages – these possessions precious to many people could pose a danger to others if placed haphazardly, as they run a risk of falling. Even some home fixtures which appear to be secure and stable may also fall and hurt others if not maintained properly. Pick up these useful tips to keep our living environment safe for all.

### What can I do if I spot items placed dangerously in my neighbourhood?

If they are found in common areas, contact the Town Council managing your flat.

If they are seen inside HDB flats (such as on window ledges), contact HDB Branch Service Line at 1800-225-5432.



## Laundry Area

- ✔ **Do place bamboo poles properly into the pole holders and on the laundry rack.**
- ✘ **Don't hang or place other items except your laundry.**

确保晾衣竹竿稳妥地插入或摆放在支架上。  
除了衣服外，不要在支架上悬挂或放置其他物品。

Sila letakkan galah dengan sempurna di dalam pemegang galah dan di atas rak jemuran.

Jangan gantung atau letak benda lain kecuali jemuran anda.

மூங்கில் கம்புகளை அவற்றுக்குரிய தாங்கிகளில் சரியாகப் பொருத்தித் துணி உலர்த்தும் சட்டத்தில் வைக்கவும்.

துணிகளைத் தவிர்ந்து வேறு எந்தப் பொருள்களையும் அவற்றில் வைக்காதீர்கள் அல்லது தொங்க விடாதீர்கள்.

SCAN TO LEARN MORE!

欲知详情，  
请扫描QR码!

Imbas untuk  
ketahui lebih lanjut!

மேலும் தெரிந்துகொள்ள  
வருடவும்!

Upon scanning, you will be directed  
to a link that contains gov.sg.



<https://go.gov.sg/hdb-kl>

## Air-con Compressor

- ✘ **Don't place any items on the air-con compressor.**

On a side note, do check your air-con compressor structural supporting system regularly and ensure that it is securely installed.

Engage a trained air-conditioning unit installer for replacement or repair services.

不要在冷气压缩机上放置任何物品。

温馨提醒：请定期检查冷气压缩机的支架，确保支架安装牢固。如有需要，请聘雇专业及经过训练的合格冷气安装人员进行更换或维修。

Jangan letak sebarang barang di atas kompresor penyaman udara. Sebagai nota sampingan, sila periksa sistem sokongan struktur kompresor penyaman udara anda dengan kerap dan pastikan yang ia dipasang dengan kukuh. Sila dapatkan khidmat pemasang unit penyaman udara yang terlatih untuk menggantikan atau membaiki sistem tersebut.

குளிர்சூட்டும் சாதனத்தின் கம்பர்சர் மீது எந்தப் பொருள்களையும் வைக்காதீர்கள்.

மேலும், உங்கள் குளிர்சூட்டும் சாதனத்தின் கம்பர்சரை தாங்கும் அமைப்பைத் தவறாமல் சோதித்துப் பார்த்து அது திடமாக பொறுத்தப்பட்டுள்ளதை உறுதி செய்யுங்கள். பயிற்சி பெற்ற ஒருவரைக் கொண்டு அதை மாற்றவும் அல்லது பழுது பார்க்கவும்.



<https://go.gov.sg/hdb-home-care-guide>

## Windows

- ✘ **Don't place items such as potted plants on window ledges or hang them outside windows.**

On a side note, do check your windows regularly to prevent them from dislodging or falling off.

If required, contact a Building and Construction Authority (BCA)-approved window contractor listed with HDB for repairs immediately.

不要在窗沿或窗外放置、悬挂任何物品，例如盆栽。

温馨提醒：请定期检查窗户，避免窗户松脱或坠落。如有需要，你可以聘雇由新加坡建设局 (BCA) 认证的建屋局 (HDB) 合格窗户承包商，请他们立即维修。

Jangan letak barang seperti tanaman pasu di atas belebas tingkap atau gantung pasu-pasu itu di luar tingkap.

Sebagai nota sampingan, sila periksa tingkap-tingkap anda dengan kerap untuk mengelakkannya daripada tertanggal atau jatuh. Jika perlu, sila hubungi segera kontraktor tingkap yang diluluskan oleh Penguasa Bangunan dan Binaan (BCA) yang disenaraikan dengan HDB untuk pembaikan.

பூந்தொட்டிகள் போன்ற பொருள்களை சன்னல் விளிம்புகளில் வைக்காதீர்கள் அல்லது அவற்றைச் சன்னலுக்கு வெளியே தொங்கவிடாதீர்கள்.

மேலும், சன்னல்கள் கழன்று போவதை அல்லது கீழே விழுவதைத் தடுக்க அவற்றைத் தவறாமல் சோதித்திருங்கள். தேவைப்பட்டால் வீடமைப்பு வளர்ச்சிக் கழகம் பட்டியலிட்டுள்ள கட்டட கட்டுமான ஆணையத்தால் (BCA) அங்கீகரிக்கப்பட்ட சன்னல் ஒப்பந்ததாரரைத் தொடர்புகொண்டு உடனடியாகப் பழுதுபார்க்கவும்.



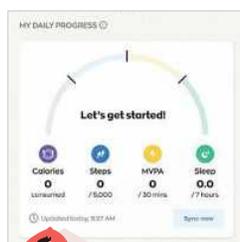
<https://go.gov.sg/hdb-window-safety>

# Your Journey to Well-Being Begins with HEALTHY



## My Daily Progress

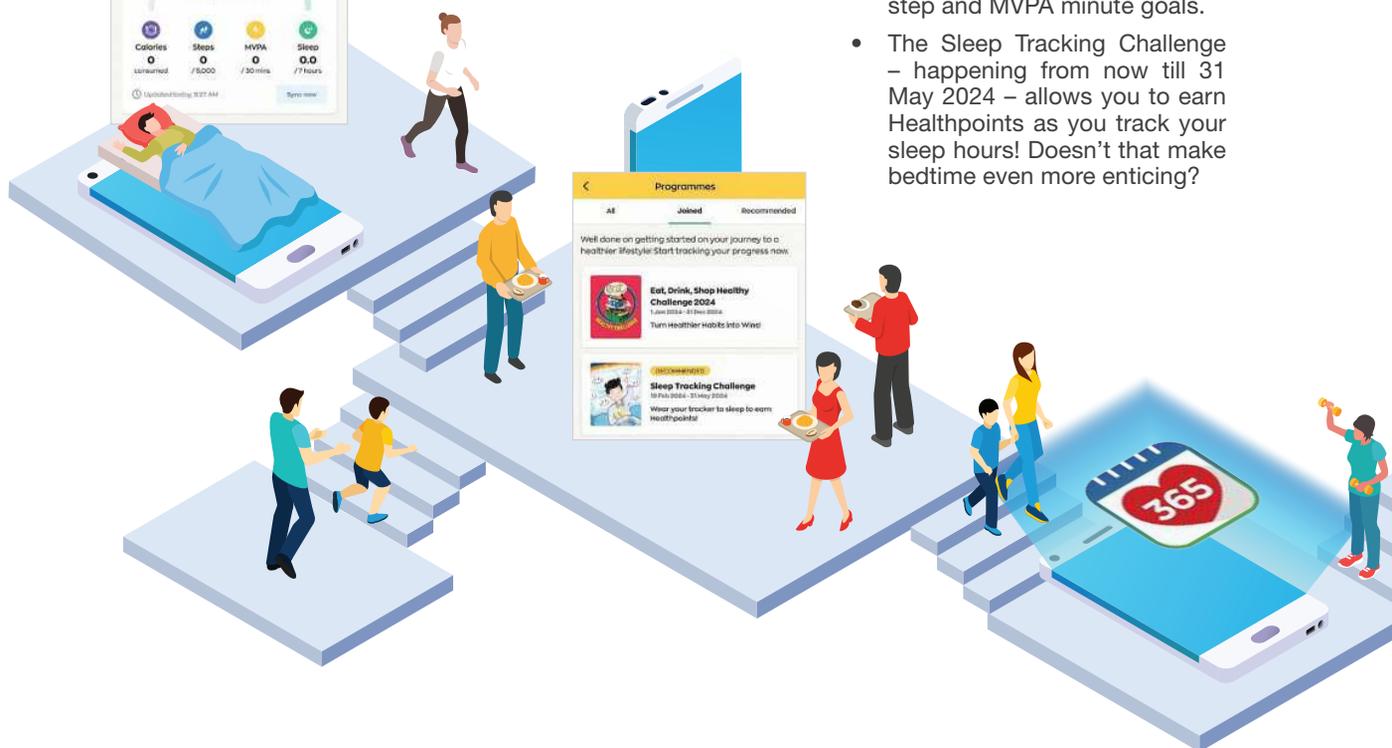
Tap into the app and you'll see this home screen, which displays your essential health-related and lifestyle data at a quick glance. Whether it's your daily caloric intake, how much you've moved during the day, or number of hours you have slept, these progress bars can help you monitor your progress towards holistic well-being.



## Programmes & Challenges

Embark on exciting programmes and challenges designed to encourage and support you in making healthier lifestyle choices every day.

- Snag sure-win rewards with the Eat, Drink, Shop Healthy Challenge – simply by purchasing healthier choice items at participating partners. Scan QR Receipts from healthier choice purchases to earn Healthpoints, which you can use to redeem cool rewards.
- If you are using a HPB fitness tracker or a third-party fitness tracker/app, remember to also sync your steps and MVPA (Moderate to Vigorous Physical Activity) minutes – aim to hit at least 150 minutes of MVPA every week! With the National Steps Challenge™, you also get to earn Healthpoints and redeem attractive rewards when you achieve your daily step and MVPA minute goals.
- The Sleep Tracking Challenge – happening from now till 31 May 2024 – allows you to earn Healthpoints as you track your sleep hours! Doesn't that make bedtime even more enticing?



## Get fitter, eat healthier, and track if you are getting sufficient sleep with Healthy 365's features, resources and programmes – and earn some attractive rewards along the way!

A healthy lifestyle can feel rather difficult to achieve or maintain – especially amid deadlines at work, chores at home, and caring for the kids. The Healthy 365 app by Health Promotion Board (HPB), offers some useful support. Read on for what we love – and you might too.

### Workout Classes & Health Workshops

Up the fun in getting fit by having your family and friends join in. Sign up for workout classes and health workshops right in your neighbourhood.

- There is something for every age group and fitness level! Adults aged 50 years and older can enjoy specially curated activities to maintain physical, mental and social health under the “Live Well, Age Well” programme, while little ones can enjoy activities with their parents under the “Active Family” programme. To explore and sign up for these activities, tap on the “Filter” function and choose the age group you have in mind. You can even set the filter to highlight activities at a location near you!

### Meal Log Tool

Use the Meal Log tool to log your daily consumption and better understand your eating habits over time. You can then choose to make necessary changes to improve your diet or achieve your weight management goals!

### Recommended For You

Healthy 365 isn't just packed with fun features; it's also the gateway to other programmes and resources that help you achieve holistic health. Information about subsidised health screenings, getting support to quit smoking, and other ways to embrace a healthier lifestyle are simply a tap away via this section!

### Get Started Now

Healthy 365 is available on Apple App Store or Google Play.

Read more about the app at <https://go.gov.sg/thehealthy365app>! Want to download the Healthy 365 app but your mobile phone is incompatible? Have a family member or friend register for a Healthy 365 account on your behalf. Alternatively, visit your nearest Community Centre for assistance.

**Residents who have enrolled in Healthier SG can receive \$20 worth of Healthpoints.**

**HERE'S A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE:**

1

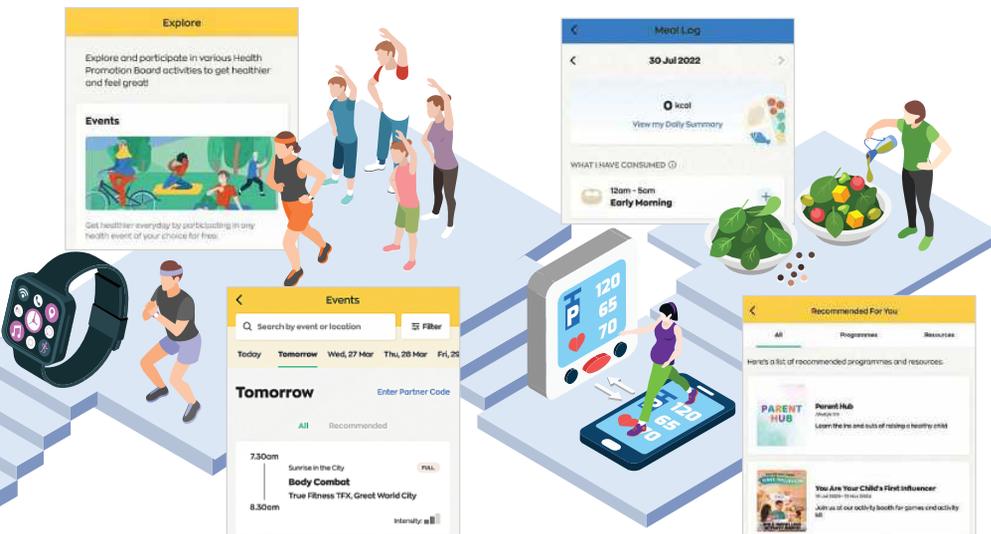
**Download Healthy 365.**

2

**Complete your first Health Plan consultation under Healthier SG.**

3

**Receive \$20 worth of Healthpoints on Healthy 365 and redeem attractive rewards of your choice!**



# More Support for Those on the AUTISM SPECTRUM

One in 150 children in Singapore has autism – higher than the World Health Organization’s global rate of 1 in 160 – with the number set to increase. It is imperative that our community lends support to persons with autism.

## What is Autism?

Autism, or autism spectrum disorder, is a neurodevelopmental condition that affects how one communicates, interacts with others, and perceives the world around him/her. Dr Lian says it is a spectrum because of its many possible combinations and permutations of severity of symptoms. As Veronica explains, “No two persons with autism are exactly alike – each experiences the condition in his/her way”.

## What causes Autism?

The exact causes of autism are still unknown, although research suggests that both genetic and environmental factors play a role.

## Can Autism be cured?

“No, but it can be managed with early intervention, therapies aimed at impairments such as language or motor delay, and by introducing a structured environment,” according to Dr Lian.

**T**he key to building an inclusive society for these individuals is to understand that they have unique abilities and can contribute to society too.

Dr Lian Wee Bin, medical director of SpecialKids Child Health and Development Clinic\*, says children with autism struggle with developmental challenges that may hamper their learning in the long run. It can be difficult for them to understand social norms, and occurs whether they are verbal or non-verbal. So they often become victims of bullying at school or work.

Veronica Ho, principal of St. Andrew’s Autism School\*, shares about one of her students John\*\*, who often throws things or jumps on the floor at home when he is anxious. “It disturbs their neighbours, who have confronted the family many times and even reported to the police. The family has very few friends in the neighbourhood because not many understand why John is ‘so naughty’.”

\* SpecialKids Child Health and Development Clinic offers developmental assessment and screening and other services. St. Andrew’s Autism School offers a personalised curriculum that covers social-emotional learning, communication, and vocational skills, among others.

\*\*not his real name



## COMMON BEHAVIOURS ASSOCIATED WITH AUTISM

- Weak social communication abilities, such as poor eye contact and difficulty with conveying requests through gestures or speech.
- Failure to engage during interactive play with peers, usually due to poor awareness of social cues and body language and/or disinclination or over-inclination to talk.
- Repetitive motor behaviours, including opening and closing of doors, rocking the body back and forth, and a pervasive interest in specific subjects like trains.
- Rigidity, where any change in routine can cause anxiety.
- Meltdowns, which can be caused by sensory overload such as noise and bright lights.



## HOW TO INTERACT WITH PERSONS WITH AUTISM & THEIR CAREGIVERS IN PUBLIC SPACES

- **Be patient.** "Some persons with autism cannot communicate their needs as easily," says Veronica. "That's why they need more time to process and respond. Speak calmly and slowly to them."
- **Provide clear instructions.** Persons with autism may possess weaker ability to understand or infer hidden meanings in text or speech, explains Dr Lian. Veronica cites an example: "Say 'it's raining very heavily' instead of 'it's raining cats and dogs'."
- **Let the caregivers take the lead.** They know best why the child experiences a meltdown and how to calm him/her down.
- **Ask if the caregivers need help.** But be prepared that many may decline to minimise any attention to the meltdown, says Veronica.





Singapore's rapidly ageing population means many elderly citizens may struggle with dementia.

**D**ementia happens when the brain function gradually fails, which can affect day-to-day activities. Dr Bryan Han, Associate Consultant, Post-Acute and Continuing Care, SingHealth Community Hospitals, shares how to identify symptoms.



## Dealing with **DEMENTIA**

如何应对  
失智症

Menangani  
Demensia

முதுமைக்கால மறதி  
நோயை கையாளுதல்



### How You Can Help

If you spot an elderly person who appears lost and cannot identify himself/herself, ask for his/her address and accompany him/her home. If the person cannot tell you the address, bring him/her to a designated Dementia Go-To point (such as an MRT station or bus interchange). Staff there can help to reunite the person with his/her caregiver.

Keeping a lookout for persons living with dementia in the community is easier with the Dementia Singapore CARA app; it is available on Apple App Store or Google Play. The app allows you to report and to receive alerts of missing persons with dementia.

## CONSULT A DOCTOR IF YOU EXPERIENCE THESE SYMPTOMS

如果出现以下这些症状，请尽早向医生咨询

Dapatkan nasihat doktor jika anda mengalami gejala-gejala ini

உங்களுக்குப் பின்வரும் அறிகுறிகள் இருந்தால் மருத்துவ ஆலோசனை பெறுங்கள்

### Short-term memory loss

- 短期失忆
- Kehilangan ingatan jangka pendek
- குறுகிய கால நினைவாற்றல் இழப்பு



including misplacing personal items such as house keys.

### Increasing difficulty with executive function

- 越来越难执行日常功能
- Kesukaran yang meningkat dalam fungsi eksekutif
- திட்டமிட்டு செயல்படுவதில் சிரமம் அதிகரித்தல்



such as handling finances, planning travel routes or cooking.

### Communication difficulty

- 沟通困难
- Kesukaran komunikasi
- தொடர்புகொள்வதில் சிரமம்



especially in finding the right words in daily conversation, or in understanding and following simple instructions.

### Frequent sleep disturbances

- 睡眠经常受到干扰
- Gangguan tidur yang kerap
- தூக்கத்தில் அடிக்கடி இடையூறு ஏற்படுதல்



with some waking up more often during the night while others require more naps during the day.

## PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST DEMENTIA WITH THESE TIPS

如何保护自己，避免患上失智症

Lindungi diri anda daripada demensia dengan tip-tip ini

பின்வரும் குறிப்புகளைக் கொண்டு முதுமைக்கால மறதி நோயிலிருந்து உங்களைப் பாதுகாத்துக்கொள்ளுங்கள்

### Stay mentally active

- 维持精神活跃
- Kekal aktif secara mental
- மனரீதியாகத் துடிப்புடன் இருங்கள்



such as learning a new language or reading your favourite books. Playing a few rounds of mahjong or sudoku can help too.

### Keep socially active

- 保持社交活跃
- Terus aktif secara sosial
- சமூக ரீதியாகத் துடிப்புடன் இருங்கள்



such as meeting with family, friends and neighbours regularly.

### Exercise, and try to achieve 150 to 300 minutes every week of moderate-intensity activities

- 积极锻炼，并进行每周150到300分钟的中等强度运动
- Bersenam, dan cuba mencapai kegiatan intensiti sederhana sepanjang 150 hingga 300 minit setiap minggu
- உடற்பயிற்சி செய்யுங்கள், மற்றும் வாரத்திற்கு 150 முதல் 300 நிமிடங்கள் வரை மிதமான தீவிரத்தன்மைகொண்ட உடற்பயிற்சி செய்வதற்கு முயற்சி செய்யுங்கள்.



such as swimming, jogging, cycling or Tai Chi (depending on your physical condition).

### Eat a healthy diet

- 摄取健康饮食
- Amalkan pemakanan yang sihat
- ஆரோக்கியமான உணவு உண்ணுங்கள்



which promotes overall well-being. Try to choose foods like whole grains, such as wholemeal bread or brown rice, green leafy vegetables, nuts, and antioxidant-packed berries such as blueberries. Opt for proteins like chicken or fish, which are rich in omega-3 fatty acids. Avoid processed or canned foods.



**Hang liddat,  
cannot lah!**

## **Gently remind your neighbours to keep things safely indoors!**

If you spot your neighbours placing their items in places where they could fall and become killer litter, do gently encourage them to store the items safely indoors.

You may also contact your Town Council for items at common areas that are in immediate danger of falling.

Otherwise, someone could get badly hurt!

**LIFE'S SAFER WITH NO KILLER LITTER.**

Scan to learn more about  
how to prevent killer litter.



<https://go.gov.sg/hdb-kl>  
Upon scanning, you will be directed  
to a link that contains gov.sg.



**HOUSING &  
DEVELOPMENT  
BOARD**



*Fulfilling **Dreams**, Building **Homes**, Creating **Communities***

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