



# PROBATION AND COMMUNITY REHABILITATION SERVICE

2020 annual report

# VISION

Changed lives. Safer community

# MISSION

To work with Youths-At-Risk and individuals who have offended, in collaboration with families and the community, to lead socially responsible lives

# VALUES

Progressive, Collaborative, Responsive, Service

# QUALITY POLICY



We commit to quality service in the probation of offenders and their rehabilitation in the community

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Rehabilitation with the goal of facilitating pathways towards desistance\*

- 1** Adopt evidence-informed practice
- 2** Anticipate and respond to changing needs
- 3** Develop and maintain well-trained and professional staff
- 4** Play an active and influential role in the criminal justice and social service sectors

\* In the field of criminology, desistance is generally defined as the cessation of offending or other antisocial behaviour.

# CONTENTS

**04**

**PROBATION  
COMMITTEE**

**06**

**NEW PROBATION ORDERS**

**10**

**FACILITATING CASE  
MANAGEMENT THROUGH  
DIGITALISATION**

**12**

**MOBILISING COMMUNITY  
SUPPORT AND RESOURCES**

**15**

**CELEBRATING  
ACHIEVEMENTS**

**05**

**KEY FIGURES &  
PRE-SENTENCE REPORTS**

**08**

**COMPLETION OF  
PROBATION ORDERS**

**11**

**WORKING WITH FAMILIES  
IN THE NEW NORMAL**

**14**

**STAYING CONNECTED  
WHILE APART**

**16**

**FEATURING  
STORIES OF PROBATION**

**18**

**DESISTANCE IS A  
JOURNEY**

## **The Cover**

The face symbolises every probationer who comes through the Probation Service. Each brushstroke represents the elements that shape the probationers' experience and spur them on a journey of hope and transformation.

# Probation Committee



**CHAIRPERSON**  
**JUSTICE VINCENT HOONG**

**Presiding Judge**  
State Courts



**MR EUGENE TAY**  
**District Judge /**  
**Assistant Registrar**  
Family Justice Courts



**MR TOH HAN LI**  
**Principal District Judge**  
State Courts



**MS MAY LUCIA MEENAS**  
**District Judge**  
State Courts



**MR KESSLER SOH**  
**District Judge**  
State Courts  
*w.e.f 1 Mar 2021*



**SAC GOH LENG CHUANG**  
**TERRENCE**  
**Deputy Commissioner**  
**(Operations & Rehabilitation)**  
Singapore Prison Service  
Ministry of Home Affairs



**AC ZHANG WEIHAN**  
**2 Deputy Director**  
Criminal Investigation  
Department  
Singapore Police Force  
Ministry of Home Affairs



**MDM CHOY WAI YIN**  
**Director (Guidance Branch)**  
Student Development  
Curriculum Division  
Ministry of Education



**MDM ZULAIHA YUSUF**  
**Deputy Chief Executive**  
**Officer**  
Yayasan MENDAKI



**MS MORENE SIM**  
**Company Director**  
inlingua School of Languages



**MR JOSEPHUS TAN**  
**JOON LIANG**  
**Managing Director**  
Invictus Law Corporation



**MR YOGANATHAN**  
**AMMAYAPPAN**  
**Senior Director**  
Rehabilitation and  
Protection Group  
Ministry of Social and  
Family Development



**SECRETARY**  
**MS CARMELIA NATHEN**  
**Chief Probation Officer /**  
**Director**  
Probation and Community  
Rehabilitation Service  
Ministry of Social and  
Family Development

# Key Figures 2020



referrals for  
Pre-Sentence Reports



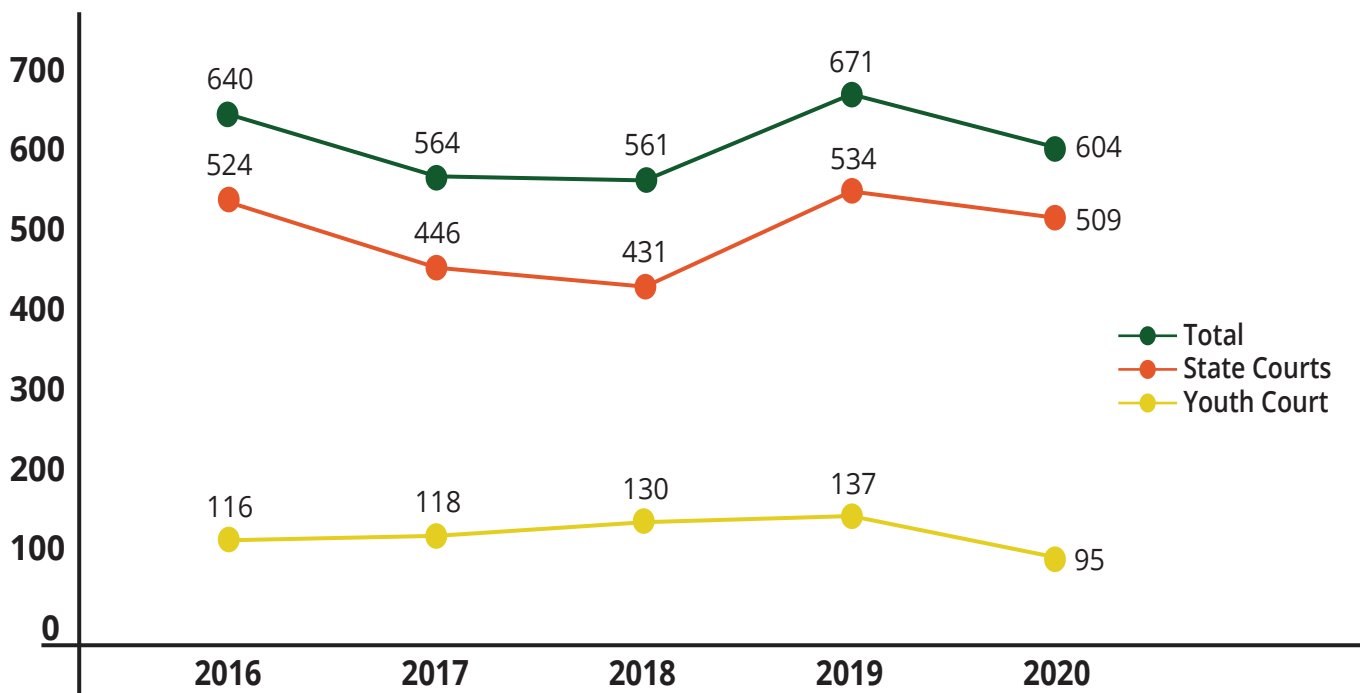
new Probation Orders



82% of Probation Orders completed

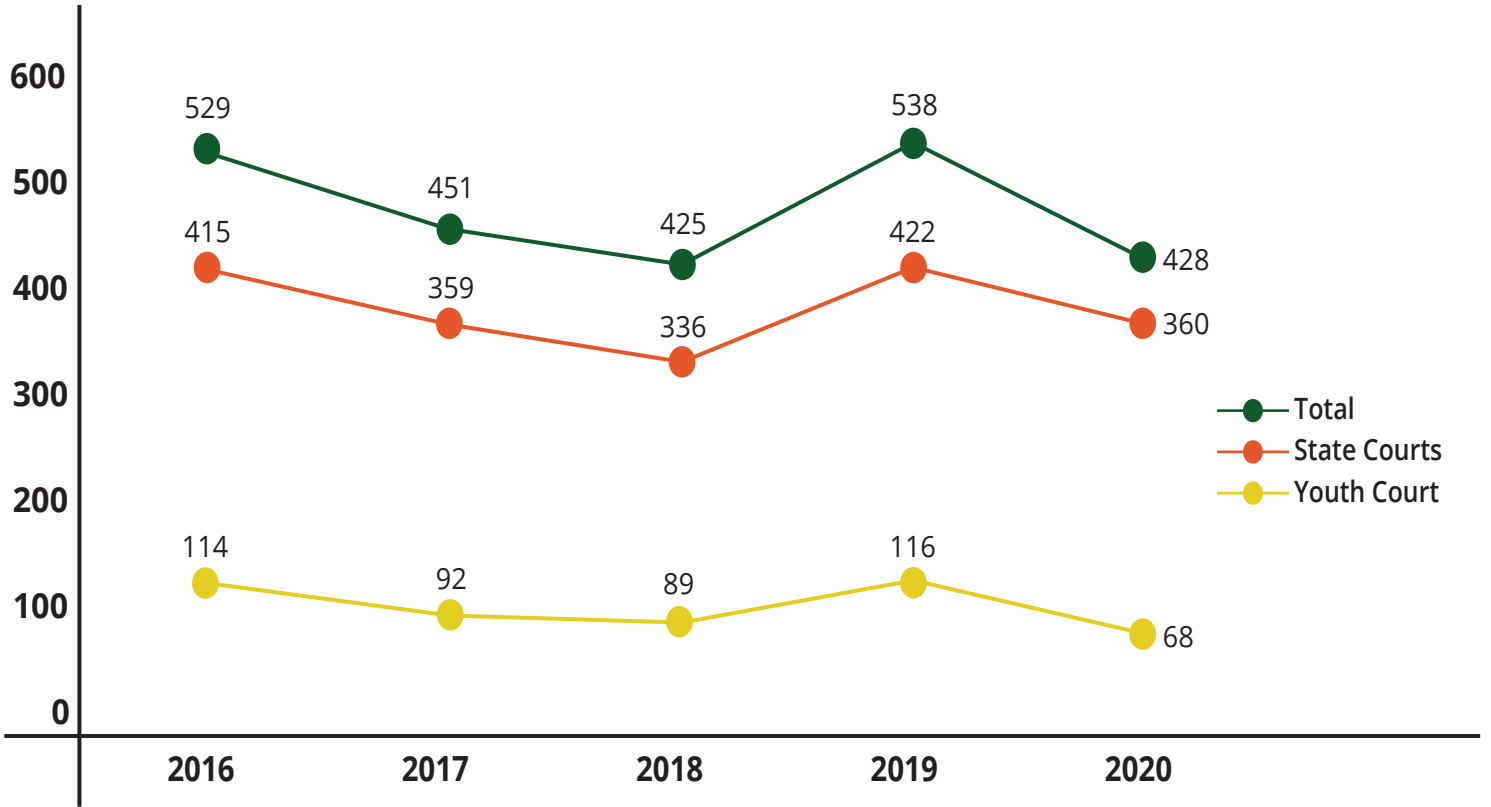
## Pre-Sentence Reports

The Courts can call for a Pre-Sentence Report from the Probation Service before sentencing an offender. The report entails a comprehensive social investigation into the offender's family background, attitude towards the offence/s, risk of future offending, strengths, needs and ability to commit to a rehabilitation plan under the probation regime. Other professional reports such as psychiatric or psychological reports may be included.

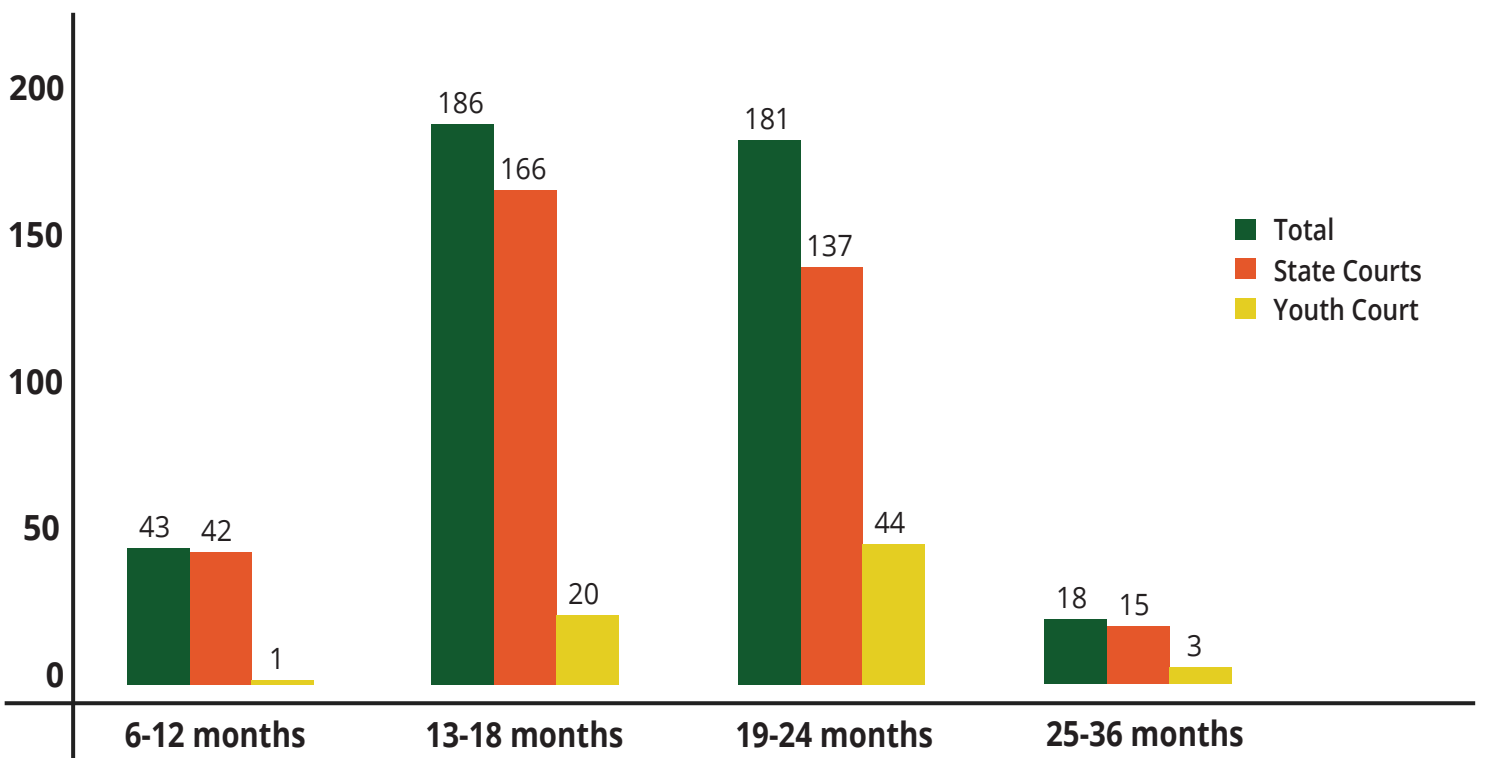


# New Probation Orders

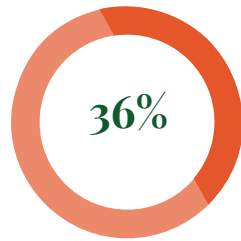
Probation is a community rehabilitation sentence ordered by the Courts that requires the offender to be under the supervision of a Probation Officer or a Volunteer Probation Officer for a period between 6 months to 3 years.



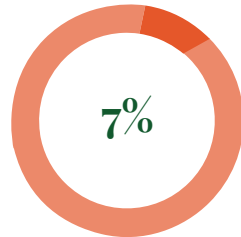
## NO. OF PROBATION ORDERS BY LENGTH



# New Probation Orders



of new orders had electronic monitoring as a condition



of new orders had hostel residency as a condition

## PROFILE

### Gender

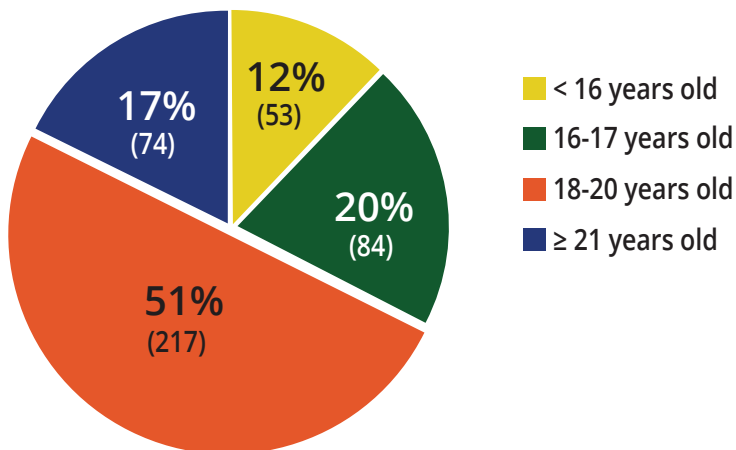


### Common Offences

- 1 Voluntarily causing hurt
- 2 Theft and related
- 3 Fraud / Forgery
- 4 Unlicensed moneylending and related
- 5 Unlawful assembly
- 6 Outrage of modesty
- 7 Drug and related
- 8 Housebreaking
- 9 Rioting
- 10 Vandalism / Mischief

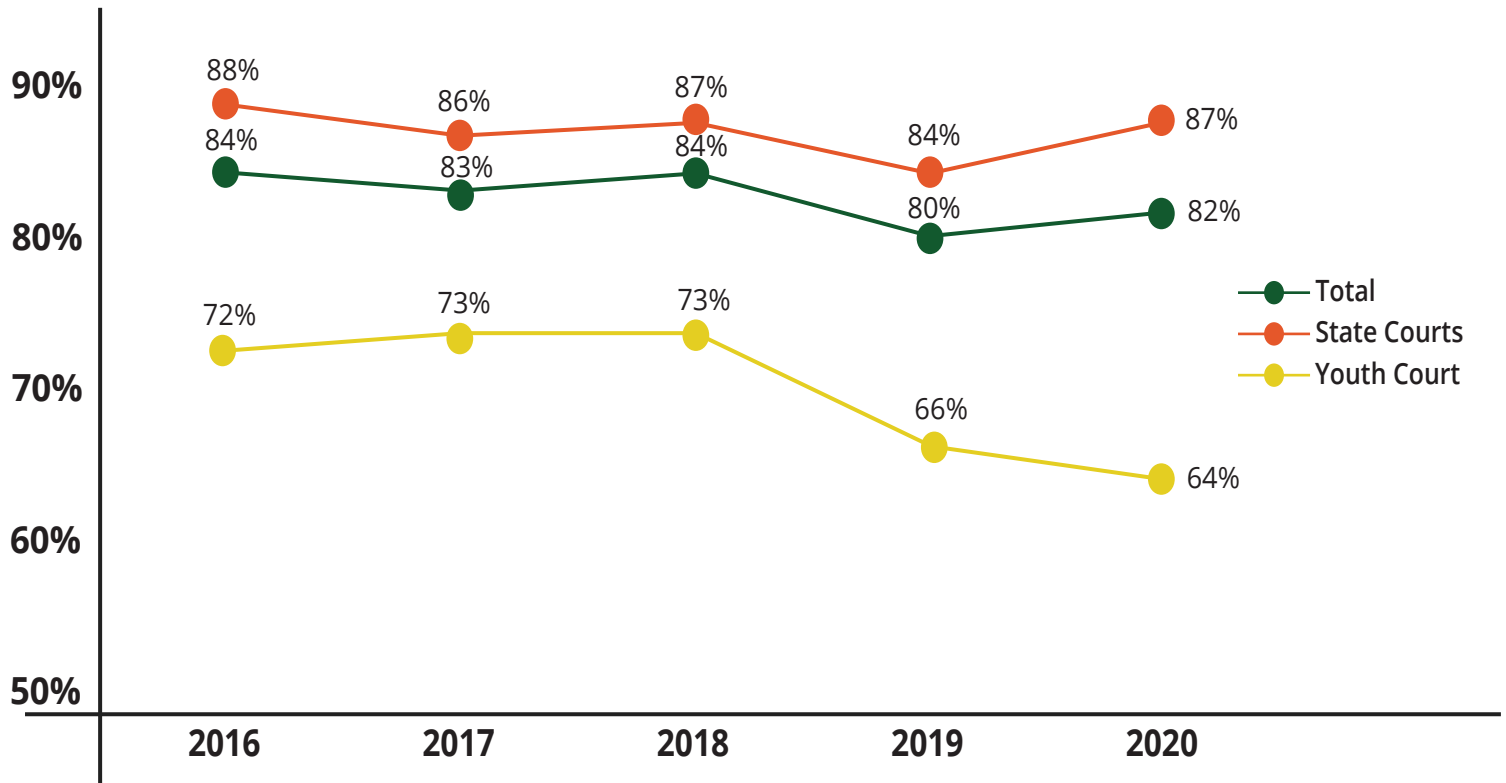


### Age at Start of Probation Order

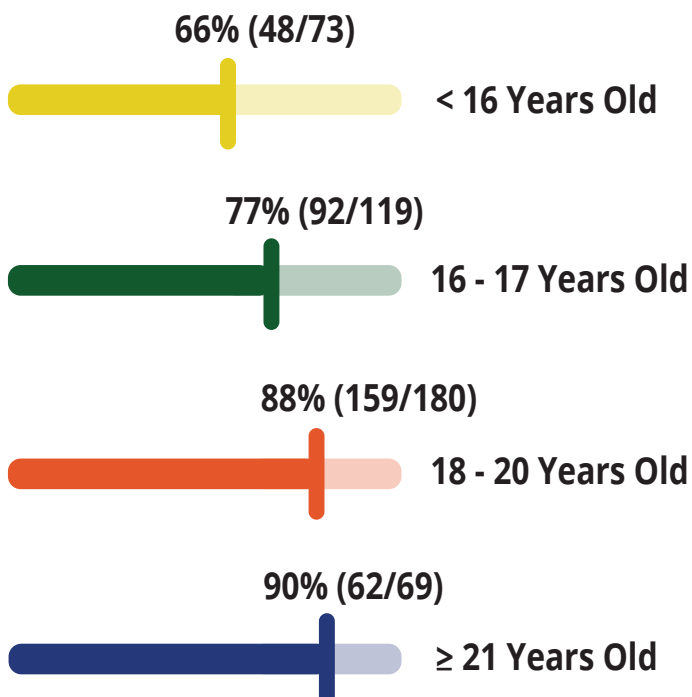


# Completion of Probation Orders

In 2020, 361 (82%) Probation Orders were completed.



## COMPLETION RATES ACROSS AGE GROUPS



## REASONS FOR NON-COMPLETION OF PROBATION

80 Probation Orders were revoked in 2020.

30 re-offended while on probation.

50 persistently failed to comply with probation conditions.\*

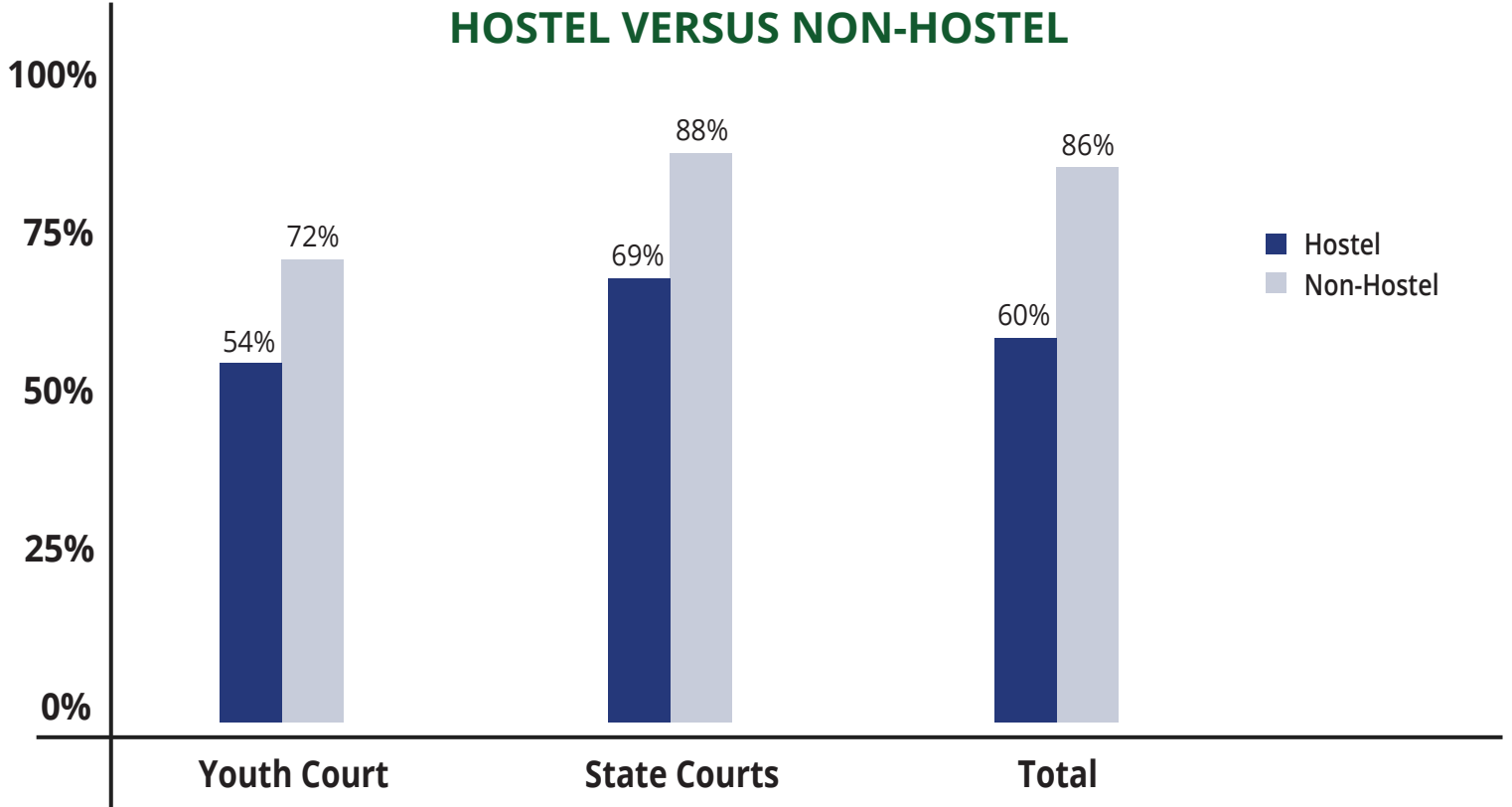
\*Violations include repeated failure to abide by time restriction, perform community service, attend rehabilitation programmes, return to hostel and serious infringements at school/work.



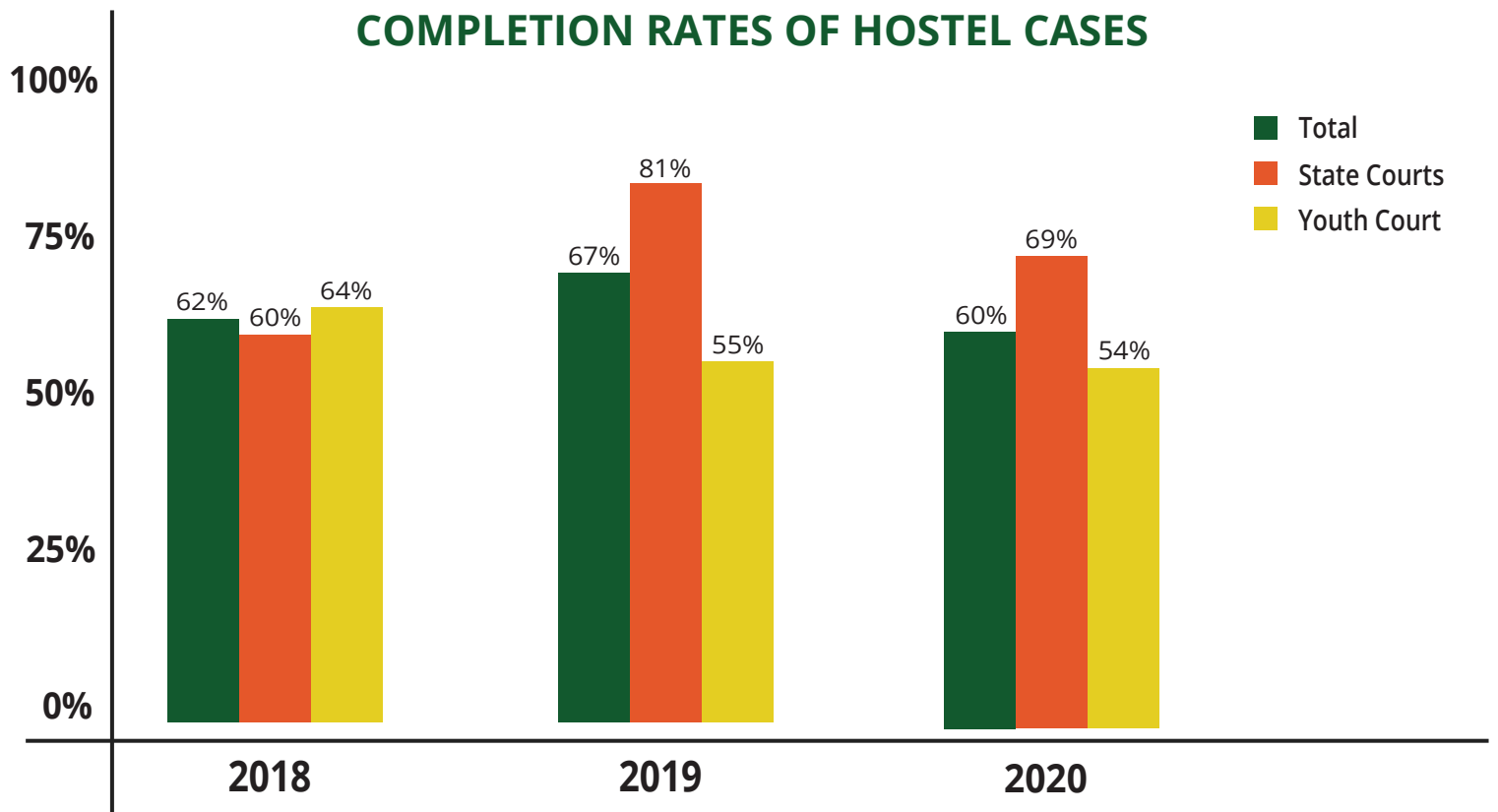
# Completion of Probation Orders

Offenders with more complex risk issues who require intensive support and monitoring will be required to reside in a hostel for a specified period.

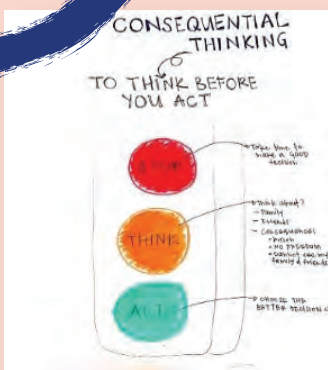
## HOSTEL VERSUS NON-HOSTEL



## COMPLETION RATES OF HOSTEL CASES



# Facilitating Case Management Through Digitalisation



"I arranged virtual meetings with my probationers who were having difficulties adapting to the COVID-19 restrictions. They shared their struggles and exchanged tips on coping strategies. Ultimately, my hope was for them to know that they were not alone during trying times."

*Ms Bin Hwee Ping, Assistant Manager*

"Routine is very important to 'Amy', who has mild intellectual disability. The transition to virtual sessions disrupted her routine and made her anxious, so I made sure to conduct my virtual sessions with similar visual aids as what was used in our physical sessions. That gave her a sense of continuity and helped her better understand what I was teaching."

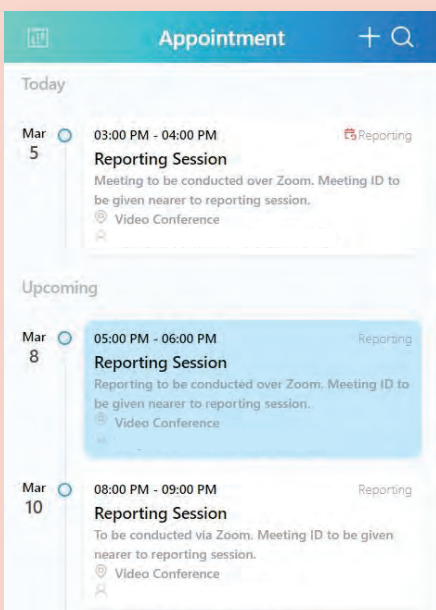
*Ms J Aswanee, Senior Probation Officer*

"The online meetings were confusing at first but Ms Aswanee was very supportive. Her drawings helped me understand what she was saying."

*Probationer 'Amy', aged 20*

"PCRS piloted the RPG RehabProtect mobile application in 2020. The use of technology facilitated greater ownership of the probation journey by probationers and their families, through functions such as tracking of appointments and enabling access to relevant resources. There are plans to further expand its features in 2022."

*Mr Hanafy Hassim, Project Lead*



The RPG RehabProtect application, piloted in collaboration with the Technology Transformation Unit of the Operations and Service Capability Office, MSF. The application was designed with inputs from probationers and Probation Officers.

# Working with Families in the New Normal



Virtual consultations with Mr Jason Medina, Functional Family Probation (FFP®) Consultant, FFT LLC.

“With a computer screen separating us, it was more challenging to establish rapport. I had to adjust my case management plans for the family and spent more time understanding the family members individually, their hobbies and interests and the family dynamics.”

— Ms Jolynn Ang, Senior Probation Officer

“Family sessions were uncomfortable at first because we had to talk about our problems to someone we’ve only met over video calls. But Ms Jolynn took the time to listen to me and that made it comfortable for me to share my problems. As I shared more, I felt less frustrated with myself.”

— Probationer ‘Ben’, aged 16

“‘Ben’ shared his feelings freely during the video calls with Ms Jolynn ... hearing directly from our child helped us to understand and support him better on probation.”

— Parents of ‘Ben’

“I was very stressed when I had to stay in hostel and my family couldn’t visit at first. I was happy when my family spoke to me over video calls because I missed them a lot. My mother sent me letters also to remind me to behave, asked me what I learnt in hostel and what do I wish for when probation ends. I will tell her I want to stay with her.”

— Probationer, aged 12



FFP® was piloted by PCRS in Jan 2020. FFP® is an intensive case management approach to working with families with more complex needs. It adopts a strength-based perspective and empowers families to build on what is working well and to work on areas for improvement.



“Family sessions were uncomfortable at first because we had to talk about our problems to someone we’ve only met over video calls...”



# Mobilising Community Support and Resources



*Connecting Points is a group mentoring programme that aims to create a positive community for youths and guide them to recognise their strengths. Photo (top) was taken before COVID-19.*



“Mr Zul and I share similar interests in food, music and bikes, and I feel comfortable sharing my problems with him. Even when we could not meet, our messages, phone and video calls still felt like he was with me physically. His support was refreshing and I do want to do well on probation to make him proud.”

— *Probationer 'Simon', aged 19*

“I was dispirited when physical meetings were converted to online meetups. Unexpectedly, I was still able to establish a bond with 'Simon' through virtual means. I believe I was still able to influence him positively through these gestures.”

— *Mr Abdullah Zuhilmie Bin Budiman, Connecting Points mentor*



“The demand for food deliveries increased because a lot of vulnerable persons were unable to leave their homes, had limited or no access to food sources. The probationers were part of our pool of volunteers who assisted with the packing and distribution of food to our beneficiaries as part of our COVID-19 relief efforts ... We mandated contactless delivery to reduce interactions and ensured all volunteers wore masks and gloves (where possible).”

— *Ms Rachel Wang, Administration Coordinator (Operations), The Food Bank*

“What surprised me most about doing community service during the pandemic was the fact that I was gaining more than I was giving back. At first, I just wanted to clear my hours, but over time I built relationships with the beneficiaries and am thankful I got to make a small impact in their lives. Having meals delivered to them on schedule every day was one less thing for them to worry about during this period.”

— *Probationer, aged 22*

“...I was gaining more than I was giving back.”

# Mobilising Community Support and Resources



Group logos designed by the probationers, to express what volunteering and caring for others meant to them.



Logo chosen by probationers to represent them in this project.

9 probationers designed 27 appreciation and encouragement posters and assembled 39 care hampers for NKF's nurses and frontline workers who ensured patients continued to receive dialysis at their centres during the Circuit Breaker.

"I think the nurses and front-liners would have been afraid of getting COVID-19 too but they still chose to put their patients first. It really takes commitment and motivation because some of them could not even go home to their families. Through this community service project, I realised the value of being kind to others. I hope my contributions can thank them for their kindness and commitment towards caring for others."

— Probationer, aged 19

During Circuit Breaker, 30 Volunteer Probation Officers (VPOs) came forward to support the implementation of virtual time restriction checks. Probationers who were recipients of the checks designed 'thank you' cards and prepared gift packs to appreciate the VPOs' service.

"To be valued was a pleasant surprise. It was very meaningful to learn that the gift packs were put together by the probationers and it felt like there was a personal touch in this gifting. I am glad that I was able to volunteer and support in the areas that I could."

— Ms Fiona Eng, Volunteer Probation Officer

"Through this community service project, I realise the value of being kind to others..."





# Staying Connected While Apart



“Joining service during Circuit Breaker felt isolating initially because there was no face-to face contact. I was worried that my colleagues would see me as a stranger, and I won’t be able to learn the ropes easily. Fortunately, a team of colleagues organised online bonding activities such as games and celebrations. My team also organised bi-weekly virtual check-in sessions. These helped me form meaningful relationships with my colleagues, both professionally and personally. My colleagues' efforts to reach out made me feel welcomed and supported, reminding me that I was not alone.”

— *Ms Xu Jing Yin, Probation Officer*

“The nature of our work is intensive and can be bewildering for new officers to navigate. Simple gestures like going for lunch, or a tour around the office used to be part of how we assimilated them into the culture. Since these are missing due to the work-from-home arrangements, we use regular video calls, games and bonding sessions to maintain communication and build some level of camaraderie until we are able to meet face-to-face again!”

— *Ms Kurseth Begum, Assistant Manager*



“...These helped me form meaningful relationships with my colleagues, both professionally and personally.”

# Celebrating Achievements



**Ms Carmelia Nathen**  
**Director and Chief Probation Officer**  
**MSF Public Sector Transformation**  
**Exemplary Leader Award**

“One of the most important lessons I’ve learnt about leadership is to not complicate things when we deliver service. That even as we develop rich expertise and adopt sophisticated means of doing things, it must translate to helping our beneficiaries. That’s the bottom line. Probation work is no different. I look forward to this journey in working with my team and our stakeholders in pushing for continuous improvements without losing sight of the heart of leadership – Service.”

**Mr Kalidass Karuppiah**  
**Deputy Director**  
**National Day Awards 2020**  
**Public Administration Medal (Bronze)**

“I am receiving this award, but it belongs equally to my supervisors, colleagues and partners that I had the good fortune of working with at different stages of my career.”



**Mr Umardani Umle**  
**Senior Assistant Director**  
**MSF Public Sector Transformation**  
**Exemplary Leader Award**

“To me, capability building is firstly, the recognition that every entity (be it staff, partners and sector) has its own strengths, and secondly, how we influence each other to create a synergistic effect. Identifying the right people for the job allows us to empower individuals to contribute their strengths and work together towards the desired outcomes. This thinking has guided me as I work alongside colleagues and partners for the effective rehabilitation of offenders.”



**Ms Kala Ruby**  
**Senior Manager**  
**MSF Public Sector Transformation**  
**Dare to Do Award**

*(Kala was a member of Centre for Research on Rehabilitation and Protection, RPG, which has since been seconded to National Council of Social Service)*

“Working closely with the research team has been enriching. The collaborations have been pivotal in developing my knowledge in research and providing insights for evidence informed practices. The award is an affirmation to continuously expand the scope of research, despite challenges and competing demands.”



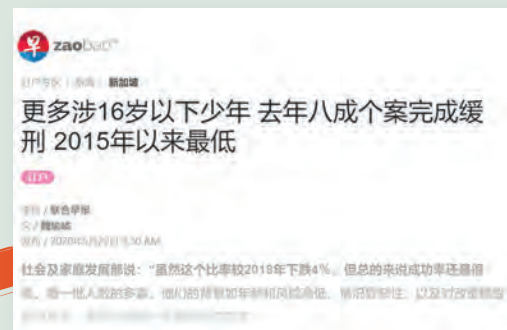


# Featuring Stories of Probation



"The media interviews were a good opportunity for us to increase public awareness of the work we do and of the offenders' capacity to mend their ways. After watching the interviews, my son expressed interest in also wanting to help at-risk youths. I hope that through greater media coverage, other young people like my son can be inspired to play a more active role in steering their peers towards the right path."

*Ms Selina Yeo, Assistant Manager*



"Every probationer who comes through our door has a story to tell. The media features gave my probationer a voice to share his unique journey and to account publicly on his commitment to change."

*Ms Eilynn Poh, Senior Probation Officer*



# Featuring Stories of Probation



"I hope everyone can see that for change to be successful, young offenders need to be supported in all aspects of their life. If more people are moved to give them educational and employment opportunities, we are then one step closer to building a more supportive society."

*Ms Charis Chenxu, Assistant Manager*

"I want people to see that I am trying to make changes to help myself and my family. At first, probation was hard for me but through probation, I get into a lot less trouble. I want people to see that I can improve."

*Probationer, aged 17, featured as 'Boy who Skipped School' in episode 3*

"I started on this project with the misconception that probation is something one could 'get away with', but now I understand that it's a rigorous process and I witnessed how this rehabilitation process could help young offenders turn their lives around. We hope this documentary series will spark conversations around probation and challenge the social stigma attached to those on probation."

*Ms Yuxin Peh, Producer for episode 1, Channel NewsAsia*

**CNA shadowed Probation Officers and probationers to produce 'Inside the Probation Service', a documentary series showcasing the inner workings of the Probation Service in Singapore.**

**“You can bounce back from mistakes, but it will take a lot of effort. I have come so far in life now. I don’t want to let my family down again and lose all that I have built.”**



*“A trainer once said to me: ‘You want to learn Muay Thai, you cannot go outside and fight. If you go outside and fight, you degrade the value of Muay Thai.’ I did not want to embarrass Muay Thai.”*

## **At 20, I was arrested and charged in court**

I was shocked, ashamed to face my family. I never expected to be caught and handcuffed. I was scared of losing my future. Even though I disappointed them, my parents stood by me and hired a lawyer for me...

## **At 22, I completed probation, got a diploma**

I got a job in an oil trading firm that paid me well. It felt good to earn my own keep.

## **At 28, I was in heavy gambling debt**

An ex-colleague found out about my debt and offered me a weekly loan with the condition that I stopped gambling. Instead of giving up on me, my parents offered to pay my debt. I knew I had to stop.

## **At 15, I joined a gang**

I did illegal things with my gang. I wanted the image of being in a gang, to be recognised, to prove I can fight...

## **At 21, I started 18 months probation**

I was very thankful to be placed on probation. I made sure to behave well on probation because I can’t go through another remand, it was a horrifying experience... I also didn’t want my parents to forfeit their bond. When I did community service during probation, I saw another side of Singapore and realised how fortunate I was.

## **At 23, I was introduced to gambling**

It was fast money, I got greedy. I kept borrowing money because I wanted to win back everything I lost. My marriage and family suffered. I lost my job.

## **I’m 37 now, and on the right track**

In my foolishness, I almost lost everything. I had to start from scratch and put in triple the effort to get back on track. Now, I am a father, a valued employee and Muay Thai enthusiast. I work hard to provide a comfortable life for my family and practice Muay Thai to help me stay disciplined. I learned that **nothing comes without hard work.**

**Desistance is about more than criminal justice. It requires engagement with families, community, civil society and the state... if rehabilitation is to be possible<sup>1</sup>. It’s about the envisioning of an alternative identity for the offender even through periods when they cannot see these possibilities for themselves<sup>2</sup>.**

<sup>1</sup> McNeill, F., Farrall, S., Lightowler, C., & Maruna, S. (2012) How and why people stop offending: Discovering Desistance. *Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Science*, Insight 15, 1-12.

<sup>2</sup> McNeill, F. and Weaver, B. (2010) Changing Lives? Desistance Research and Offender Management. Project Report. Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research, University of Glasgow, Glasgow.

