

# No need to run away to join this circus

While FSCs do a lot of work in helping troubled teens, they also have other programmes that are developmental in nature, programmes that are aimed at helping teens build self-esteem. The Circus Arts Programme at Tampines FSC, is one such interesting programme.



*(Photo courtesy of The New Paper)*

At this programme, the kids enrol to learn circus skills such as juggling, and riding the unicycle. Apart from just learning the skills, they have to perform in public as well.

Jay Che, 25, is a social worker and one of the counsellors in charge of the Circus Arts Programme.

According to him, one of the aims of the programme is to raise self-esteem. "We want to help them discover they can be good about things other than school.

"It's also about life skills. Juggling isn't easy. To achieve something, you have to persevere. Performing in front of a big crowd also boosts their confidence."

There are currently about eight kids in the programme, ranging from 11 to 16 years of age. Every Friday, they meet

at Tampines FSC to practise their skills. Muhammad Zaini Mohammad Harun\*, 14, has been on the programme for a year and a half. He has mastered two circus skills already and has just picked up juggling.

He says that he enjoys the challenge of learning new tricks and the feeling of being part of a team. "Even though you're not very good, you still feel like you are part of the team."

What he's learned from Circus Arts has also spilled over into school. "If I can't do that trick, I don't give up. Same as studies."