

Host



Mr Desmond Choo

Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
Adviser to Tampines Changkat GROS

Mr Desmond Choo is the Minister of State for Defence at the Ministry of Defence and Deputy Secretary-General of NTUC, where he oversees economic and social policies, strategic communications, and international affairs. He is also the Executive Secretary of the Union of Telecoms Employees of Singapore and Advisor to the Young NTUC Committee.

Mr Desmond Choo helped introduce initiatives including Silver Zones for road safety, redesigned transport routes for seniors, and supported young families through programmes like Sunrise Smiles and community fridges.

During his tenure as Mayor of North East District (2017-2025), Mr Desmond Choo led the creation of Nexus, an internship platform giving youth early exposure to the working world.

Mr Desmond Choo was awarded the SPF Overseas Merit Scholarship in 1997 to study Economics at the University of Chicago. He is married with two young children.

Speaker



Dr Natasha Riard

Senior Lecturer and Head of Programme
(Master of Psychology, Clinical),
Singapore University of Social Sciences
(SUSS)

Dr Natasha Riard is a Clinical Psychologist with 13 years of experience specialising in child, adolescent, and parenting mental health. She is the lead author of the Temasek Foundation Youth Connect Process-Based Brief Intervention, a manual designed to equip community stakeholders with practical tools to strengthen adolescent mental health.

Dr Riard has received innovation awards from KK Women's and Children's Hospital, and the SingHealth & Duke-NUS Academic Medical Centre in recognition of her contributions to mental health care. She is also the author of the children's book *My Emotions*, which supports young children and their parents in understanding and navigating emotions.

She currently serves as Senior Lecturer and Head of Programme at the Singapore University of Social Sciences.