

Stop Smoking for Our Children's Sake

- Press Conference on 29 May 2002

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jointly hosted by Hong Kong College of Paediatricians,
Hong Kong Paediatric Society,
and Hong Kong Society of Paediatric Respiriology

Title: Stop Smoking for Our Children's Sake

Our Stand

1. We denounce tobacco smoking in any environment with children because of its effects on the child's health and future.
2. Our research, coupled with data generated from overseas, have revealed convincing evidence that second hand smoking causes overwhelming effects on children.
3. Such effects pose a highly significant burden on our health care system, not to mention the economic effects on the rest of the family.
4. We therefore urge the Government, medical and health professionals, and the public to pay special attention to the effects of smoking on children.
5. We support the Government's attempts to ban smoking in all public places and in-door environments where children are present.
6. We urge all medical professionals to join hands in persuading smoking parents to quit smoking for their children's' sake, and be alert to the possible effects of passive smoking on children's health.
7. We are deeply concerned about the rising numbers of teenage smokers in Hong Kong, and feel that the Government and the public should join hands to prevent young people from starting to smoke. This would require serious efforts to counteract the effects of advertisements targeting at young people.
8. We are aware that the smoking cessation clinics run by the Hospital Authority are providing valuable help to adults who want to quit smoking. But for those teenagers who may want to quit, these clinics may not be able to cater to their styles and needs.

Our Proposals

1. We urge the Government, the Legislative Council, and all other bodies concerned to make it possible to ban smoking in all public places and in-door environments including restaurants, so as to minimise the effect of passive smoking on children.

2. The 3 bodies have collaborated to form a Paediatric Anti-smoking Task Force to look into the matter. 'A Doctor's Anti-smoking Kit' will be prepared to help doctors understand the magnitude of the problem, and to help them to present the case of quitting smoking to the parents. All doctors who take care of children would be asked to participate.
3. We also urge the Government and public bodies concerned to pay special attention to the effects of tobacco advertisements on teenagers, and to institute attempts to counteract such effects.
4. Efforts should also be made to help teenagers to quit smoking if they so wish. We would urge the Government to establish special smoking cessation clinics for teenagers as this group of individuals require different approaches and treatment methods apart from adult smokers.

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