

Response to Government Consultation Paper on Child Pornography

In response to the Hong Kong SAR Government's Consultation Paper on Proposed Legislation for the Prevention of Child Pornography, the Hong Kong College of Paediatricians, noting the significant harmful effect of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse on children, strongly supports legislations that protect children from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse as depicted in Article 34 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

According to the CRC, a child is defined as "being below the age of 18 years". Hence all individuals less than 18 years old should receive similar and the higher level of protection, instead of having differential treatment for those "under the age of 16" and "between 16 and 18" in both child pornography and child sex tourism.

Apart from what were listed in paragraph 10, child pornography could mean not only "visual depiction" but any means of depicting or promoting sexual exploitation of a child including written or audio material.

The College supports the proposed legislation against the possession of child pornography as the production of child pornography is a form of exploitation and abuse of children, and child pornography could aggravate paedophilic practice.

Protection of children from pornographic material including that transmitted via internet needs urgent government attention. Strategies need to be in place to prevent children falling prey to sexual exploitation and to rehabilitate victims of exploitation.

The 7-page Proposed Legislation for the Prevention of Child Pornography can be downloaded from:

http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr01-02/english/panels/se/papers/se1206_3231_e.pdf