

**Family Council**  
**Minutes of 46<sup>th</sup> Meeting held on 12 March 2021**

Date: 12 March 2021 (Friday)  
Time: 2:30 p.m. – 4:40 p.m.  
Venue: Conference Room 6, G/F., Central Government Offices,  
2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong

Attendance

Chairman

Prof. SHEK Tan-lei, Daniel

Ex-officio Members

Ms CHAN Yuen-han, Chairperson of the Women's Commission

Mr LAU Ming-wai, Vice-Chairperson of the Youth Development  
Commission

Non-official Members

Ms CHAN Suk-mei, May

Ms CHEUNG Lai-chu

Ms CHEUNG Wang-yim, Lavender, Deputy Convenor, Sub-committee  
on the Promotion of Family Core Values and Family Education

Mr FONG Yick-jin, Eugene

Dr LAM Chi-yan

Prof. LEUNG Seung-ming, Alvin, Convenor, Sub-committee on Family  
Support

Ms PUN Siu-fung, Cindy

Mrs WONG NG Kit-wah, Cecilia

Mr WOO Kin-man, Clement

Ms YIP Lai-wa, Emily, Convenor, Sub-committee on the Promotion of  
Family Core Values and Family Education

Ms YIP Yun-wan, Amarantha

Official Members

Mrs Cherry TSE, Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs

*(attending on behalf of Secretary for Home Affairs)*

Mr David LEUNG, Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare)1

*(attending on behalf of Secretary for Labour and Welfare)*

Mr CHENG Ming-keung, Principal Assistant Secretary (School  
Administration Special Support)

*(attending on behalf of Secretary for Education)*

Mr Sylvester WONG, Assistant Head (3)

*(attending on behalf of Head/Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office)*

Secretary

Mr Kenneth CHAN, Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs  
(Civic Affairs)2

In attendance

Ms Adia LAM, Chief Executive Officer (Family Council)

(For agenda item 3)

Mr Chris FUNG, Principal Assistant Secretary for Food and Health  
(Health)3, Food and Health Bureau (FHB)

Miss Lynette YAU, Assistant Secretary for Food and Health (Health)3B,  
FHB

Dr Raymond HO, Head, Health Promotion Branch, Department of Health  
(DH)

Dr WONG Hoi-kei, Senior Medical & Health Officer (Health  
Promotion)1, DH

(For agenda item 4)

Mr Godwin LAI, Principal Assistant Secretary for Education (Special  
Education), Education Bureau (EDB)

Ms Joyce YIP, Principal Education Officer (Special Education/Special Task), EDB

Ms KONG Shui-lin, Senior Inspector (Special Education Support 3)2, EDB

Absent with apologies

Dr LAM Ching-choi, Chairman of the Elderly Commission

Ms CHENG Chi-man, Sonia

Prof. Albert LEE

Mr LEE Tsz-king, Dominic

Dr WONG Fung-yee, Margaret, Deputy Convenor, Sub-committee on Family Support

**Welcome Remarks**

The Chairman welcomed all to the 46<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Family Council (the Council), in particular Mr Kenneth CHAN who took up the post of Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs (Civic Affairs)2 on 2 March 2021 following the transfer of Ms Carmen KONG; and Mr Sylvester WONG, Assistant Head (3) of the Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office who attended the Council meeting for the first time. The Chairman also suggested and Members agreed to record a vote of thanks to Ms Carmen Kong for her contributions to the Council.

**Item 1 – Confirmation of Minutes of the 45<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Family Council**

2. The minutes of the 45<sup>th</sup> meeting were confirmed without amendment.

## **Item 2 – Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting**

3. The Chairman noted that the Council Secretariat had circulated a progress report to Members for information, and invited Chief Executive Officer (Family Council) (CEO(FC)) to brief Members on the progress. In respect of the application of the Family Impact Assessment (FIA) checklist, CEO(FC) reported that the FIA checklist had been applied to 644 Legislative Council briefs as at 28 February 2021. Besides, the Sub-committee on Family Support (Support Sub-committee) had provided comments on the draft Final Report of the Consolidation Exercise of the Findings of Family Surveys conducted since 2011 at its meeting held on 1 March 2021. The research team would submit the finalised Final Report to the Council Secretariat by mid-March 2021.

4. CEO(FC) also informed the meeting that as at 28 February 2021, the Council’s Facebook had attracted over 22 999 “likes” and the average number of “Reaction”, “Comments” and “Sharing” per post was about 278. The second storybook of the “The But’s Family” was also launched on 26 February 2021. The e-version of the storybook (both English and Chinese) had been uploaded onto the Council’s website for free access/download by members of the public. For the Scheme on Thematic Sponsorship to Support Family-related Initiatives, the Support Sub-committee had endorsed the Assessment Panel’s recommendations to grant a total funding of \$3.2 million to support four projects. Successful applicant organisations were informed of the application results in December 2020 and all the projects were launched in January 2021 for completion by February 2022.

5. For the “Further Study on the Phenomenon of Divorce in Hong Kong” (the Divorce Study), CEO(FC) reported that the research team had submitted a revised draft Final Report in October 2020. After initial vetting, the Council Secretariat had consulted the relevant bureaux/departments on the accuracy of the factual information contained in the draft report so as to facilitate a more thorough discussion by the Working Group (WG).

### **Item 3 – Promotion of Mental Health (Paper FC 3/2021)**

6. The Chairman invited Mr Chris FUNG, Principal Assistant Secretary for Food and Health (Health)<sup>3</sup> of FHB, Miss Lynette YAU, Assistant Secretary for Food and Health (Health)<sup>3B</sup> of FHB, Dr Raymond HO, Head, Health Promotion Branch of DH and Dr WONG Hoi-kei, Senior Medical and Health Officer (Health Promotion)<sup>1</sup> of DH to brief Members on the promotion of mental health in Hong Kong. The salient points of the presentation were summarised as follows –

- (a) the Government attached great importance to the mental well-being of the public and had been promoting mental well-being by enhancing public understanding and awareness through education and publicity using a life-course and setting-based approach;
- (b) jointly organised by the Advisory Committee on Mental Health and DH, the “Shall We Talk” initiative was officially launched in July 2020. A one-stop thematic website had been set up, providing useful information on mental well-being. Apart from setting up social media pages, a number of key opinion leaders who were popular among youth, were invited to share messages on mental well-being on social networks. Series of other online and offline advertisement and publicity in various platforms had also been carried out;
- (c) the Mental Health Workplace Charter was implemented jointly by DH, the Labour Department and the Occupational Safety and Health Council which aimed to promote mental well-being, encourage active listening and create an inclusive and mental health-friendly workplace; and
- (d) the second phase of the “Shall We Talk” initiative commenced in 2021 which adopted a new theme of “seeking help” and extended the target audience from youth to their parents and

families. The existing website would also be enhanced by strengthening its content library and setting up a chatbot for more interactions with the website visitors.

7. Members' views and questions were summarised as follows –
  - (a) a Member suggested that the Government should include in its promotion strategy the enhancement of knowledge of the general public of identifying mental health problems that were likely to be faced by their family members so that assistance could be given at an earliest possible stage;
  - (b) a Member commented that the existing strategy of mental health promotion should aim to address mental health issues covering different areas of concerns such as impact of cultural differences. The Government should work out a plan for collaboration with other organisations to promote mental health in the community with particular emphasis on providing early support and assistance to youngsters in need;
  - (c) a Member opined that while it was good to set up a chatbot in the thematic website of “Shall We Talk” to provide instant responses to enquirers by artificial intelligence (AI) generated voices, interaction with human touch was better to encourage more frank communications; and
  - (d) a Member stated that some youngsters might be passive to seek help from the available sources provided by the Government or other related organisations. She suggested that the Government could be proactive to find out possible cases of youngsters with mental health issues from the social media platforms like discussion forums for offering early assistance and support.

8. Mrs Cherry TSE considered that it would be helpful to include a “tool kit” in the “Shall We Talk” website so that people could make use of this tool kit to get a better idea of whether they might be susceptible to mental health issues. She also suggested attaching more importance to the role of sports which had been proven to be beneficial to ones’ mental health, in the Government’s promotion of mental health.

[Post-meeting note: To facilitate easier access, enhancements were made to the website by adding prominent quick links (including direct access from the home page) to the relevant page.]

9. Mr Chris Fung thanked Members for their comments. He informed Members that a psychological distress test was already available on the “Shall We Talk” website and responded that while a more general approach was initially adopted for the “Shall We Talk” initiative, its content would be enhanced in order to make it more targeted to specific mental health issues or people such as carers of people with mental health needs. A greater variety of promotion channels/platforms would also be considered to reach out to more people in the community. Dr Wong Hoi-kei added that the “Joyful@HK” Campaign organised by DH from 2016 to 2018 included a number of sports activities like the “Joyful@HK Run”. Different kinds of activities/programmes would continue to be organised under “Shall We Talk”.

10. The Chairman thanked Members for their comments and invited the representatives of FHB and DH to take note of Members’ comments for necessary action. The Chairman commented that evaluation of the effectiveness of the promotion work done by the Government was important. Due considerations should also be given to reviewing the mental health problems from a macro perspective. He suggested that Members could forward any further views or questions to the Council Secretariat after the meeting, if any, for follow up action.

[Post-meeting note: A Member forwarded the following comments to the Council Secretariat after the meeting which had been submitted to FHB for

information and necessary action – (a) “it was desirable to make appropriate and prompt referral to agents like the non-governmental organisations for provision of early assistance/support to those who sought help from the “Shall We Talk” platform; (b) it was important to follow up continuously on the received cases, including offering care and support to the case subjects; and (c) to enable a better tackling of the mental health issues/problems, the Government should find out the root of the problems such as the difficulties being faced by couples who were divorced but still lived under the same roof with no alternative and/or were having arguments over the right of custody of their children.”]

**Item 4 – Development of Integrated Education in Hong Kong and Measures to Support Students with Special Educational Needs (Paper FC 4/2021)**

11. To facilitate discussion of this agenda item, the Chairman invited Mr Godwin LAI, Principal Assistant Secretary for Education (Special Education) from EDB to brief Members on the latest development of integrated education (IE) and measures to support students with special educational needs (SEN). The salient points of the presentation were summarised as follows –

- (a) the Government adopted a dual-track mode in providing special education. Subject to the assessment and recommendations of specialists and the consent of parents, EDB would refer students with more severe or multiple disabilities to special schools for intensive support. Other students with SEN would attend ordinary schools;
- (b) EDB had been encouraging ordinary schools to adopt the Whole School Approach (WSA) to IE based on five underlying principles, namely, early identification, early intervention, WSA, home-school co-operation and cross-sector collaboration;



- (c) EDB had all along been providing schools with additional resources, professional support and teacher training to facilitate the implementation of WSA to IE. Starting from 2019/20 school year, all public sector ordinary schools had been allotted the Learning Support Grant based on the number of students with SEN and the tier of support they required. All public sector ordinary schools had also been provided with a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) who was tasked to lead the Student Support Team in planning, coordinating and promoting the implementation of WSA to IE. Besides, SENCOs collaborated with professionals (such as school-based educational psychologists (EPs), school-based speech therapists and school social workers) to provide support for students with SEN and their parents. To enhance teachers' professional capacity of catering for students with SEN, serving teachers were also provided with structured training courses;
- (d) to support parents in looking after children with different types of SEN, EDB had published the "Parent Guide on the Whole School Approach to Integrated Education" and a series of pamphlets on nurturing children with different types of SEN; and
- (e) the Task Force on IE would continue to serve as a platform for collecting views from the education sector and various stakeholders on improvement measures of implementing IE.

12. Members' views and questions were summarised as follows –

- (a) a Member was of the view that the existing support to students with SEN was insufficient, which would have negative impact on the students, in particular those in ordinary primary and secondary schools. She stressed the importance of enhancing the current professional training for teachers and extending such training to teaching assistants (TAs);

- (b) a Member said that the existing support also could not meet the actual needs of children with special needs in kindergartens. She suggested employing part-time teachers to help teachers in kindergartens take care of those children;
- (c) a Member stated that more resources should be allocated to kindergartens to promote IE;
- (d) a Member considered that after-school support to students with SEN, their parents and families was important. She enquired if EDB had any specific directions of enhancing the support in this regard; and
- (e) a Member opined that it might be difficult to train sufficient EPs to meet the great demand for supporting students with SEN. He suggested allocating more resources to provide professional training to TAs so that they could assist in providing more effective support to these students.

13. Mr Godwin Lai thanked Members for their comments and replied that EDB would continue to provide structured training courses pitched at basic, advanced and thematic levels to teachers in order to strengthen their professional capacity of supporting students with SEN. He also pointed out that EDB had been liaising with some UGC-funded universities about the training of more EPs to increase the supply of locally trained EPs. Besides, EDB had been providing training to principals, SENCOs, teachers at large and other school supporting staff (e.g. TAs) to enhance the effectiveness of the implementation of IE. Mr David LEUNG added that the Social Welfare Department had been coordinating closely with EDB, in particular the transfer of relevant and useful information of children with special needs from kindergartens to primary schools so as to facilitate primary schools' understanding of the situation of the students and timely provision of support services to them.

14. The Chairman thanked Mr Lai for his presentation and Members' comments on this item. He remarked that better collaboration among relevant bureaux/departments could prevent provision of "fragmented" support services to students with SEN. He also suggested exploring the possibility of involving psychologists specialising in other streams like family psychologists to help meet the demand for support services for students with SEN where appropriate.

**Item 5 – Progress of Work of the Sub-committees under the Family Council (Paper FC 5/2021)**

15. The Chairman invited Ms Emily YIP, the Convenor of the Sub-committee on Promotion of Family Core Values and Family Education (Promotion Sub-committee) to report on work progress. Ms Yip reported that at the last Promotion Sub-committee meeting held on 26 November 2020, the service contractor for production of the second storybook briefed Members on the latest progress of the production of the storybook entitled "Secret to Perfection of the But's Family", the tailor-made theme song, storytelling audio clips in Cantonese, English and Putonghua, activity book as well as the digital publicity plan to promote the storybook. After taking into account the views of the Members, the storybook was finalised and launched on 26 February 2021 as scheduled. The storybook, the theme song and the activity book had all been uploaded onto the Council's website. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Promotion Sub-committee meeting which was originally scheduled for early February 2021 was called off. A meeting paper was circulated to update Members on the launch of the second storybook and theme song of "The But's Family" as well as the related publicity plan.

(Action: Promotion Sub-committee)

16. The Chairman invited Prof. Alvin LEUNG, the Convenor of the Sub-committee on Family Support (Support Sub-committee) to report on work progress. Prof. Leung reported that at the Support

Sub-committee meeting held on 1 March 2021, the research team for the Consolidation of Findings of Family Surveys conducted since 2011 (the Consolidation Exercise) presented the recommendations of the draft Final Report of the Consolidation Exercise. Based on the comments of Members of the Support Sub-committee, the research team would finalise the Final Report for endorsement by the Support Sub-committee shortly.

(Action: Support Sub-committee)

### **Item 6 – Any Other Business**

17. The Chairman proposed that the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) prepared the information on (a) the additional measures being carried out to deal with family problems (e.g. family violence and parenting issues) under the COVID-19 pandemic; and (b) whether the number of families seeking help had increased in the past year. Such information was to be submitted for the Council's information when available.

18. Mrs Cherry Tse proposed a vote of thanks to the outgoing Chairman, Prof. Daniel SHEK and the four outgoing Members, namely Prof. Alvin Leung, Ms Emily Yip, Ms Sonia CHENG and Mr Dominic LEE who would complete their terms of service on 31 March 2021. Mrs Tse thanked them for their valuable contributions and support to the Council.

19. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m. The next meeting would be held in June 2021.

**Family Council Secretariat**  
**April 2021**