

Family Council

Progress of Work of the Sub-committees under the Family Council

PURPOSE

This paper briefs Members on the progress of work of the two Sub-committees under the Family Council (“the Council”).

SUB-COMMITTEE ON THE PROMOTION OF FAMILY CORE VALUES AND FAMILY EDUCATION

2. The Sub-committee on the Promotion of Family Core Values and Family Education (“the Promotion Sub-committee”) met on 6 February 2018 to discuss the territory-wide publicity campaign organised in collaboration with the Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) and the progress of 2017/18 Family-Friendly Employers Award Scheme (Award Scheme).

Publicity campaign organised by RTHK

3. The Promotion Sub-committee endorsed that the title 「家・多一點愛在乎你」 be adopted as title of the campaign which would include the following –

- (a) family fun day on 26 May 2018;
- (b) family activity workshops tentatively named as 「微笑行動愛家庭」 in June to September 2018;
- (c) three radio programmes (i.e. 「一家大細瘋 show 私房菜」 which promotes the core values of communication and harmony through the theme of dining with family members; 「Share 心聲小豆丁」 which promotes communication across different generations, and 「家族承

傳在乎你」 which tells stories of family business in Hong Kong) from April 2018 to March 2019;

- (d) promotional programme trailers and e-card during specific festive occasions; and
- (e) dedicated webpage for the publicity campaign on RTHK's website.

4. RTHK was requested to explore ways to recruit participants with different backgrounds for workshops and family fun day through non-governmental organisations (NGOs) so as to support the building of an inclusive society, and to provide information on the programmes' performance indicators for the Promotion Sub-committee's reference in future.

2017/18 Award Scheme

5. Ming Pao Magazines Limited is the service provider for the provision of image building, publicity and outreaching services for the 2017/18 Award Scheme. A new logo and slogan were adopted for the 2017/18 Award Scheme and various forms of publicity including launching of a new Announcement of Public Interests had commenced in January 2018 with a view to raising the profile, increasing exposure and boosting participation rate of the Award Scheme. In addition, newsfeeds and game posts on the Award Scheme had been posted to the Council Facebook since December 2017.

6. Apart from five briefing sessions to be held between February and April 2018 to drive the public awareness of the Award Scheme, an Organising Committee chaired by the Council Chairman, with the Convenor and Deputy Convenor of the Promotion Sub-committee as Vice-chairmen and representatives of various chambers of commerce, industry associations, NGOs, statutory bodies as well as government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) as members, was formed to provide a platform for outreaching to different sectors of the community. Moreover, an outreaching team comprising 15 members would visit shops and companies in different districts throughout the application period to promote the scheme. The team had already visited over 2 300 shops and companies as at 6 February 2018 and a total of 649 applications were received by 28 February 2018.

SUB-COMMITTEE ON FAMILY SUPPORT

7. The Sub-committee on Family Support ("the Support

Sub-committee”) met on 12 February 2018 to examine the preliminary findings of Family Survey 2017 and the proposal of setting up a Working Group on the “Further Study on Phenomenon of Divorce in Hong Kong” (Divorce Study).

Family Survey 2017

8. Conducted since 2011, the Family Survey aims to collect an updated and empirically-based information on the families in Hong Kong. Policy 21, the Research Team, had conducted fieldwork survey with a sample size of 3 000 respondents from September to December 2017. Its preliminary findings are at **Annex**.

9. The Support Sub-committee noted that according to the preliminary findings, families in Hong Kong in general functioned quite well. Notwithstanding the drop in several aspects (e.g. willingness to live with parents, satisfaction with family life), around 72% of respondents indicated that they were very satisfied or satisfied with their family life. The Support Sub-committee urged Policy 21 to look into reasons leading to findings with deviation from the general trend of the surveys since 2011 during the qualitative in-depth surveys to be conducted with around 1 000 respondents in late February to March 2018. For example, the correlation between the council’s efforts in promoting family-friendly employment practices and the positive move in the trend of respondents’ satisfaction with family-work balance should be examined. Policy 21 will brief the Support Sub-committee on further findings and recommendations in May 2018.

Working Group on the Divorce Study

10. The Support Sub-committee supported setting up a Working Group for the Divorce Study. The Working Group will meet regularly to monitor and review the progress of the Divorce Study. It will consider and provide comments on the various deliverables submitted by the Consulting Team at different stages. For important milestones of the Divorce Study (e.g. inception report, final report), the Council will be consulted during meetings or by circulation.

11. The Working Group would be chaired by the Council Chairman and Members may join the Working Group either as regular members (for the whole study) or ad hoc members (for specific issues and attend meetings on a need basis). As the subject of divorce cuts across the portfolios of different B/Ds, representatives of the Home Affairs Bureau, Central Policy Unit, Labour

and Welfare Bureau, Social Welfare Department, Department of Justice, Legal Aid Department as well as the Judiciary would be invited to join as official members or observers.

ADVICE SOUGHT

12. Members are invited to note the progress of the Sub-committees. The Sub-committees will continue to oversee their respective programmes and activities. Members are welcome to convey their comments and suggestions to the Secretariat.

**Family Council Secretariat
March 2018**

Family Survey 2017

Policy 21 was commissioned in May 2017 to conduct the Family Survey 2017. It had completed in December 2017 the fieldwork survey, with a sample size of 3 000 respondents, to cover the following areas –

- (a) importance of family;
- (b) parenthood;
- (c) family functioning;
- (d) satisfaction with family life;
- (e) work-family balance;
- (f) availability of social support network; and
- (g) awareness and participation of family-related programmes.

In addition, an in-depth survey, with a sample size of 1 000, was adopted to explore the relationship between family members and elderly/people with chronic illness or disability within the family, and the needs of these care receivers. Supplementary questions were included in the in-depth survey with the selected households comprising care receivers.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

2. Major findings of the survey are as follows –

- (a) majority of the respondents were willing to live with their parents (63%) and support their living (90%). The percentage of respondents willing to live with their parents fluctuated in the past years, which dropped from 68% in 2011 to 65% in 2013, then rose to 70% in 2015 and dropped to a record low at 63% in 2017. Significantly more respondents agreed that the newly-wed couple should live away from their parents (43% in 2011, 47% in 2013 and 2015, and 68% in 2017);
- (b) the number of respondents who were willing to live with their adult children surged to 80%, changing from the decreasing trend over the past years (73% in 2011, 67% in 2013 and 65% in 2015);
- (c) 66% of the respondents agreed that marriage was a necessary step in life. Compared with the findings in previous years, the trend observed was relatively stable. Respondents who considered child bearing important in a marriage increased by 7% to 62%, reaching the highest level among the four rounds of surveys. 55% of respondents indicated that life without having a child was empty,

representing a significant rise compared with the stable trend in previous years (44% in 2011 and 2013, and 42% in 2015);

- (d) majority of the respondents accepted divorce as the best solution for a married couple who could not live together harmoniously provided that they did not have children (71%). The percentage increased sharply and was the highest among the past four years (57% in 2011, 63% in 2013 and 56% in 2015). Similar rising trend was observed for respondents accepting divorce as the best solution for a married couple who could not live together harmoniously even though they already had children (45%) (as compared with 31% in 2011, 32% in 2013 and 33% in 2015). On the other hand, the percentage of respondents who considered marrying a divorced person acceptable (35%) continued to drop, forming a downward trend since 2013 (54% in 2013 and 45% in 2015);
- (e) 48% of parent respondents found the stress of raising their children overwhelming. This figure continued to drop, by 4% when compared with 2015 further to the significant drop of 12% in 2015;
- (f) number of respondents who agreed that their relationship with their children had gotten worse when they grow up sharply dropped to 9%, despite the upward trend in previous years (13% in 2011, 15% in 2013 and 19% in 2015);
- (g) non-parent respondents' intention not to have children was in an upward trend. Non-parent respondents who indicated that they were not at all likely or not very likely to have children increased from 31% in 2013, 39% in 2015 to 49% in 2017. Besides, 94% of parent respondents had no desire to have more children in the future. For parents aged 18-34, half of them had no desire to have more children in the future which was similar to the findings in 2013 and 2015. Only 15% of parent respondents aged 18-34 had desire to have more children, which showed a downward trend when compared with the findings in 2013 (26%) and 2015 (21%);
- (h) similar to the findings in 2013 and 2015, 70% of the parent respondents indicated that they were more tired than before. About half of the parents claimed that they had no personal time and large parts of their lives were dominated by the needs of children. Nevertheless, more parents claimed they were happier than before (64% in 2013, 65% in 2015 and 72% in 2017);

- (i) increasing number of parent respondents indicated that grandparents should not intervene in their parenting method (43% in 2013, 44% in 2015 and 58% in 2017);
- (j) by adopting the Chinese Family Assessment Instrument, the mean scores of “Conflict”, “Control”, “Mutuality” and “Concern” in 2017 were similar to those in previous years, while the mean score of “Communication” was observed with a drop from 3.7 in previous years to 3.4 in 2017;
- (k) 73% of the respondents considered that their families functioned very well, which remained at a level similar to that of 2013 (72%) and 2015 (76%). On the other hand, the proportion of respondents who were satisfied or very satisfied with their family life was the lowest among the four years (81% in 2011, 76% in 2013, 80% in 2015 and 72% in 2017); and
- (l) about 40% of the respondents found it difficult to balance family and work. A slight drop was observed as compared with the findings in 2011 to 2015. Similarly, a rising percentage of respondents claimed to have encountered no problem of poor work-life balance (66% in 2017 as compared with 38% in 2013 and 44% in 2015).

3. The preliminary findings above indicated that families in Hong Kong in general functioned quite well. Notwithstanding the drop in several aspects (e.g. willingness to live with parents, satisfaction with family life), around 72% of respondents indicated that they were very satisfied or satisfied with their family life. It is noted that some findings (2(a), 2(c) to 2(g) and 2(j) to 2(k)) showed deviations from the past. As the questionnaires do not cover questions examining reasons leading to the variations, Policy 21 will conduct focus groups to identify the reasons.