

Speech by PSHA at opening ceremony of Jockey Club's Symposium for FAMILY
(English only)

Following is the speech by the Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Raymond Young, at the opening ceremony of Symposium for FAMILY: A Jockey Club Initiative for a Harmonious Society - FAMILY Participation: Generating Evidence for FAMILY Health, Happiness and Harmony in the Community today (May 24):

Dr the Honourable Leong Che-hung, Mr Anthony Chow, Professor T H Lam, Professor Sophia Chan, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to this very meaningful Symposium for Family organised by the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust and the School of Public Health of the University of Hong Kong. I am also delighted to note that the Family Council is part of this endeavour by co-organising the symposium again this year and some of our Family Council members will participate in the plenary session by sharing their experience and insights on a variety of family-related subjects later today.

Family is the basic unit for community building and the cornerstone of a harmonious society. To underline the importance the Government attaches to the promotion of family values in Hong Kong, the Family Council was set up in 2007. It provides a high-level platform for leaders of various sectors of the community to examine family-related policies and champion various initiatives that promote a culture of loving families in the community. As the Family Council is chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration and comprises all the Secretaries of the policy bureaux concerned, it is effective in ensuring that family values are given due regard in the formulation of any new government policies.

The Family Council fully recognises the importance of generating evidence for supporting family-related programmes. Towards this end, the Family Council regularly conducts surveys and consultancy studies to better understand the current state of Hong Kong families. Last year, we completed four researches on youth drug abuse, youth prostitution, child neglect and elderly neglect, and the findings from these studies have provided useful pointers for all stakeholders, Government and NGOs alike, in the work of combating social problems.

I understand that the family project by the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust and Hong Kong University embraces a similar philosophy, but is of a much bigger scale. It has been conducting a five-year territory-wide household survey covering some 20 000 households. I'm sure when the survey is completed in 2013/14, the Government and other related organisations will benefit from your findings in formulating long-term family policies and programmes.

I am also very encouraged to see so many participants from different sectors attending this symposium today, and I'm sure they will take this opportunity to share their valuable experiences in promoting family health and strengthening core family values in Hong Kong. May I wish the symposium a resounding success.

Thank you.

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