

ACA NEWSFILE

(Publication of the Advisory Council on AIDS, Hong Kong)

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ACA Secretariat

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. Calendar.

XXXIInd Meeting of the Advisory Council on AIDS (ACA)

2:30pm 7 April 2000

IIIrd Meeting of the AIDS Prevention and Care Committee (APCC)

6:00pm 18 May 2000

XIXth Meeting of the Scientific Committee on AIDS (SCA)

to be confirmed

Ist Meeting of the Committee on Promoting Acceptance of People affected by HIV/AIDS

2:30pm 9 March 2000

Committee Meetings Highlights

AFTER the Chinese New Year holidays, the Scientific Committee on AIDS (SCA) and the AIDS Prevention and Care Committee (APCC) held its 18th and 2nd meeting on 11 February and 17 February 2000 respectively.

The SCA focussed on mother-to-child (MTC) HIV transmission, one of the pressure areas identified for this term, in its last meeting. International development of multiple countries on the issue was presented. It was noted that universal voluntary HIV testing has become an integral part of antenatal care in Malaysia since 1997. While universal antenatal screening has been recommended for London years ago, the United Kingdom Health Department demanded in 1999 that this goal to be reached for the rest of the country by the end of 2001. HIV prevalence of antenatal mothers in these countries was generally similar to that of Hong Kong.

In the same meeting, Dr. Tse Hei Yee of Kwong Wah Hospital shared with SCA members her experience of conducting a pilot project of universal opt-out antenatal HIV testing locally. The study found that the acceptance rate of the test was very high - over 97%. Three HIV positive women were diagnosed, which would be missed short of the project. Dr. Tse's study offered useful data on the actual implementation of the programme in Hong Kong. A Working Group for the prevention of MTC HIV transmission was formed under SCA, with wide representation of the various stake-holders. The Group will have its first meeting in early March.

Progress of the Sub-committee on Media & Publicity, and Task Forces on *Youth*, *Travellers*, and *Men who have sex with men* were reported by the respective convenors - Ms. Bella Luk, Mr. Billy Ho, Dr. Joseph Lau, and Mr. Graham Smith at the APCC meeting. The Committee endorsed the formation of the Task Force on Drugs and AIDS. In an effort to minimise the confusion of roles of the Task Forces (and APCC) and that of the Community Planning Process (CPP), a paper was prepared for information and discussion. This is important for maximising the effectiveness of the CPP. Draft strategy papers on Youth and Travellers were also deliberated with useful comments raised by the Committee members. Development of strategy for HIV prevention under their respective domain is one of the main tasks of the Sub-committee/Task Forces for this term. ♂



AIDS Hotline
2780 2211



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Advisory Council on AIDS Secretariat

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Council News / Activities

Champion masterpiece of a comic design competition project organised by the Kwai Shing Children's Centre of the Boys' and Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong under the 1999 "Youth Action on AIDS" Funding Scheme

專題初級組：愛滋病與小孩

冠軍：李萃敏 聖公會仁立小學



In its tenth year

FORMED in 1990, the Hong Kong Advisory Council on AIDS (ACA) is having its tenth anniversary at the beginning year of this new millennium. To celebrate this landmark, the ACA will be holding a gathering on the 6th April 2000 at Red Ribbon Centre. Besides Chairmen and members of the Council, members from the Committees, Working

Groups and Task Forces, as well as partners over the years will all be invited to join the gathering.

Dr. EK Yeoh, Secretary for the Health and Welfare, has kindly consented to be the officiating guest for the event. A photo exhibition "15 years of AIDS in Hong Kong" will also be

kicked off on that day. It is expected that the gathering will provide an opportune chance for old and new friends to get together, to chat and share experience with each other. The Council looks forward to meeting you at the event. For enquiries, please contact Mr. John Yip at tel: 2304 6100. ♂

ACA

Hong Kong Virtual AIDS Office
<http://www.info.gov.hk/aids>



New API for Drug and AIDS

THE Government has just produced a new Announcement of Public Interest (API), which has been shown in the local television stations starting 21 February 2000. The theme messages of the API were avoidance of

needle-sharing and practising protected sex for HIV prevention.

Notwithstanding the need to reach out to drug users for AIDS preventive education and counselling, the API on drug and AIDS is produced with the aim of

targeting those drug users not currently in the drug treatment and rehabilitation network. Rapid spread of HIV among injecting drug users has occurred in many places, including Mainland China and our neighbouring countries. A rise in HIV infection among drug users in Hong Kong was noted via the surveillance system. Concerted efforts of AIDS workers and drug workers are indispensable if effective prevention and control of HIV/AIDS in drug users is to be achieved. ♂

Exchange between Mainland and Hong Kong

FOR the second year, the Lions Red Ribbon Fellowship Scheme is now open for application. The Scheme is run by the Red Ribbon Centre with sponsorship by the Lions Clubs International District 303 - Hong Kong and Macau. The objectives of the Scheme are to facilitate experience sharing between the Mainland and local workers, enhance technical exchange and encourage collaboration as well as networking. The target applicant has to be a citizen of the People's Republic of China, be engaged in public health work, and been working in the field of AIDS in China for over a year. In 1999, Prof. Shan Guang-nai of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences was a Fellow under the Scheme. The deadline for application this year is 31 March 2000. For details, please contact Mr. Mak Sik-yan at tel: 2304 6268. ♂

Cumulative HIV/AIDS Statistics in Hong Kong updated 31 December 1999

		HIV (AIDS)
Gender	male	1138 (386)
	female	221 (47)
Ethnicity	Chinese	940 (329)
	non-Chinese	419 (104)
Transmission	heterosexual	762 (265)
	homosexual	278 (91)
	bisexual	72 (25)
	injecting drug use	23 (6)
	blood/bl products	68 (18)
	perinatal	10 (4)
	undetermined	146 (24)
TOTAL		1359 (433)

Department of Health, Hong Kong SAR

AIDS Education for Youth

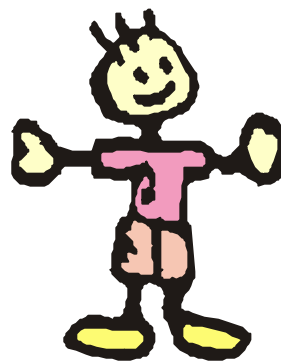
FOCUS

MANY places, including Hong Kong, have put youth as one of the priority groups for targeted AIDS education and health promotion. Though the current HIV/AIDS situation among youth in the locality is relatively not severe, we can by no means be complacent - multiple surveys have indicated growing prevalence of HIV-related risk behaviours, especially that of sex, in youth. Equally important, as youth is the pillar and owner of the future society, we have to strive our best, together with youth themselves, to protect their health.

Information dissemination is the basics for health promotion. Skills acquisition is also necessary for AIDS prevention in youth. It would be best if the youth can be mobilised to undertake AIDS education activities by themselves. The "Youth Action on AIDS" Funding Scheme, organised by the Task Force on Youth of the AIDS Prevention and Care Committee (APCC), is one endeavour to this end.

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Entering its ninth year, a total of 22 youth groups successfully participated in the Scheme in 1999. The participants comprised youth from the youth centre, school students as well as workers of non-governmental organisations. A prize presentation ceremony was held on 26



February 2000 at Red Ribbon Centre with officiating guests being: Ms. Miriam Yeung Chin-wah, *UNAIDS Hong Kong Ambassador*, Mr. Tam Chun Kit, *Assistant Director of Education Department*, Ms. Kay Ku, *Assistant Director of Hong Kong Council of Social Service*, Mr. Cheung Hing-wah, *Chief Social Work Officer of Social Welfare Department*, and Mrs. Diana Wong, *Chairman of APCC*.

Three youth groups

won the Best Project Awards: they were the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups Verbena Children & Youth Centre cum Reading Room, Caritas Children & Youth Services and Kowloon Sam Yuk Secondary School. Tai Po Sam Yuk Secondary School won the Best Design Award in the project exhibition contest. The prize-winning teams, together with the other groups, have organised a variety of health education activities for their peers and the public. The need to face a complex subject like AIDS has certainly offered the youth a good training opportunity for their development.

The wide dimensions of HIV/AIDS demand a social, rather than biological perspective, in running AIDS prevention programmes for the youth. Integrating AIDS education into sex education and/or moral education for the youth/students would be the goal to be achieved in the long run. A culture-sensitive approach has to be taken, bearing in mind the readiness of the youth in following suit after the trendy things in the society. ♂