

All secondary schools in Hong Kong are welcome to join Healthy School Programme supported by Beat Drugs Fund (with photo)

â€‹The Healthy School Programme, supported by the Beat Drugs Fund, is now open for application. All secondary schools in Hong Kong and non-governmental organisation partners of their choice may submit applications on or before April 12 (Friday) for applying for funding for implementing activities in the 2024/25 school year. The Programme is a school-based anti-drug education initiative, the enrolment for which is voluntary. It aims to foster a healthy drug-free culture in schools through students' participation in diversified personal growth activities and voluntary school drug testing. The Programme facilitates the physical and mental development of students and consolidates their resolve to stay away from drugs.

To better understand the implementation of the Programme in the 2023/24 school year, member of the Action Committee Against Narcotics (ACAN) Mr Lau Chun-hung and representatives of the Narcotics Division (ND) of the Security Bureau (SB) paid a visit to the Yan Chai Hospital Wong Wha San Secondary School and exchanged views with its teachers and students today (March 7). The school has participated in the Programme for 12 years and has arranged a diversified range of activities with the funding provided under the Programme, including today's school-wide game booths activity. By taking part in the interesting interactive games, students gained a clear understanding of drug harm and the importance of living a healthy drug-free life.

The Yan Chai Hospital Wong Wha San Secondary School appreciated the Programme's simple application procedures and the additional resources provided, which enable the school to flexibly arrange anti-drug activities that are best suited to the needs of both the school and its students. The school's principal, Mr Kelvin Yau, said, "The voluntary drug testing element of the Programme can strengthen students' resolve to stay away from drugs. We have no concern at all about any potential 'labelling effect' on the school." The chairman of the school's Parent-Teacher Association, Mr Ng Chi-yeung, said, "Parents welcome the school's participation in the Programme, and we see no issue whatsoever as the students can receive correct information about drugs and learn how to resist drug temptation through the Programme." ACAN member and former chairman of the Hong Kong Subsidized Secondary Schools Council, Mr Lau, stated that the implementation of the Programme has been smooth over the years, and there are already enough measures in place to protect students' privacy. He appealed to all secondary schools in Hong Kong to join the Programme together, "Drug problems may appear in any schools. Schools that are publicly recognised as elite schools, Direct Subsidy Scheme schools and international schools are all encouraged to apply for joining the Programme."

By now, the Programme has entered its 13th year of implementation, and about half of all secondary schools in Hong Kong have taken part as of today. To further promote the Programme, the ND has invited Mr Lau, as well as a participating school's principal, a teacher, and a parent to share their experiences in a short video. The video will be uploaded to the ND's social media accounts (YouTube channel of the ND of the SB; Facebook page and Instagram account of "narcotics.divisionhk") by the end of March.

The Programme for the 2024/25 school year is now open for application. The application form and Programme details are available from the Programme website (www.nd.gov.hk/en/HSP.html). Enquiries can be made by phone at 2867 5974/2867 5975/2867 5976 or by email to sb-hspdt@sb.gov.hk.

