

Commendation ceremony held for home-based child carers of Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project (with photos)

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) held a commendation ceremony for the Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project today (May 10) to honour about 200 participating home-based child carers (HCCs) for the caring and neighbourhood spirit they displayed when taking care of needy children in the community. The SWD also took the opportunity to encourage people who have a drive to help others to become HCCs.

The Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun, accompanied by the Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Ms Alice Lau, and the Director of Social Welfare, Miss Charmaine Lee, officiated at the ceremony. Representatives of 15 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) subsidised by the SWD in providing the service also attended.

Addressing the ceremony, Mr Sun said that since its launch in 2008, the Project has been providing a flexible form of day child care service at the neighbourhood level to assist parents who cannot take care of their children temporarily because of work or other reasons. In the past 16 years, the Project has benefited about 150 000 children from needy families.

Mr Sun pointed out that with a view to strengthening the support for working families in childbearing and incentivising more families to join the labour market, the Chief Executive announced in the 2023 Policy Address that the incentive payment for HCCs will be substantially increased in April this year, and the number of service places under the Project will be increased in the fourth quarter. Enhanced training for HCCs will also be in place in the fourth quarter. He encouraged participating HCCs to enrol in the training as well to enhance their child care skills, knowledge and confidence through revision and experience sharing.

Mr Sun expressed his gratitude to the participating HCCs for the tireless contributions they have made for the needy children in addition to taking care of their own families. He also thanked the 15 NGOs for their wholehearted support for both the Project and the HCCs. He appealed to participating carers to actively introduce the Project to their families and friends and motivate more people with a drive to help to become HCCs to expand the caring network in the community.

The SWD subsidises NGOs to operate the Project in 18 districts. There are now around 1 700 HCCs in the territory. The service operators have established mechanisms to recruit, assess, screen and train suitable HCCs, and arrange service matching.

Members of the public interested to become HCCs may contact the operators in their respective districts. Details of the Project are available on the SWD website (www.swd.gov.hk/en/pubsvc/family/cat_childcareservice/daychildcares/nsccp/index.html).

