

Education Bureau launches 4Rs Mental Health Charter (with photos)

The Education Bureau (EDB) held the 4Rs Mental Health Charter Launching Ceremony cum Briefing Session today (April 12), marking the commencement of the 4Rs Mental Health Charter (the Charter) for the 2024/25 school year.

Speaking at the Launching Ceremony, the Secretary for Education, Dr Choi Yuk-lin, said that a harmonious and friendly school environment, a diligent and enthusiastic team of teachers, as well as healthy family relationships and lifestyles, are essential conditions for cultivating a positive new generation.

In order to promote mental health in schools in a more comprehensive and systematic manner, Dr Choi appealed to all schools in Hong Kong to join the Charter, thereby working together to set practical and feasible goals and take concrete actions to promote students' physical and psychological health.

The 4Rs in the Charter cover four elements and objectives for promoting mental health. They are equally important in fostering students' mental health and are closely related to each other. The 4Rs are:

- (i) Rest: Help students cultivate healthy habits from an early age including having enough rest, adequate sleep and leisure activities.
- (ii) Relaxation: Teach students to take the time to relax, take care of their mental health and practise self-compassion.
- (iii) Relationship: Strengthen the relationships among students, teachers and students, as well as parents and children, so as to enhance their sense of connectedness; help students understand their roles and their importance in these relationships, so as to willingly take on responsibilities and make contributions.
- (iv) Resilience: Equip students to adapt to the inevitable stress and setbacks in life, and teach students to deal with emotions, cope with stress and overcome difficulties with a positive attitude.

At the Launching Ceremony, Dr Choi and the Director of Health, Dr Ronald Lam, accompanied by the mascot of the Department of Health, Active Lion, engaged in stretching exercises for relaxation together with guests. The guests of honour attending the Launching Ceremony included representatives of school councils and school heads' associations of primary and secondary schools, as well as partner organisations of the Charter at this stage, including the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, the Hong Kong Red Cross, the Mental Health Association of Hong Kong, the WEMP Foundation and the Child Development Initiative Alliance. In addition, the school heads' associations of the 18 districts and all government schools in Hong Kong attended and echoed the Charter at the Launching Ceremony, working together to enhance students' physical and psychological well-being.

Schools participating in the Charter should implement various measures and activities for the promotion of students' mental health starting from the 2024/25 school year to help students develop healthy habits, provide opportunities for them to relax and reduce stress, help them build positive interpersonal relationships, and enhance their well-being and resilience, thereby enhancing an overall healthy culture in schools. Schools should also organise parent education courses or parent-child activities to promote positive parent education every year, sharing ways to instil positivity in their children.

Schools participating in the Charter will sign the Mental Health Workplace Charter, jointly implemented by the Department of Health, the Labour Department and the Occupational Safety and Health Council, to provide a mental health-friendly work environment for staff. Furthermore, in order to support schools to implement health promotion in a sustainable, comprehensive and effective manner, schools participating in the Charter will also participate in the Whole School Health Programme, and formulate health promotion strategies according to the circumstances of the schools.

Details of the 4Rs Mental Health Charter are set out in the EDB Circular Memorandum No. 60/2024

(applications.edb.gov.hk/circular/upload/EDBCM/EDBCM24060C.pdf)

and the 4Rs Mental Health Charter designated webpage

(mentalhealth.edb.gov.hk/tc/promotion-at-the-universal-level/promotional-resources-for-schools/121.html).

The EDB appeals to all schools in the territory to join the Charter as soon as possible, instil a sense of well-being in students' everyday lives, and work together for their healthy development. The EDB will continue to strengthen the synergy through cross-departmental and cross-sectoral collaboration, with a view to helping schools utilise external and community resources for the enhancement of the promotion of students' mental health.



