

HKPF holds Launching Ceremony of Child Protection Comic Book Series cum Multi-Disciplinary Seminar on Navigating Online Grooming Risks: Spotting and Stopping them (with photos)

The Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) held the Launching Ceremony of the Child Protection Comic Book Series cum Multi-Disciplinary Seminar on Navigating Online Grooming Risks: Spotting and Stopping them today (March 25). Over 500 principals, teachers, social workers, child service providers, parents and police officers participated in person and online in parallel.

The Commissioner of Police, Mr Siu Chak-ye, highlighted in his speech that there were 1 359 child sexual abuse cases in 2024, with 94 cases (7 per cent) involving online elements. In the first two months of 2025 alone, 10 cases of online grooming were recorded, including two rape cases involving victims as young as 12 years old. These figures highlighted the severity and alarming rising trend of online grooming.

He noted that the HKPF conducted a survey on online grooming in 2024, interviewing 2 000 students of secondary One to Four. The findings revealed that over 60 per cent of the participants had encountered online grooming, including receiving explicit messages, being asked for nude photos, or even being lured into meetings for sexual exploitation. The survey also indicated that factors such as using social media at a younger age, spending more time online, and having multiple social media accounts significantly increase the risk of falling victim to online grooming.

Mr Siu emphasised that the threat of online grooming should not be overlooked. Addressing the issue requires the joint efforts among schools, parents and students to foster a safer online environment through education, supervision and trust. He stressed that much like other crime prevention efforts, educating children about safe internet practices must "start from a young age with continuous and concerted efforts". He called on parents and educational stakeholders to work together continuously, helping children develop the ability to resist dangers and establishing a safer environment for future generations.

The HKPF has been actively promoting child protection initiatives, including the "Let's T.A.L.K. – Child Protection Campaign" and the newly launched eight-volume "Child Protection Comic Book" Series. The comic books address topics such as online child sexual grooming, prevention of child abuse, naked chat and court trial procedures. The series aims to educate children and juveniles on how to identify risks and protect themselves. The

comic books will be distributed to over 1 500 primary schools and kindergartens, public libraries, and related non-profit organisations across Hong Kong, thereby spreading the message of child protection and fostering a safe and healthy environment for children to grow up.

Mr Siu, along with the ambassadors of the HKPF Child Protection Campaign, Mr Bernard Chan and Ms Guo Jingjing; the Director of Public Prosecutions of the Department of Justice, Ms Maggie Yang; the Chairman of the Agency for Volunteer Service, Ms Melissa Kaye Pang; the Assistant Director (Family and Child Welfare) of the Social Welfare Department, Ms Wendy Chau; Clinical Professor of the Department of Paediatrics and Adolescent Medicine of the University of Hong Kong, Professor Patrick Ip; and the Chairman of the Committee on Home-School Co-operation, Mr Eugene Fong; officiated at the comic book series launching ceremony.

To raise public awareness and create a safer online environment for children, a seminar was held following the launching ceremony. Officers from the HKPF and representatives of the relevant sectors discussed the risks of online grooming faced by children and explored practical coping strategies.

Speaking at the seminar were the Chairman of the Hong Kong Direct Subsidy Scheme Schools Council, Mr Dion Chen; the Founder and Honorary President of the Smart City Consortium, Mr Eric Yeung; the Hong Kong E-sports Team member, Mr Pang Ka-kit; and the senior social worker of the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups, Mr Eric Chu Heung-hung.

The seminar marked the successful conclusion of the fourth year of the "Let's T.A.L.K. – Child Protection Campaign". Details of the campaign have been uploaded onto the one-stop child protection online platform (www.childprotection.gov.hk).



