

Ping Wo Fund holds Anti-gambling Get Set Go Carnival (with photos)

The following is issued on behalf of the Ping Wo Fund Advisory Committee:

Co-organised by the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau (HYAB) and the Ping Wo Fund, in association with the Hong Kong Police Force, the "Anti-gambling Get Set Go" Carnival was held at the MacPherson Playground in Mong Kok today (March 23), attracting more than 1 000 participants.

The carnival was funded by the Ping Wo Fund. Through booth games, exhibition and stage performances, the carnival aimed to promote the no-gambling message to participants and to further raise public awareness of the harm of gambling addiction.

Speaking at the kick-off ceremony of the carnival, the Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs, Miss Alice Mak, said that, as addiction to gambling could cause harms to individuals and to the society, it has been the Government's established policy not to encourage gambling. To address problems caused by gambling, the Government established the Ping Wo Fund in September 2003 to finance public education and counselling, treatment and other support services for gamblers with a view to preventing and alleviating problems relating to gambling.

Miss Mak said that, the HYAB wished to instill in children and the youth the values of no-gambling and to promote the message of "Healthy Living, No Gambling" in the community. The Bureau also wished to further raise public's awareness of the Gambling Counselling Hotline 183 4633, financed by the Ping Wo Fund and its services through the carnival.

Miss Mak appealed to people who found themselves or their family members or relatives facing gambling-related problems to call the Gambling Counselling Hotline for prompt assistance at the carnival. "The Ping Wo Fund's counsellors will definitely uphold the spirit of serving the community with heart and provide appropriate support to individuals affected by gambling problems, including their family members," she said.

Meanwhile, a new TV Announcement in the Public Interest (API) with the theme of "Stay away from gambling. Don't bet your life on it" was premiered at the carnival. The new API highlights the harm of addiction to gambling, urges members of the public to avoid excessive gambling and encourages gamblers with gambling disorder and those affected by them to call the Gambling Counselling Hotline for assistance. The TV API and the corresponding radio API will be broadcast in late March.

Other officiating guests of the carnival included the Chairperson of the Ping Wo Fund Advisory Committee, Ms Lu Hai; and the Chief Superintendent of Organized Crime and Triad Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force, Mr Kwan King-pan.

The establishment of the Ping Wo Fund aims to finance public education and other measures to prevent or alleviate problems relating to gambling; provide counselling, treatment and other remedial or support services for gamblers with gambling disorder and those affected by them; and conduct research and studies into problems and issues relating to gambling. The Ping Wo Fund Advisory Committee is a non-statutory body to advise the HYAB on the use and application of the Ping Wo Fund.

