

(Translation)

Motion on
“Ensuring children’s right to play
for them to grow up happily”
to be moved by Hon HO Kai-ming

Wording of the Motion

That, children in Hong Kong have long schooling time and heavy homework load, and lack time for leisure, play and even rest; coupled with the fact that the living environment (especially in sub-divided units) in Hong Kong is so cramped that children often do not have sufficient space for activities, not to mention space for playing; at present, public playgrounds for children are unevenly distributed among districts, channels for community participation in the design process are inadequate, play equipment is insufficient and designs are identical with no elements to stimulate the healthy growth of children; moreover, inclusive play equipment has failed to meet the needs of children with disabilities, and play equipment and services for in-patient children are also in acute shortage; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to formulate measures to ensure that local children can enjoy the rights stated in Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, including the right to rest and leisure, and to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child, and at the same time improve the software and hardware of children’s play equipment, so that children can obtain more diversified recreational experience, enjoy leisure and grow up happily; specific measures include:

- (1) urging the Commission on Children to conduct studies on ensuring children’s entitlement to the right to play and draw up criteria for the construction of children’s play equipment, such as play equipment should embody the elements of variety, flexibility, inclusiveness and holistic and healthy development of children, and to make amendment proposals on the relevant laws and regulatory measures based on the findings of the studies;
- (2) revising the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines to raise the standard for provision of children’s playgrounds;
- (3) requiring private housing courts to provide suitable children’s play equipment through various means, including imposing land sale conditions, and providing financial assistance and technical support for

owners or owners' corporations of private housing courts and Tenants Purchase Scheme to provide additional and upgrade children's play equipment in housing courts or estates;

- (4) identifying suitable sites in public housing and private developments for constructing children's playgrounds, and providing at least one inclusive playground in each district for children with or without disabilities to play together;
- (5) setting up additional children playrooms under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department in various districts and improving the equipment of existing playrooms, including setting up specifically designed playrooms for infants and pre-school children to provide more public play area for parents and children;
- (6) setting up additional toys libraries in various districts to enable children of all ages and from different strata to have equal rights and opportunities to access to toys;
- (7) increasing the number of child care centres and subsidized child care service places, so that young children can receive care and enjoy free playtime in a safe and healthy environment;
- (8) urging the Hospital Authority to provide sufficient play equipment and services for sick children;
- (9) reviewing the frequency of internal tests and examinations and homework load of primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong, so that children will not have less time for rest and play due to excessive homework and tests and examinations, thereby promoting their balanced development;
- (10) stepping up the development of game-based education and collaboration with non-governmental organizations to provide games and organize outdoor activities within and outside schools, as well as organize more outdoor activities during holidays; at the same time, providing appropriate subsidies for grass-roots children to ensure that they enjoy equal rights to participate in games and activities;
- (11) providing training on game-based education for teachers and parents, and promoting to them the benefits and importance of play to children, with a view to reversing the social atmosphere of pursuing examination success and catching up with the curricula, so that teachers and parents can attach more importance to children's right to play; and

- (12) expeditiously reviewing the outdated holiday policy to align statutory holidays with general holidays to 17 days, so that all employees in Hong Kong can enjoy the same number of holidays, thereby increasing their family time and playtime with children.