



和諧之家 HARMONY HOUSE LTD.

賽馬會和諧一心家暴防治中心
Jockey Club Harmony Link
Domestic Violence Prevention Centre

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Team 1, Labour and Welfare Bureau,
11/F, West Wing, Central Government Offices,
2 Tim Mei Avenue Tamar,
Hong Kong

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Submission to the Labour and Welfare Bureau

on the Consultation of the Establishment of a Commission on Children

Harmony House was established in 1985 as the first shelter for abused women and their children in Hong Kong. Now we have developed into a one-stop anti-domestic violence service agency, with a wide range of preventive, therapeutic and developmental programs to help families affected by domestic violence.

We strongly believe that all human beings have the right to live with dignity and respect and to be free from violence, abuse and coercion. Therefore, we are dedicated in enhancing the understanding of emotion and the building of positive social relationship of children, as well as providing case and group intervention for children who are plagued by and witnessing domestic violence with an aim at facilitating victims of domestic violence in protecting themselves.

Toward the changes of the society, we are highly appreciated for government's preparation to set up a Commission on Children, paving the





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way for focusing on addressing children's issues as they grow. As the pioneer fiercely combating domestic violence, we are obligated to participate in the discussion on the establishment of the Commission on Children with the following recommendations:

1. To align with the definition of the child stated in The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 1), we encourage the Commission on Children to review and increase the target age group to the level of protection for all children under the age of 18, instead of the age of 14 proposed in the present preliminary age group. Under the proposed framework in categorizing different stages of growth of children, we recommend to categorize children aged 15-18 as senior secondary school stage for formulating long-term targets and strategies concerning the holistic development and important growth stages of children and the youth.
2. We take note of the concerns that the consultation period for members of the public only lasts for two months. Such an insufficient period of time limits the discussion on the composition and structures of the Commission on Children. Moreover, the fatal abused incident of 5 years old girl also induce the society to discuss about the welfare of children. In view of the public concern, we strongly recommend that the consultation period to be extended for two months, dated March 31, 2018, for gauging public views and involving the participation of





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children in responding to the establishment of the Commission, so that direct consultation with children on the matters that affect them can be encouraged and respected.

To keep abreast of the changing society, we support the establishment of the Commission on Children with a vision of ensuring children's rights, interests and wellbeing are respected and safeguarded. Hence, we sincerely hope that, by joining force with different parties, the Commission can be advanced to a more comprehensive and inclusive manner, taking a big leap to in fighting against children affected by domestic violence in community.

Warmest regards,

Doris Lee
Executive Director

