

Presentation 2:

Health Promoting School as Community Developmental Approach to create better health of our young generation

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Summary:

Priority risk behaviours causing global burden of diseases are often established early in life so the 45th session of the UN Commission on Population and Development has chosen adolescents and youth as central theme. Many published evaluations of school health initiatives have suggested that the way the school is led and managed, the experiences students have to participate and take responsibility for shaping policies, practices and procedures, how teachers relate to and treat students and how the school engages with its local community (including parents) in partnership work, actually builds many health protective factors and reduces risk taking behaviours. Only complex, multi-factorial and innovative activity in many domains (curriculum, school environment and community) with substantial duration would become effective school health promotion programs in changing health behaviours. During the eighties, the World Health Organization has initiated the concept Health Promoting School (HPS) movement moving beyond individual behavioural change and to consider organizational structure changes for health improvement. In Hong Kong, the Centre for Health Education and Health Promotion of the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CHEHP) has developed a comprehensive framework of HPS with indicators for monitoring and evaluation to adopt the HPS approach as an ecological model for health improvement. The WHO framework of HPS is only an outline. Much of work still needs to be done to develop a robust model to fit into the context of school setting. This involves empowerment and capacity of school educators, students and parents as well as other key stakeholders. There is no single determinant factor for health and well-being so services for children and adolescents must be cross-cutting rather than in silos. This project was effective in cascading the effect of HPS by developing a local network of HPS as a knowledge and resource hub. CHEHP was commissioned by Quality Education Fund in 2010 to establish the Thematic Network of Healthy Schools and also engaged in WHO Consultancy to Lao P.D.R to support ProLead Team to build capacity and sustain the momentum for stronger Health Promotion policies and programmes.