

About the Alliance for Children's Commission

Our History

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) came into effect in Hong Kong in 1994. Since then, there has been endless discussion of establishing a Children's Commission in Hong Kong in order to champion the rights stipulated in the Convention and the specific needs of children. The debate came to a climax in the year 2005-2006 when the HKSAR Government reported the child rights situation to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child in Geneva and many discussion sessions were held in the community and in the Legislative Council.

In 2006, The Hong Kong Committee on Children's Rights conducted a research *A Children's Commission for Hong Kong – Shaping the Future* where NGOs, professional groups, academics, senior government officials and overseas Child Commissioners were involved. Based on the research findings, a **Consensus Building Seminar** was conducted among child-related NGOs and professional groups on the establishment of a Children's Commission in Hong Kong on 9 March 2007. The Seminar was conducted in the name of 18 parties whereas majority of them had previously joint hands in contributing and/or supporting the shadow report on the CRC under the flagship of The Hong Kong Committee on Children's Rights in the year 2004-2005. In the Seminar, speakers and participants unanimously agreed that there is an urgent need to establish a Commission for Children in Hong Kong to champion the rights of children.

Besides, the participants also listed out the roles, functions and composition that they are expected of a Commission for Children in Hong Kong:

- To champion for children's rights and to advocate for all children
- To coordinate resources to ensure the best use of them
- To represent the interest of children in all policies and decisions
- To ensure a child impact study is done when policies and legislation are changed or introduced
- To monitor the child right situation in Hong Kong and the government's action/ inaction relating to children
- To conduct research for systematic analysis and evaluation on child right situation of different aspects
- To give advice on children's issues to the government and legislature
- To collect the views of children and provide opportunities for them to voice out their views
- To arouse public awareness and concern on children's issues
- To provide training for different target groups

Participants agreed that strategies have to be mapped out to persuade the government to accept our suggestion and enlist public support. Participants also agreed that this Seminar was only the starting point. We should keep the ball rolling by involving more professionals, as well as the public to participate in this campaign. It was here in this seminar, we secured the support of legislators Dr Fernando Cheung Chiu-hung and Dr Kwok Ka Ki who pledged to bring the Children's Commission issue into the legislature for motion discussion.

After the Consensus Building Seminar, more and more partners joined in. Meetings were conducted regularly to discuss further actions and strategies. On 4 April 2007, a press conference was held and a joint statement was announced to the attention of the media. The joint statement was signed by 63 agency and individual parties.

“The call for a Commission for Children in Hong Kong was clear, both in the community and in the United Nations. We believe it is the right time to bring this issue forward and to act now with determination. A Children's Commission may not be the answer to all the problems faced by children but it can be a channel through which the voice of children can be more clearly heard.” Statement to support the establishment of a Commission for Children in Hong Kong on 4 April 2008 at press conference.

After the press conference, the child rights partners further discussed our strategies and renamed ourselves as the **Alliance for Children's Commission** to make our stand clear to the public. In May, we invited Dr Ian Hassall, the first Child Commissioner from New Zealand to come to Hong Kong in supporting our campaign leading to the motion discussion at the Legislative Council. We also met with various political parties to seek their support by direct meeting and/or breakfast meeting.

On 29 May 2007, we conducted an **Interactive Forum “Why a Children's Commission is important to everyone?”** at the Auditorium of Duke of Windsor Social Service Building. Dr Ian Hassall being New Zealand's first Child Commissioner, shared the case with some 150 people from various sectors including legal and justice, medical and health, social welfare, education, academics and government departments have joined on the day. During the stay, Dr Ian Hassall received a series of media interviews; he also met with children directly to hear their voice.

On 7 June 2007, a motion was moved by Legislative Councilor, Dr Fernando Cheung Chiu-hung, *“That this Council urges the Government to set up a Commission on Children to fulfill the obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, safeguard the well-being of children, and ensure that children's perspectives are fully taken*

into account in the process of formulating government policies.” Outside the Legislative Council Building, Alliance Members, children and families, held a peaceful assembly under the rain and distributed the “Vote for Children” stickers to the Legislative Councilors to seek their support for the 1.3 million children in Hong Kong who cannot themselves vote. The motion debate was well-attended by legislators and the motion was passed with unanimous votes across all political parties.

The Alliance for Children’s Commission continues to meet regularly, update the children’s agenda and monitor the rights of children in Hong Kong together until today. We made use of opportunities to draw media and public attention on issues affecting children. Events included:

- 5 October 2007: **Press Conference on home accidents involving children** to spell out our concern and expectations towards the Policy Speech to be delivered by the Chief Executive of HKSAR
- 28 July 2008: **“When Children and Candidates of the Legislative Council Election Met” 7 • 28 Election Forum** at the Henry G Leong Yau Ma Tei Community Centre before the Legislative Council Election to allow the “no vote” children’s groups to voice out their concerns and interact with the candidates directly
- 3 Dec 2009: **Press Conference on problematic TV commercials on baby milk powder** to point out the misleading messages that could affect the healthy development of young children, and the consequences .in the absence of a Child Commission in Hong Kong

At present, the Alliance for Children’s Commission has 23 agency members and 4 individual members. We committed ourselves to promote the establishment of a Children’s Commission in Hong Kong.

ALLIANCE FOR CHILDREN'S COMMISSION

爭取成立兒童事務委員會聯盟

The Alliance for Children's Commission is formed by agencies, professional groups and individuals, who are concerned about children's rights and have committed ourselves to promote the establishment of a Children's Commission in Hong Kong. At present, we have 23 agency members and 4 individual members.

爭取成立兒童事務委員會聯盟由關注兒童權利的組織、專業團體及個人組成，承諾致力推動在香港成立兒童事務委員會，直至現在共有 23 個組織成員及四位個人成員，他們包括：

Against Child Abuse 防止虐待兒童會

Caritas Youth and Community Service 香港明愛青少年社區服務

Center for Child Development, Hong Kong Baptist University 香港浸會大學兒童發展研究中心

Children Rights Association 兒童權利關注會

Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong – Hin Keng Centre 香港中華基督教青年會 – 顯徑會所

ELCHK – Grace Rehabilitation Service 基督教香港信義會 – 天恩展能服務

ELCHK – Uncle Long Legs' Letter Box 基督教香港信義會 – 長腿叔叔信箱

The Hong Kong Childhood Injury Prevention and Research Association 香港兒童安全促進會

Hong Kong College of Paediatricians 香港兒科醫學院

Hong Kong Committee for UNICEF 聯合國兒童基金會

Hong Kong Committee on Children's Rights 香港兒童權利委員會

Hong Kong Council of Early Childhood Education and Services 香港幼兒教育及服務聯會

Hong Kong Down Syndrome Association 香港唐氏綜合症協會

Hong Kong Human Rights Monitor 香港人權監察

229th Hong Kong Scout Group 香港童軍 229 旅

Hong Kong Society for the Protection of Children 香港保護兒童會

Kids' Dream 童夢同想

Playright Children's Play Association 智樂兒童遊樂協會

Society for Community Organization 香港社區組織協會

Suen Mei Speech & Hearing Centre 宣美語言及聽覺訓練中心

The Boys' and Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong 香港小童群益會

The Hong Kong Council of Social Service 香港社會服務聯會

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