

Press Release

For Immediate Release

2017 Hong Kong Altruism Index Release

The Hong Kong Jockey Club Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention (the Centre) of The University of Hong Kong (HKU) held a press conference on June 19 (Tuesday) to present the latest survey findings on altruism and well-being.

2017 Hong Kong Altruism Index

The Centre released the first Altruism Index Survey results in 2014, which gained much public attention. An academic paper was later published on the validation and reliability of the Altruism Index. In 2016, with the generous support of Chow Tai Fook Charity Foundation, the Centre conducted a two-year territory-wide panel survey on altruism. A total of 3016 Hong Kong citizens were recruited for a study on their altruistic behaviours and well-being in 2016. Subsequently, a follow-up study was conducted in 2017 with 1185 respondents to see the changes in a year.

According to the findings, the average altruism score for Hong Kong residents in 2017 was 5.12 out of 10, which showed a slight decrease compared to the average altruism score of 5.25 in 2016. The average scores are maintained at a mid-upper level but still have room for improvement. The Altruism Index consists of four dimensions, namely *Volunteering*, *Monetary Donation*, *Blood and Organ Donations*, and *Informal Help*. Over the past two years, the participation rates of volunteering dropped from 51.3% to 47.3% while informal help decreased from 98.0% to 97.1%. The participation rate for monetary donation also slightly decreased from 85.1% to 83.5%. On the other hand, the participation rate for blood and organ donations increased from 50.0% to 52.7% in 2017. However, it is worth noting that the participation rate was still on the low side.

As online platforms play a pivotal role in sharing news and events, it is of our interest to study the utilisation of online platforms in sharing altruism related information. It was found that 49.7% of respondents reported using online platforms to share resources or information that are beneficial to others without any cost in 2017, with the participation rate of respondents aged 65 or above soaring from 13.8% in 2016 to 31.4% in 2017. This reflects a rising trend of using online platforms to share helpful information among the new generation of elderly.

In summary, peoples' well-being significantly correlate with the total altruism score. Being altruistic is evidenced to be one of the many factors to constitute an individual's well-being. Promoting altruism in Hong Kong may enhance well-being at the society level. More resources and myriad supporting policies are needed to provide incentives and motivate Hong

Kong people to participate in altruistic behaviours.

Charles: I am more blessed by giving than receiving

Our study indicated a rise in the number of senior citizens involved in altruistic behaviours. Charles, a retired nurse, shared his volunteering experience. He has started donating blood at the age of 18. Despite doubts from his close friends and relatives, he is committed to donating blood on a regular basis. He has been active in helping others in many aspects. After retirement, he has joined a volunteering medical team to help perform orthopaedic surgeries for mainland children suffering from cleft lips or cleft palate. Being able to use his professional knowledge, Charles finds much satisfaction in helping the children regain confidence. Sports is one of Charles' favourite hobbies. Even though he is not as strong as in the old days, he accompanies the elderly to go hiking and takes the opportunity to do exercise. Charles believes "*It is more blessed to give than to receive*". Being able to help within his capacity is a great blessing. He encouraged everyone to use their skills and talents to help others.

About HKJC Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention (CSRP), HKU

Founded in 2002, the Centre has been promoting the use of Public Health Approach in tackling suicide problems in Hong Kong. The Centre has established its reputation in suicide research and prevention worldwide and extended its research scope to well-being of individuals as well as the whole society. The Centre believes that empirical research will optimise practices and ultimately contribute to the improvement of a society.

About Chow Tai Fook Charity Foundation

Chow Tai Fook Charity Foundation ("CTFCF") is a private family foundation founded by Dr Cheng Yu-tung and his family members in 2012. CTFCF has actively supported charitable causes through partnering and grant-making to different non-profit making organisations, to provide opportunities and resources to the underprivileged, to empower individuals and to promote sustainable community development. CTFCF funds a range of projects including Education and Training, Mental Wellness, Community Services, Health Care and Ageing Innovation. In recent years, CTFCF has been collaborating with NGOs, academic institutions and other family charitable foundations for a range of projects to provide immediate, ongoing assistance to the people in need.

Photos and more details of the event can be downloaded after 5 pm on 19 June 2018 from:
<http://csrp.hku.hk/altruismindex-2017>

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Last Update: 19/06/2018