



香港賽馬會慈善信託基金
The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust



SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
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【Press Release】

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FAMILY: A Jockey Club Initiative for a Harmonious Society HKU Study on Family Communication Patterns in Hong Kong More Praise More Happiness

A population-based survey

To help build a more harmonious society, **The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust** has invited the **School of Public Health of The University of Hong Kong** to collaboratively launch a project entitled “**FAMILY: A Jockey Club Initiative for a Harmonious Society**” (“FAMILY Project”) with a HK\$250 million funding. The FAMILY Project is based on the premise that traditional Chinese values of cherishing family relationships can still be adapted to modern-day life, and can help promote the 3Hs – Health, Happiness and Harmony – across generations. At the end of 2009, a population-based survey, entitled “**Hong Kong Family and Health Information Trends Survey**” (HK - FHITS), was conducted. The survey explores a wide variety of topics related to family communication patterns, family relationships, and the indices of family Health, Happiness, and Harmony (3Hs).

More praise, more happiness

The study finds that communication time with family members is closely linked to family Health, Happiness, and Harmony (3Hs), especially for older adults. Spending quality time with family such as dining, shopping or walking brings to a positive impact on family 3Hs.

The study also shows that communication methods such as praising family members and physical touch like hugs or thoughtful touches on family member's shoulder are significantly associated with family Harmony and Happiness. However, such communication methods are not commonly adopted by Hong Kong people: only 30% of respondents show their care to family members by physical touch, while only 23.9% of them praise their family members. On the other hand, over 60% (64.1%) of respondents believe that serving the family such as doing housework could improve family relationship, which is, however, not the most effective method.

Relationship between generations needs to be improved

The study reveals that younger adults (aged 18 to 24) and adults (aged 25 to 44) most likely perceive having better/the best relationship with their mothers. Over half (55.19%) of the younger adults (aged 18 to 24) have such relationship with their mothers, but only 10.58% claimed the same relationship with their fathers. Similarly, over one-third (32.24%) of adults (aged 25 to 44) have such relationship with their mothers, and only a minority (7.65%) reported the same relationship with their fathers. Results show that children tend to have a closer relationship with their mothers instead of their fathers. In the long run, we should put more emphasis on fostering communication between father and his family members in order to enhance family Happiness and Harmony.

Furthermore, results show that older adults (aged 45 to 64) perceived having better/the best relationship with their spouse/partner (47.8%), but not with their children. This reflects that relationship between generations is a prime concern of the public.

Professor Sophia Chan, Professor and Head of the School of Nursing and Co-Investigator of FAMILY Project says, "Spending more quality time with family members is effective in improving family Happiness and Harmony. Family members should spend more time on family activities such as going out for shopping and dining. Unlike the Western culture, Chinese tend to be more implicit in showing love to our family. However, evident in this study, praises contribute to more happiness and harmony in family. So, let's give more praises to our family members to show our support and appreciation."

Professor Tai-hing Lam, Sir Robert Kotewall Professor In Public Health, Director of the School of Public Health and Principal Investigator of FAMILY Project says. "Besides the HK-FHInTS, FAMILY Project included a territory-wide household survey which focuses on family as a unit. It is preventive in nature, rather than trying to rectify family problems. The survey will interview 20,000 households, and has completed over 10,000 households. We strongly encourage all Hong Kong households to support this survey, and our second household visit will be started in early 2011."

Research Background

The School of Public Health of The University of Hong Kong commissioned Public Opinion Programme (HKU POP) at The University of Hong Kong to conduct this random telephone survey from 19 November to 23 December 2009. The target population of the survey was Hong Kong residents aged 18 or above who speak Cantonese. A total of 1,510 Hong Kong residents were successfully interviewed.

FAMILY: A Jockey Club Initiative for a Harmonious Society

Website: <http://www.family.org.hk>

Heart Touching Episodes@YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/familyhk3h>

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