

ACA News

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Hong Kong man arrested for allegedly beating son, 11, in fourth child abuse case in three days

Hospital staff alerted police after finding injuries on boy's face and body



Police have arrested a 52-year-old man suspected of beating his 11-year-old son with a plastic ruler, marking the fourth child abuse case reported in Hong Kong over the past three days.

More of these types of cases were being exposed because schools, social workers and medics had been alerted by recent incidents and stepped up efforts to prevent ill-treatment of children, an non-government organisation said.

It urged the government to outlaw physical punishment and educate parents that beatings are not the way to discipline youngsters.

“Given the recent shocking incidents, schools and social workers may have paid more attention to students who had skipped classes and checked on them,” said Wong Chui-ling, the acting director of Against Child Abuse.

“But I believe these cases are only the tip of the iceberg and there are many more hidden in society.”

The latest arrest came after medical staff at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Yau Ma Tei found injuries on the boy and alerted police at about 11.45am on Friday.

The man had taken his son to a private hospital in Kowloon City to treat his injuries, but the pair were asked to go to a public hospital.

Recent cases involving neglect or ill treatment of children

Date	Victim	Arrestee
Jan 10	Three-year-old girl found unattended at her Cheung Sha Wan home after skipping kindergarten	Mother was emotional and had bitten two police officers during an arrest
Jan 10	Eight-month-old boy from a foster family in Kwai Chung was found with blood clot in his brain and sustained head and face injuries when he was brought to a public hospital for vomiting and seizure	His foster mother was arrested
Jan 11	Four-year-old boy and eight-year-old girl who skipped school were found in a subdivided flat filled with faeces in Mong Kok, the boy was naked	Mother who was arrested had told a school that she could not cope with taking care of the children as she was struggling with health and financial problems
Jan 12	11-year-old boy beaten with plastic ruler, leaving a 4cm-long wound on his right cheek	Father arrested for cruelty to child

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“Initial information showed the boy was beaten with a plastic ruler [for being] naughty,” a police source said. “A 4cm wound was found on the boy’s right cheek.”

Officers arrested the father for cruelty to a child, according to a police spokeswoman.

He was being held for questioning and had not been charged. Crime squad officers from Yau Tsim police district were handling the case.

Separately, at 6pm on Friday, a social worker also made a police report that a girl was admitted to Queen Mary Hospital after claims of being beaten by her mother. Police were still investigating the case.

On Thursday, a 31-year-old mother was arrested in her Mong Kok flat after police located her eight-year-old daughter and four-year-old son, who had missed school over an extended period.

After the school and social workers failed to contact the family, they made a report to police, who found the boy naked in the 150 sq ft flat filled with faeces, along with his sister.

According to the boy’s school, Dominic Savio Kindergarten, the mother had said she could not cope with taking care of two children as she was struggling with health and financial problems.

On Wednesday, a foster mother was arrested after an eight-month-old boy under her care was found to have a blood clot in his brain.

Separately on Wednesday, a woman, 40, was arrested for leaving her three-year-old daughter unattended at home in Cheung Sha Wan.

According to official statistics, the Social Welfare Department handled 704 child abuse cases in the first nine months of last year. There were 892 reports in the whole of 2016.

Wong said these figures did not reflect the true picture of child cruelty as there were many hidden cases that remained undetected, especially those that involved mental or verbal abuse rather than physical harm.

She said the public should be educated on child protection, while friends and neighbours should take a more active role to report such cases.

This article appeared in the South China Morning Post print edition as: Police make fourth arrest in three days over child abuse

Reference:

<http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/law-crime/article/2127971/hong-kong-man-arrested-allegedly-beating-son-11-fourth>