



17th ISPCAN INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

News Release

6 June 2008

A Kick-off Press Conference for 17th ISPCAN International Congress “Towards a Caring and Non-Violent Community: A Child’s Perspective”

Children around the world face different forms of maltreatment, like sexual abuse, physical abuse, the neglect and unattended, infanticide, etc. Some violence is unique to their locations, but many of them goes beyond cultures and nations. In response to this serious and deteriorating international problem, the International Society for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect International Congress is held every other year and in 2008, the 17th ISPCAN International Congress was co-hosted by Against Child Abuse (ACA) and the International Society for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN). It will be held at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, from 7th to 10th September 2008. Today, the Congress Co-chair, Dr. Jon Conte, the Chairperson of Against Child Abuse, Dr. Patricia Ip, Director of Against Child Abuse, Mrs. Priscilla Lui and Child Councilor of 2006 Children’s Council, Mr. Jerry Tam, jointly announced this significant global event in the Kick-Off Press Conference.

Congress Theme and Developing Country Forum

“The planning of the Congress started in April, 2004. ”, Dr. Jon Conte, the ISPCAN Congress Committee Chair and the 17th Congress Co-chair shared. The theme of the 17th Congress stressed the perspective of children. The committee expected that the Congress could stimulate and unify the professionals to move the world towards a caring and non-violent community, through a series of lectures, discussions and fellowship. Furthermore, a Developing Country Forum, held a day before the Congress, was specially arranged to enlighten participants of strengths and good practices, as well as weaknesses and limitations in both prevention and remedial efforts of child right and protection. Ambassador Moushira Khattab (Egypt), Secretary General of the National Council for Childhood & Motherhood and member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child will deliver a keynote presentation in the Forum.

Mrs. Lui, Director of Against Child Abuse, shared how ACA worked with global partners, such as ISPCAN, UNICEF, World Vision, Save the children, and local collaborators, like Social Welfare Department of HKSAR China and various NGOs, professionals and youth, social service organizations and corporations. This demonstrated the importance of collective collaboration in making societies more child friendly, moving from a mere child welfare approach to appreciate children’s entitlement. Mrs. Lui also shared some of the paintings and artworks of children, which will be used to produce the conference bag for participants. Currently, a total of 170 volunteers have been recruited.



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Enthusiastic Response

Up till now, the Congress was well supported. 10 countries have participated in the Congress, including, United States, China, Australia, United Kingdom, Canada, South Africa, India, Japan, Poland and Philippines. More than 20 international and local bodies generously sponsor the Congress, such as Social Welfare Department of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region China, Savantas Policy Institute Limited, Department of Sociology (HKBU), Shun Hing Education and Charity Fund, Centaline Property Agency Limited, Cathay Pacific Airways, Melco Group etc. Moreover, social organizations like World Vision International, Hong Kong Children & Youth Services, Harmony House Limited and End Child Sexual Abuse Foundation (ECSAF) will exhibit in the Congress.

Authors were invited to submit proposals for papers, workshops, symposia and interactive presentations till 15 February, 2008. After the call for abstracts, more than 500 experts and scholars have made abstract submissions and 428 abstracts are accepted eventually. 209 abstracts are from East Asia Pacific Region, which are Australia (89), China (62), India (21), Japan (20) and Philippines (17). Totally, 18 abstracts are selected as symposia. 126 abstracts will be presented as poster.

Voice of the Youth

During the press conference, a youth, Mr. Jerry Tam, Child Councilor of 2006 Children's Council and member of Kids' Dream, expressed that, "The perspective of child and adult towards children needs and entitlements may be varied. Children voice and needs are not heard and considered." Jerry deeply appreciated that ACA and ISPCAN had joined hands to organize an International Congress to disseminate the importance of children voices and a non-violent community. He also invited all parties, who are concerned with the future of children, to join the conference in September.

On-line registration is available at <http://www.ispcan.org/congress2008/registration.html>. Besides, members of the media are cordially invited to cover the Congress. For further Congress details, please visit the website: <http://www.ispcan.org/congress2008>.

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