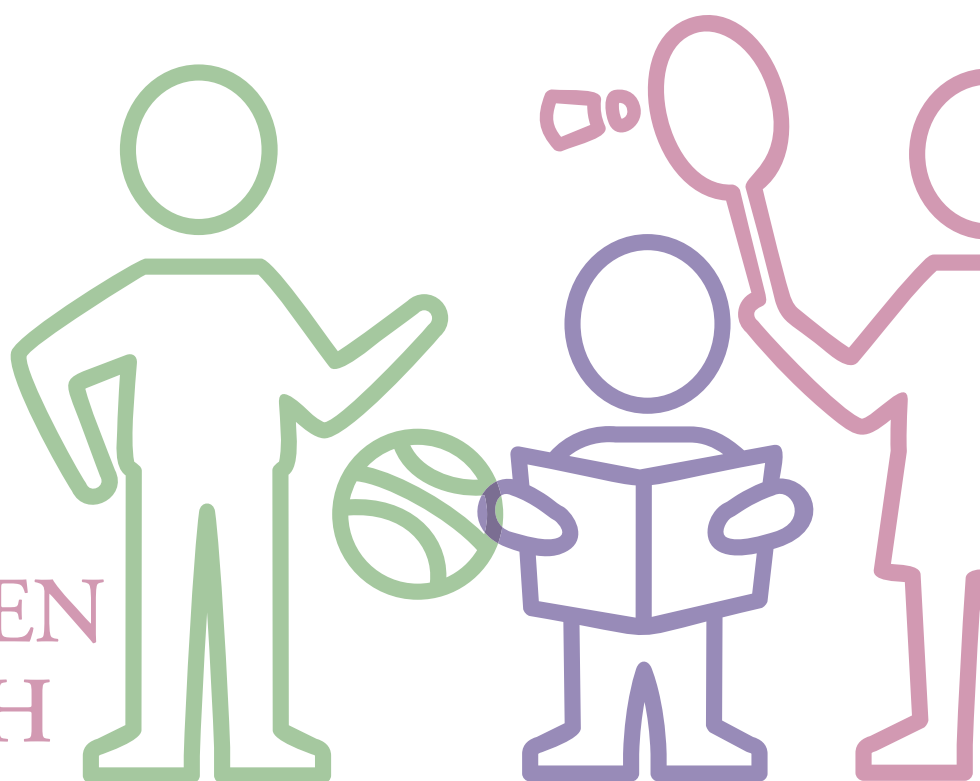


## 4 CHILDREN & YOUTH



### INTERGENERATIONAL POVERTY

- 4.1 Children are our future. Each child, whatever his or her background, matters. We hope that our children, regardless of their socio-economic background, are able to enjoy a healthy and balanced development, and to contribute positively to our society when they grow up.
- 4.2 For children from a disadvantaged background, the community is concerned about whether the poverty of parents may prevent their children from enjoying a healthy and balanced development, and that poverty may be “passed on” from one generation to the next (i.e. “intergenerational poverty”).
- 4.3 While providing for the healthy and balanced development of children and youth, including those from a disadvantaged background, has long been a core element of the Government’s public policy, the concept of intergenerational poverty is relatively new and less well understood in Hong Kong.
- 4.4 Tackling intergenerational poverty is to prevent the younger generation from becoming poor as a result of the older generation’s poverty. The focus is to deal with poverty risks of the children, with poverty of the parents (Chapter 3) being one of the factors affecting the child’s development.

## WORK OF THE COMMISSION

Tackling intergenerational poverty is one of the work priorities of the Commission. A Task Force on Children and Youth was established under the Commission in May 2005 to enhance understanding on the relevant issues; to examine existing policies and measures with a special focus on the needs of those from a disadvantaged background; to consider room for improving the interface and coordination among services; as well as to formulate policy recommendations which help reduce risks of intergenerational poverty.

## THE KEY CHALLENGES

### Ensuring opportunities and mobility

- 4.5 In a generally affluent city like Hong Kong, there is no apparent lack of services and resources to take care of the basic needs of children (see paragraph 4.13 below). The key concern may no longer be material deprivation, but whether there are adequate opportunities for children to learn, to enhance personal capacities, and eventually to improve the quality of life for themselves and their families in the future.
- 4.6 Tackling intergenerational poverty is closely related to availability of opportunities and mobility in our system. Intergenerational mobility is a relatively unexplored area in Hong Kong. The study conducted by the University of Hong Kong (Chapter 2, paragraphs 2.24 - 2.29) has included an analysis on intergenerational earnings mobility. Based on the relationships between the lifetime earnings of father and child, intergenerational poverty was not found to be prevalent in the local economy.
- 4.7 While Hong Kong is generally regarded as a relatively open and meritocratic society and the available data so far do not show that intergenerational poverty is prevalent, there remain concerns and anxieties in the community especially among the disadvantaged on whether their children can move up the social ladder when they grow up.

### Finding the right approach

- 4.8 Some children and their families in the society are more vulnerable than others and deserve our special attention and support. At the same time, we need to beware of the limitations of passive assistance and the possible impact of negative labelling of programmes targeted specifically at disadvantaged children. The ultimate objective is to help children to develop a positive attitude, an ability to learn and a sense of self-responsibility and self-worth. Adopting the right approach in our policies and measures in tackling intergenerational poverty is important.

- 4.9 Searching for the right approach however is easier said than done. The mere provision of additional financial assistance to the children or their families may deal with the symptoms but not the root of the problem.

## UNDERSTANDING THE FACTS ABOUT CHILDREN IN POVERTY<sup>1</sup>

### Number of children living in poverty

- 4.10 Public concern is often focussed on the number of children living in poor households. There is however a need to put into perspective the impact of public policies in improving the material well-being of the children concerned. For instance, based on the data collected in the 2006 Population By-census, there were 247 800 children (aged 0 – 14) living in households with income below average CSSA payment in 2006 (i.e. 26.5% of the total population of the same age group). As explained in Chapter 2, this income-based indicator figure has not considered the impact of government transfers on the household income of such families. To this end, the figure should be viewed in conjunction with the fact that government transfers serve to lift household income across all decile groups, more so for the lower-income groups (Chapter 2, paragraph 2.19).
- 4.11 Using the correct statistics aside, we should not just focus on income-based indicators to reflect the well-being of our younger generation. Their family background (workless households, single parent families), school attendance, and the number of youths not in school, employment or training (“non-engaged youths”) are all relevant when analysing the poverty risks of our younger generation<sup>2</sup>.

### General well-being of children

- 4.12 In terms of the general well-being of children in meeting their daily living needs, Hong Kong has a relatively good story to tell. With the availability of comprehensive disease prevention and health promotion services, the health indices related to children compare favourably with those of most developed countries. The infant mortality rate is as low as 1.8 per thousand registered live births in 2006. The performance of Hong Kong children in various developmental aspects is comparable to their peers in the Western countries. In some areas concerning the acquisition of numeracy skills and pre-writing and literacy skills, Hong Kong children are even more advanced. In general, children in Hong Kong grow up in a relatively safe and healthy environment.

### Public investment on services for children and youth

- 4.13 The Commission has examined the wide range of services available for children and youth. Children with financial or other special needs receive additional assistance. In terms of financial resources, the Government invests around 30% of its operating expenditure on children and youth (nearly \$60 billion). Within this, a quarter was targeted specifically at disadvantaged children and youth. Compared to the total number of children and youth from

0-24 years old (1 847 800 in mid-2006), the average amount of resources invested on each child and youth in Hong Kong amounts to some \$32,000 in a year.

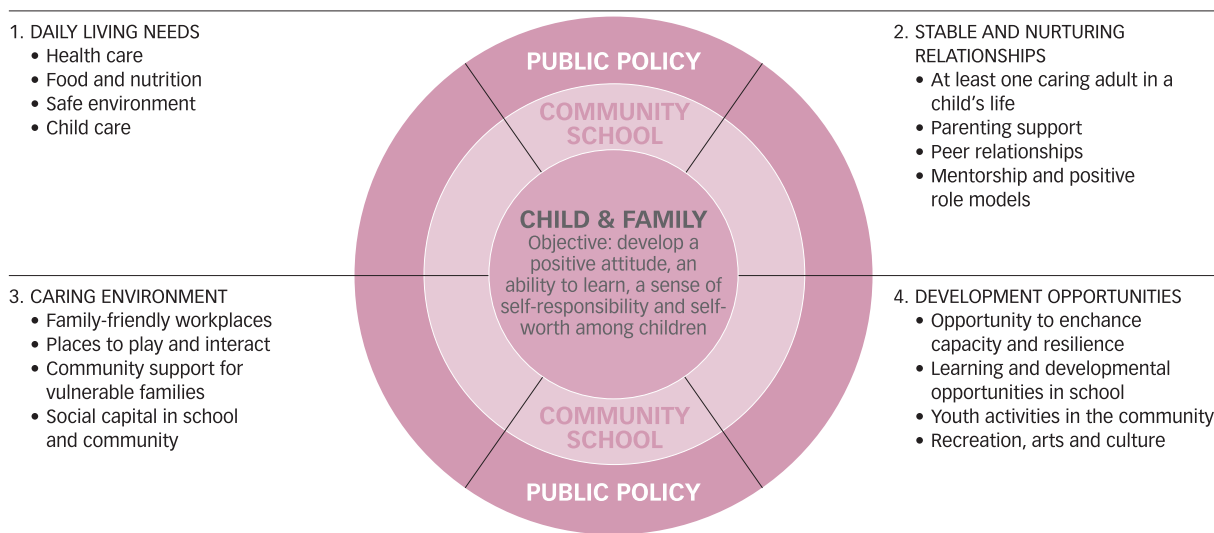
Programmes/Services	Spending on children and youth	Spending targeted at disadvantaged children and youth
	Amount (\$ million)	Amount (\$ million)
Education	45 545	4 081
Health Care	727	-
Social Welfare	10 936	9 979
Personal Development	157	88
Training/Employment	2 000	440
<b>Total</b>	<b>59 365</b>	<b>14 580</b>

Resources for children and youth services provided by the government (2005)

4.14 Appendix (v) shows a breakdown of the different Government/Government subvented services available. A brief overview of these services is at Appendix (vi). The list is not exhaustive and does not include services supported by other non-governmental funding sources. Hence, the issue in hand may not be a lack of existing services and programmes for children and youth, but how to improve their visibility and accessibility to those in need, to enhance the existing efforts and their interface in order to produce greater impact, and to improve the impact assessment of the existing efforts on the development of children from a disadvantaged background.

### PROMOTING THE HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN - KEY DETERMINANTS<sup>3</sup>

4.15 While material well-being of the children and their families affects access to daily living needs, this is but one of the many variables which affect a child’s development. Hence, tackling intergenerational poverty should focus not just on financial support and material well-being of the children and their families. Stable and nurturing relationships, a caring environment, and development opportunities are all important determinants in the development of the younger generation.



## USING THE RIGHT APPROACH

- 4.16 Addressing the needs of children and youth requires a systemic way to identify the needs of high-risk children and their families early, to provide timely and appropriate intervention according to their needs, and to evaluate the impact of the intervention measures on the children.
- 4.17 The process does not mean a clinical process of problem identification and removal by surgical interventions. Positive and lasting results are most effectively achieved by providing a continuum of structured support from childhood to adulthood, taking into account the complex determinants on the development of the younger generation.
- 4.18 Against the background, the Commission has examined the existing services and programmes relevant to tackling intergenerational poverty for children and youth aged 0-5, 6-14, and 15-24, with a special focus on the needs of those from a disadvantaged background. The key observations and recommendations from the Commission are summarised below.

## CHILDREN (0 - 5 YEARS)<sup>4</sup>

- 4.19 Recent scientific studies have demonstrated that early life experience during the formative years has very crucial impact on the child's subsequent development. In this regard, the Commission supports the direction of strengthening investment in early childhood development, and the identification of high-risk children and families for early intervention.

### **Pre-primary education**

- 4.20 The Commission welcomes the Government's initiative to invest additional resources to subsidise and upgrade the quality of early childhood education. While the initiative is a universal one, the Commission notes that pre-primary education is an important stage for the child's physical, intellectual, social and emotional development, and reduces the risk of subsequent developmental problems.
- 4.21 The Commission notes that nearly 90% children aged 3 to 5 are studying in kindergartens in 2006/07. It is unclear whether those young children not receiving support were due to financial or other reasons. With the introduction of the new measures, it is envisaged that all children aged 3 to 6 should be able to receive quality and affordable pre-primary education.

### **Comprehensive Child Development Service<sup>5</sup>**

- 4.22 The Commission has also examined the pilot implementation of the Comprehensive Child Development Service (CCDS), which aims to identify needy children or at-risk pregnant women or families at an early stage and to refer them to different health and social services units to receive early intervention services. The CCDS model takes into account district needs, and strengthens the multidisciplinary collaboration between health care, pre-primary education and social services and provides integrated support to the at-risk children and families identified.
- 4.23 While the CCDS is a universal service, its design has enabled it to particularly strengthen the support to children and families from a disadvantaged background, such as new arrival families, low income families, families with cross-border marriages, by proactively connecting health and social services to them.
- 4.24 Since its launch in July 2005, the pilot has yielded encouraging results. The Commission supports extending the CCDS to all districts in phases and strengthening social services support to children and families at risk.

#### **COMPREHENSIVE CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICE - DOES IT WORK?**

A review of the implementation of CCDS from July 2005 to September 2006 was conducted in four pilot communities, namely Sham Shui Po, Tin Shui Wai, Tuen Mun and Tseung Kwan O. The early results of the service indicated that, among other things, more children and families in need have accessed and accepted different health and social services. The critical success factors include -

- Using the Maternal and Child Health Centres (MCHCs) as a platform has reduced the perception of stigmatisation and inconvenience to receiving psychiatric and social services, and facilitating clients to share personal difficulties and accept referral of services.
- Providing proactive and one-stop service further enhances service accessibility to the disadvantaged groups that were hard-to-reach.
- Intersectoral collaboration among health and social workers is instrumental in ensuring the clients receive the most appropriate services.

## Parent education

4.25 Children develop best in stable and nurturing relationships. Parent education is considered an important element to guide parents in building a stable and nurturing relationships for children at home. The Commission has examined the existing programmes and held sharing session with representatives from various advisory committees and agencies delivering parent education<sup>6</sup>. The Commission has also commissioned a Study on the Promotion of Parent Education for Economically Disadvantaged and Hard-to-Reach Families in Hong Kong to identify the special needs of disadvantaged parents and make recommendations on how to strengthen parenting support to them. Major recommendations include <sup>7</sup> -

- (a) parent education should not be limited to the teaching of skills and values, but the whole-person development of parents which are important to the effective performance of their parenting role;
- (b) a family perspective should be adopted to guide the strategies for strengthening families, including parenting and other factors which limit the efficacy of parents to care for their children;
- (c) reaching-out and community-oriented services should be strengthened to cater for the special needs of families that are disadvantaged and hard-to-reach; and
- (d) more coordination and longer-term funding to support families and parent education, enabling schools and agencies to provide longer-term and more structured family and parent support.

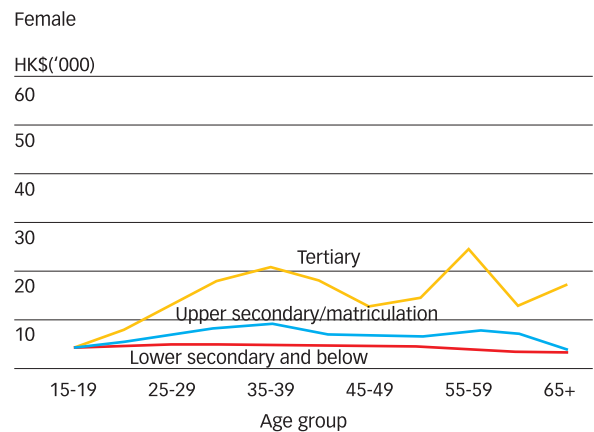
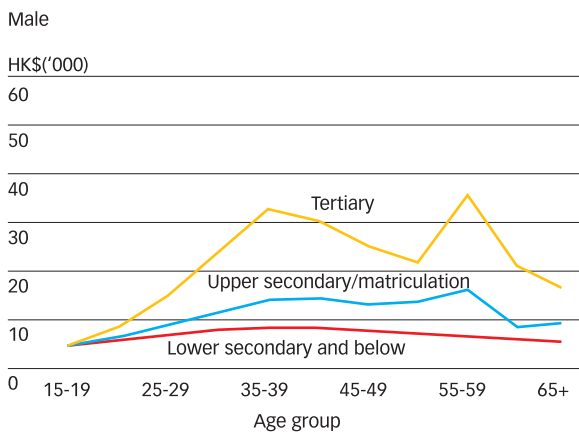
4.26 While the Administration will take into account the recommendations in considering the establishment of the Family Commission, in the short-term, additional resources have been allocated to expand the Capacity Building Mileage Programme of the Women's Commission in strengthening parent education and the capacities of women.

## CHILDREN (6 - 14 YEARS)

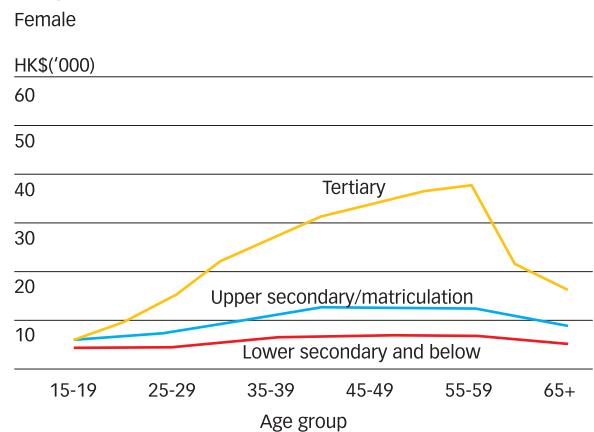
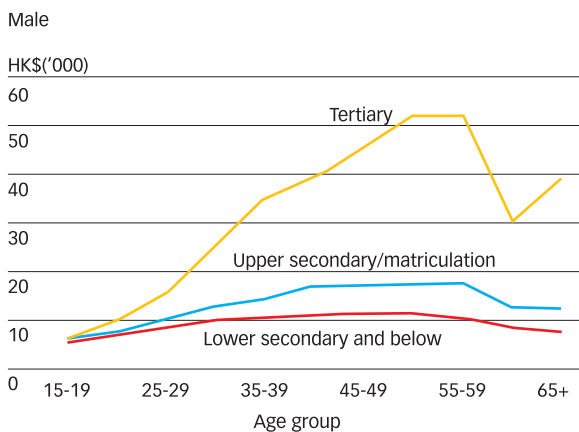
### Education is prevention

4.27 The role of education in preventing intergenerational poverty cannot be over-emphasised. Education enhances capacity and strengthens an individual’s ability to advance in society and break away from intergenerational poverty. In a knowledge-based society like Hong Kong, earnings of those with higher education have experienced significant growth in real terms, while the earnings of those with low education have remained relatively stagnant.

**AVERAGE MONTHLY EARNINGS OF FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES, 1986  
(AT 2006 CONSTANT PRICES)**



**AVERAGE MONTHLY EARNINGS OF FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES, 2006**





- 4.28 In Hong Kong, all children enjoy 9 years of free and compulsory education. Children from poor families can apply for financial assistance to meet their schooling expenses. The issue is whether the public education system provides opportunities for children to learn and excel regardless of their socio-economic background.
- 4.29 In this regard, the Commission has examined the available statistics and studies on the correlation between education performance, future earnings ability of children and the socio-economic status of their parents to see to what extent a poor family background would affect children's opportunity of moving up the social ladder. The Commission finds that based on available data, such correlation is not proven strong and intergenerational poverty is not prevalent in Hong Kong.

### **Small class teaching**

- 4.30 Overseas research studies indicate that small classing teaching has more significant effects on students with weak family support and in their early years of schooling. In response to the pledge to tackle intergenerational poverty, the Government introduced small class teaching in primary schools with a majority of students from disadvantaged families in 2005. Schools having 40% of their Primary 1 - Primary 3 students receiving CSSA or full grant assistance under student financial assistance scheme are eligible to participate. A total of 75 primary schools met the 40% threshold and 29 of them joined the scheme in the 2005-06 school year. 48 schools joined the scheme in the 2006/07 school year. The Government will evaluate the outcome of the initiative including the impact on the participating students in order to decide on the best way forward<sup>8</sup>.

### **School as an important platform**

- 4.31 In the dialogues with stakeholders and the community, one of the recurrent themes is how to make better use of schools as a platform to help address the needs of the disadvantaged children. Similar to the MCHCs for young children, the school with its extensive coverage is a natural platform for identifying the developmental needs of school children, particularly for the "hidden cases". It can also avoid stigmatisation associated with the more traditional welfare services, and facilitate acceptance by children and families of the services and support.
- 4.32 At the same time, there are concerns that schools are presently focussed on their core business of educating the children. There is little room for the schools at present to take up additional responsibilities to help tackle intergenerational poverty.

- 4.33 That said, there are a number of programmes in place in schools which screen and assist children and youth with developmental needs, including the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB)'s "Understanding the Adolescent Project" (U.A.P.) in primary schools and the Hong Kong Jockey Club's "P.A.T.H.S. to Adulthood: A Jockey Club Youth Enhancement Scheme" (P.A.T.H.S.) in secondary schools co-organised by Social Welfare Department (SWD) and EMB. There is also increasing collaboration between the social service and the education sectors in addressing the varied needs of school students.

#### SCREENING AND DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMMES FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

The U.A.P. targets primary students and aims to enhance their resilience in coping with adversities. The project has two different programmes - a universal programme which provides a guidance curriculum on resilience, targeting at all Primary 4 to 6 students. The intensive programme is a series of small group, adventure-based and parent-child activities, targeting Primary 4 students identified with greater needs for guidance.

"P.A.T.H.S." was launched in 2005 with sponsorship from the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust for junior secondary students. There are two tiers of programmes - Tier I is a universal programme for all junior secondary students. Students with greater psychosocial needs would be screened to join Tier II. The programme aims to promote the holistic development of students by providing them with opportunities and recognition, enhance their self-esteem, cultivate students' resilience and promote their learning motivation. This would in turn empower children and lift them from poverty.



#### After-school support

- 4.34 After-school support to children and youth is a growing area of concern in the light of the changes in the workforce (higher female participation, longer working hours). Such support, either school-based or community-based, is a relatively new field where school intersects with other traditional social service fields. There is also a great potential to encourage intersectoral collaboration among schools, NGOs and other local community organisations, tapping the rich local resources in the communities to help tackle intergenerational poverty.

- 4.35 In response to the pledge to tackle intergenerational poverty, the Government launched the School-based After-school Learning and Support Programmes<sup>9</sup> in 2005-2006 school year. To avoid undue additional workload on teachers, schools were encouraged to work in partnership with NGOs which have rich experience in running support programmes and could bring in their backend support to schools. Starting from 2006-07, funding is also provided to support community-based projects with a view to establishing a service network in the neighbourhood where the disadvantaged children live.
- 4.36 After-school support is particularly important in communities with a higher concentration of youth from a disadvantaged background, which are more deprived of communal facilities and where the risk of children and youth going delinquent after-school is higher. In response to community concerns, the Government has stepped up the provision of communal facilities in Tin Shui Wai and Tung Chung<sup>10</sup>. A pilot scheme has been launched to encourage schools to open their premises for community use after school, and a secondary school in Tin Shui Wai has opened up its covered playground for students in the district after school hours to try out the arrangements.

## YOUTH (15 - 24 YEARS)

### Non-engaged youths

- 4.37 The focus of this age group is the so-called “non-engaged youths” (NEYs) who are not in school, employment or training. According to the poverty indicators for 2006, the number of NEYs was 21 400. The Commission notes that this problem is a worldwide phenomenon especially among the more developed economies. The Government has analysed the problem from different perspectives, and assessed the needs of NEYs in terms of personal development, skills training, career development and employment opportunities<sup>11</sup>. A number of strategies have been adopted to tackle the problem<sup>12</sup> -
- (a) provision of quality education to the young generation in schools, with a diversity of options in the curriculum, including the introduction of vocational element through the Applied Learning (ApL)<sup>13</sup> for students with different needs, aptitudes and interests;
  - (b) provision of alternative routes to school leavers and mature students. Such include vocational training of the Vocational Training Council (VTC), and a wide range of programmes organised by the Government (Project Yi Jin), uniformed groups and other youth organisations;

- (c) provision of pre-employment and on-the-job training programmes for youths, including the provision of a transport allowance for participants in the Youth Pre-Employment Training Programme and the Youth Work Experience and Training Programme in 2007-08 to enhance youth employability;
- (d) establishing new Youth Employment Resource Centres in 2007-08 to provide “one-stop” advisory and support services to youths aged 15 to 29<sup>14</sup> on employment and self-employment including self-assessment, career counselling, up-to-date employment market information, and provision of office facilities for those pursuing self-employment, etc.;
- (e) promoting employment opportunities suitable for youths, e.g. tourism and creative industries, and opportunities in the Mainland and overseas.

4.38 The Commission notes that the strategies above are more remedial in nature. Early intervention at childhood may be a more sustainable and cost-effective way to deal with the problem.

4.39 In order to further strengthen the current efforts, the Government has established the Task Force on Continuing Development and Employment-related Training for Youth (“the NEY Task Force”) in 2004 to explore on effective ways to motivate the NEYs to integrate into the community. With the support of the Youth Sustainable Development and Employment Fund, 22 pilot projects have been/are being conducted. The NEY Task Force is conducting an assessment on the effectiveness of the pilot programmes and will submit a report to the Government on further ideas and strategies in assisting NEYs in their continuing development and employment.

### **Hardcore unemployed youth**

4.40 Some of the NEYs are unemployed youth receiving CSSA. While the number is not very large, there were noticeable increases in the past few years. The time they stayed on CSSA is also increasing. Some of the “hardcore” ones who have received CSSA for a long period of time and could not become employed after going through existing employment programmes. The Commission notes that some of these hardcore youths (some 704 in July 2005) have already been CSSA recipients for an average of five years and around 30% of them have never worked<sup>15</sup>.

- 4.41 In view of this, the Commission supports the introduction of a more intensified employment assistance pilot project “My STEP”, which aims to meet the needs of the hardcore unemployed youths and strengthens interdepartmental collaboration to assist these youths. Early results indicate that providing targeted assistance to the hardcore unemployed youths yields positive outcomes<sup>16</sup>. An evaluation is being conducted comparing programme participants and a control group in order to enhance the intervention measures in tackling the unique needs of the hardcore unemployed youths.

### PROMOTING CHILD DEVELOPMENT - AN ALTERNATIVE MODEL<sup>17</sup>

- 4.42 Besides examining the existing services and programmes, the Commission has also looked into the overseas experience in promoting child development, particularly the child development fund model which emphasises on long-term personal development of children and encourages asset-building habit and mindset among children from poor families.

#### WHAT IS ASSET BUILDING?

Asset building encourages the disadvantaged to build up “assets”. Such assets can be both financial savings and non-financial ones (such as human capital and social network).

The approach is based on the premise that passive income support and public assistance has its limitations in encouraging the disadvantaged to plan for their own future and escape from poverty. Overseas researches have demonstrated that developing an asset-accumulation habit among the poor yields positive results, including causing behavioural change towards a more forward-planning orientation.

- 4.43 While the concept of building asset among the poor is relatively new in Hong Kong, the Commission considers that it is worthwhile to consider shifting away from a deficit model in viewing child development (by providing children with programmes and services to address their needs/deficits) to an asset-based model which encourages longer-term personal development of children, especially those from a disadvantaged background.
- 4.44 In this regard, the Commission has consulted relevant stakeholders in the community on the future direction in promoting child development in Hong Kong, in particular in tackling intergenerational poverty. At the Child Development Forum held in November 2006, key stakeholders (schools, NGOs, academia, business and policy makers) shared their views on the existing efforts<sup>18</sup>, and supported that it is worthwhile to explore an alternative model which can help achieve the ultimate objective of assisting children to develop a positive attitude, an ability to learn and a sense of self-responsibility and self-worth.

## Child Development Fund

- 4.45 Against this background, the Commission recommends that the Government should set aside additional resources to set up a Child Development Fund (CDF) for pilot child development projects on top of the existing services and programmes. In this regard, the Commission welcomes the Government's decision to earmark \$300 million to set up a new CDF to provide children from a disadvantaged background with more development opportunities as announced in the 2007-08 Budget.
- 4.46 The Commission also recommends that the CDF should have a number of key features, including -
- (a) the CDF should be used to promote building personal development plans among children from a disadvantaged background under on-going guidance and mentorship from NGOs and voluntary mentors; and
  - (b) the CDF should encourage targeted savings in order to examine whether asset-building habits would yield positive behavioural and mindset change among children from a disadvantaged background.
- 4.47 While the CDF may be explored on a trial basis for a number of years, the Commission believes that there is room to further develop it into a longer-term model to promote child development in Hong Kong, and to consolidate the different resources and funding sources in order to promote a more child-based, asset-based and family-based model.

## Promoting Child Development - A Holistic and Family Perspective

- 4.48 The Commission notes that the services and programmes catering for the needs of children and youths at different stages of development are delivered by different bureaux and departments as well as a vast number of agencies and community organisations, and there are a number of advisory bodies overseeing different areas of development (see Appendix vii).
- 4.49 While this state is in a way inevitable, the Commission notes that in the longer run, the Government should adopt a more holistic perspective to structure the support to children and their families, especially to those from a disadvantaged background -

**Early intervention:** place emphasis on a preventive approach, through strengthened services for early childhood as well as screening mechanisms to identify high-risk children and families for early intervention; and to follow-up on those children and families who could not be assisted and need more intensified support;

**Evidence-based policy making:** evaluate systematically the impact of public policies, intervention measures, family and school practices on the outcomes of the children at different stages of development; and track the trend of intergenerational mobility through longitudinal studies and researches, especially on the development of children from a disadvantaged background;

**Intersectoral collaboration:** enhance coordination and collaboration across the health, education and social service sectors in order to cater for the varied needs of children and their families and to enhance accessibility to relevant services by the hard-to-reach families.

- 4.50 In this regard, the Commission notes the Government is studying the setting up of an integrated, holistic and high-level Family Commission and to take a family perspective in considering policies and initiatives relating to family support. The Commission considers that the Family Commission, if set up, should also take into account the needs of children and families from a disadvantaged background.

## DIRECTION FOR FUTURE WORK

- 4.51 This chapter provides an overview of the existing policies and measures examined by the Commission, as well as the major recommendations in strengthening our support to the younger generation, with a special focus on the needs of children from a disadvantaged background.

### OVERALL

- Adopt a **holistic and family perspective** in policies and measures in assisting children and youth, with particular emphasis on early identification and intervention, evidence-based policy making and intersectoral collaboration (*Paragraph 4.49*)
- Implement the **CDF** and try out an **asset-based model** (including a targeted savings element and a mentoring scheme) which encourages longer-term personal development of children from a disadvantaged background (*Paragraphs 4.42 - 4.46*)
- Further developing the CDF into a **longer-term model** to promote child development in Hong Kong after the trial stage, and consolidate different resources and funding sources in order to promote a more child-based, asset-based and family-based model (*Paragraph 4.47*)
- Improve the **impact assessment** of existing efforts on the development of children from a disadvantaged background (*Paragraph 4.14*).

- Make appropriate use of **schools as a platform** to help address the developmental needs of the disadvantaged children, particularly for the “hidden cases”, through collaboration between the social service and the education sectors (*Paragraphs 4.31 - 4.33*).
- The work of the **Family Commission**, if set up, should take into account the needs of children and families from a disadvantaged background (*Paragraph 4.50*).

### CHILDREN AGED 0 - 5

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- Support investing additional resources to subsidise early childhood education so that all children can receive quality and **affordable pre-primary education** (*Paragraphs 4.20 - 4.21*).
- **Extend the CCDS** to all districts in phases and strengthen follow-up social services support to children and families at risk (*Paragraphs 4.22 - 4.24*).
- **Strengthen parent education**, with particular focus on the needs of the disadvantaged and hard-to-reach families (*Paragraphs 4.25 - 4.26*).

### CHILDREN AGED 6 - 14

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- Ensure the **education system** provides opportunities for children to learn and excel regardless of their socio-economic background, and to provide additional assistance to students with weak family support where appropriate (*Paragraphs 4.27 - 4.30*).
- Promote school-based and community-based **after school programmes** for primary and secondary students from disadvantaged families, through promoting intersectoral collaboration among schools and non-governmental/local community organisations (*Paragraphs 4.34 - 4.36*).

### YOUTH AGED 15 - 24

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- Tackle the problem of **non-engaged youths** through various strategies and consider ways to further strengthen the current efforts, noting in particular that early intervention may be a more sustainable way to tackle the problem (*Paragraphs 4.37 - 4.39*).
- Provide **more intensified form of assistance to youths** who have remained on CSSA for a long period and cannot benefit from existing programmes, and evaluate their needs in order to provide targeted and timely assistance (*Paragraphs 4.40 - 4.41*).